# Guidelines for Centering Prayer

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❖ Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.

# Guidelines for Centering Prayer

❖ Sitting comfortably with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within. Once you have done so, you can simply drop the silent word.

# Guidelines for Centering Prayer

❖ When your thoughts (sensations, feelings, images and reflections) intrude, simply return ever so gently  to the sacred word.

# Guidelines for Centering Prayer

❖ At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

# Priest Work History

*A Collaboration between **Chicagoland VOTF** & **SNAP***

*Published on October 10, 2010*

*Reported by Bob Kopp, VP, Chicagoland VOTF*

***National VOTF Conference***
*& **American Catholic Council***

*in Detroit on June 10-12, 2011*

# Priest Work History

**<u>Current State</u>**

- When a priest is credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor:

    - Do the Catholics in the pew hear from the hierarchy?

    - Do parishioners learn of the priest's previous assignments?

    - Do parishioners learn how long he was stationed at each assignment?

    - Do parishioners at each assignment       learn of oth    credibly accused            priests who were statio    there, maybe at the same time?

# Priest Work History

**Ideal Future State**

- When a priest is credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor:

  - The hierarchy notifies civil authorities immediately.

  - The hierarchy notifies each of the credibly accused priest's previous assignments of the accusations.

  - The hierarchy notifies each of the credibly accused priest's assignments of all his other assignments and which years he was stationed there.

  - The hierarchy notifies each of the credibly accused priest's assignments of all other credibly accused priests who were also stationed there at the same time.

# Priest Work History

**<u>Project Description</u>**

- Collaboration between Chicagoland VOTF and SNAP was a win-win project.

- Realization that answers to above questions can be found in public domain.

- *Official Catholic Directory* is located in library reference rooms.

  - Has been published annually since 1817.

  - Information provided by the hierarchy.

- Other useful information found on websites:

  - Archdiocese of Chicago
    (via link from USCCB)

  - Bishop Accountability

  - U. S. Postal Service

# Priest Work History

**<u>Chicago project process</u>**

- Involved extraction of priest work history data from official Roman Catholic Church source;

- Involved accurate coding of extracted data into spreadsheets for assignment pattern recognition;

- Analysis of data addressed each question posed;

- Development of cogent graphical results;

- Preparation of final archdiocesan report.

# Priest Work History

**Internet data sources**

- Archdiocesan website provides:
  - List of active parishes and parochial schools with addresses and ZIP codes.

- Bishop Accountability website provides:
  - List of credibly accused priests by diocese with religious order and ordination date;
  - Newspaper and other sources of information about accusations.

- U. S. Postal Service website provides:
  - ZIP codes by county.

# Priest Work History

**<u>Ancillary project findings</u>**

- Total number of priests in diocese and total number of parishes by year

- Analysis of credibly accused priest data yields

  - Annual pattern of <u>credibly accused priests</u> in archdiocese

    - ➢ Credibly accused priests by year

    - ➢ Total number of priests by year

    - ➢ % of credibly accused priests to total number of priests by year

- Annual pattern of <u>parishes</u> in archdiocese

  - Parishes ministered by credibly accused priests by year

  - Total number of parishes by year

  - % of parishes ministered by credibly accused priests to total number of parishes by year

# Priest Work History

**Typical project data analysis**

- Which ZIP codes were credibly accused priests most frequently assigned to?

- How many man-years of ministry are represented in those assignments by ZIP code?

- Are there any obvious socio-economic-demographic patterns in those assignments by ZIP code?

- Were there parishes or institutions that housed more than one credibly accused priest at the same time?

# Priest Work History

**Next steps**

- Use BA.org list of credibly accused priests

- Target major dioceses in USA

- Target dioceses that have filed for protection under bankruptcy laws

- Analyze these dioceses for similar patterns of credibly accused priest assignments

# Priest Work History

**Major Archdioceses:**

- Boston, MA
- Chicago, IL – done
- Cincinnati, OH
- Los Angeles, CA
- Louisville, KY
- Miami, FL
- Omaha, NE
- Philadelphia, PA
- Seattle, WA

**Bankruptcy protected dioceses:**

- Davenport, IA
- Fairbanks, AK
- Milwaukee, WI (A)
- Portland, OR (A)
- San Diego, CA
- Spokane, WA
- Tucson, AZ
- Wilmington, DE

(A) Indicates Archdiocese

# Priest Work History

## Projected results

- Chicago project had 97 credibly accused priests.

