

## PASTORAL VISITATION – **THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH**

Thank you for making arrangements in your parish for my upcoming visit. These notes are intended to give some additional information to help with your planning.

**Weekend Masses** The assigned liturgy of the day should be used. I will try to develop the visitation theme as the Scriptures allow. It is good for the pastor to concelebrate with the bishop. It is helpful to have one or two extra servers to assist with the miter and crosier. If the Sacrament of Penance is scheduled close to Mass, please let me know in advance, so that I can be available to hear confessions.

**Potluck Suppers** It probably makes sense to start the program once people have finished eating but before any serious effort is made to clean up. The pastor or his delegate should invite the preschoolers (including kindergartners) to go to a separate place for “babysitting”, the children in grades 1 through 4 to another place and the children in grades 5 through 8 to a third place. Obviously adults will need to be prepared to oversee these three groups of children. Enclosed with this memorandum are lesson plans to be used with the school-aged children.

I will conduct a program with the adults and high schoolers in the same room as the supper. A DVD player with sufficient amplification and proper screening is needed and perhaps a PA system for me and questions from the floor. The program will last about an hour.

**Meeting with Pastoral Council** The purpose of the meeting is to engage the members of the council in a discussion about the council’s role in helping the parish fulfill its own mission within the larger context of the Church’s mission. The pastor may wish to invite other parish leaders to participate. The meeting will likely last about 45 minutes. It can be scheduled in conjunction with a potluck supper or at another time. It can also be scheduled with another parish or parishes.

**Visits to the Sick** I would like to visit the sick of the parish in their own homes and at nursing homes. Celebrating Anointing of the Sick, Penance and Holy Communion would be welcome. In those parishes with large numbers of sick parishioners, pastors may need to make some sensitive decisions about who can be visited in the time available.

**Other Activities** As time allows, I am open to visiting schools, prisons and other places where pastoral presence is called for.