- Next 16 dioceses bring total number of credibly accused priests to 1,055.

- Will assumption of a universal pattern of assignments be upheld?
  Or refuted?

- Will role of Vatican hierarchy involvement be made visible?
  Or denied?

# Adapting to Change

*Reshaping our Church for the Future*

# Universal Church Reform

- Brief history

- Vision for the platform

- Engaging the membership

- Forming separate initiatives

# Three Initiatives

- Bishop's Initiative

- Women's Initiative

- Priest's Initiative

# The Women's Initiative

*An Important Voice*

*In Catholic Church Reform*

*Presented at VOTF National Meeting,*

*Detroit, June 10, 2011*

# The Women's Initiative

Background –

- New coalition of women and men

- Part of VOTF Universal Church Reform of the Voices in Action Plan

# The Women's Initiative

Goals --

- Present and refute situations and laws that marginalize and eclipse women in Scripture, tradition and spirituality;

- Dialogue with all Catholics about issues of deep importance to women;

# The Women's Initiative

Goals --

- Educate and evangelize all Catholics about women's spirituality and recognize their contributions for reforming the universal Church; and

- Work collaboratively with organizations and groups that have similar goals.

# The Women's Initiative

Organization --

- Prayers / Feminine Spirituality

- Historians

- Connectors

- Writers

- Educators

- Organizers

# The Women's Initiative

Current Work Status --

1. Webpage development

- An online "forum" – the "Virtual Table" envisioned as a place of dialogue about the role of Women in the Church

# The Women's Initiative

Current Work Status --

1. Webpage development

- A repository of references, articles, and Scriptural references that serve as resources to the focus of this group

# The Women's Initiative

Current Work Status --

1. Webpage development

- An Activities and Events section that promotes local gatherings, workshops, lectures, and presentations

# The Women's Initiative

Current Work Status --

2. White Paper—sections to include

- The Scriptural, historical and theological bases for evaluating the current status of women in Church leadership

# The Women's Initiative

Current Work Status --

2. White Paper—sections to include

- Discussion of a female diaconate with the purpose of ensuring a future Church of inclusion, equality, and grace that cooperates with God's saving action

# The Women's Initiative

Seeks equality
for all baptized Catholics --

- To determine Church leadership

- To develop inclusive ministries
  for all who are called

# The Women's Initiative

Seeks equality
for all baptized Catholics --

- To dialogue about all issues of importance to women

- To encourage structural change focused on faith-needs for all Catholics in the 21$^{st}$ Century

# The Women's Initiative

*Join Us!*

*Members of WI are committed to using our voice, our time, and our energy to: "Keep the Faith, Change the Church."*

*We are dedicated to working "Toward Shaping Our Church for the 21st Century*

# Threats to Church Stability

1. Unprecedented Exodus of Catholics

2. Treatment of Women

3. Financial Mismanagement

4. Exclusion of the Laity from Decisions

5. Squandered Moral Authority

6. Priest Shortage

# Parish Voice Communities

Ordinary Catholics who:

1. See the Church in Disarray… in Need of Change

2. Believe Road to Change Lies in Prayer and the Holy Spirit

3. Are willing to Join Together in Parish Voice Communities

# A Parish Ministry

1. Explores issues and petitions that benefit the Church & its members & pray for God's guidance

2. Undertakes parish projects and services that enhance the community we share

3. Carries out joint projects w/other affiliates & w/national VOTF

4. Becomes part of the FABRIC of the Church

# Yet a Distinct Type of Affiliate

1. Stand alone group w/in a parish, or

2. Community "cluster" representing several parishes, or

3. Prayer team extension of an existing affiliate, or

4. "Virtual" community comprising participating members of S&CG on-line intercessory prayer group

# Resources Available

1. S&CG resource center on VOTF website offers topics to explore, prayer forms & services

2. Wide variety of meeting formats: Liturgies, Litanies, Psalms, Novenas w/backgrounds, examples & references

3. On-Line intercessory prayer group

# Launching
# Parish Voice Affiliates

1. Solicit input from a cross section of members

2. Run the idea by the VOTF leadership

3. Send to active and inactive affiliates

4. Begin VOTF-wide recruitment using "Vineyard," Website, Facebook and Twitter.

5. Send Member Comments to Kevin Connors – fcon101596@optonline.net