

**DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA, U.S.A.**

*(Diocesis Sancti Petri in Florida)*

**IN THE QUINQUENNium**

**2011-2018**

**SUMMARY**

## QUINQUENNIAL SUMMARY

- I. **Pastoral and Administrative Organization of the Diocese:** Most Reverend Gregory L. Parkes is the Diocesan Bishop of St. Petersburg. No diocesan synod has been held. The Curia has 35 offices, 2 organizations, 2 councils and 19 consultative bodies. The College of Consultors has 7 priests. The Council of Priests has 31 members. The Diocesan Tribunal has four judges, four Defenders of the Bond, two Promoters of Justice, one Auditor/Psychological Expert and three Notaries. The Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle is in St. Petersburg. The five-county diocese is divided into nine vicariates (deaneries).
- II. **Identification and General Religious Situation of the Diocese:** There are approximately 479,082 Catholics in a total population of 3,237,046. There are 132 incardinated Diocesan Priests, 71 extern Diocesan Priests, 97 Religious Priests, 115 Permanent Deacons, 15 Major Seminarians and 6 Minor Seminarians, 15 Brothers, 115 Sisters, 74 Parishes, 6 Pastoral Missions and 48 Catholic Education Institutions. The common language is English. The overall economy continues to strengthen, with new technology businesses relocating within our boundaries. Poverty exists in rural areas, particularly among Mexican immigrants and in some inner-city neighborhoods. While many attend churches, divorce remains common. In the U.S., drug- and alcohol-related problems touch many families. The suicide rate among teenagers and young adults is on the rise, as is gun violence. Civil authorities respect freedom of religion.
- III. **The Ministry of the Diocesan Bishop:** I use online resources, social media, interviews with both religious and secular media outlets and personal visits to promote and safeguard the Catholic Faith. Priests feel free to share their opinions with me. I am routinely advised regarding the activities of pastoral organizations. The diocese enjoys a close relationship with local clergy of seven Eastern *sui iuris* Churches and their eparchial bishops. I have an amicable relationship with civil authorities and other ecclesial communities. I meet regularly with the bishops from the province and the country.
- IV. **Liturgical and Sacramental Life, The Cult of the Saints:** There was a decrease in Baptisms, receptions of First Eucharist, Marriages, and Confirmations. Attendance at Sunday liturgies has increased to almost 34%. Feasts of Precept have a smaller attendance. The Catholic population swells in the winter with annual tourists and seasonal residents. Sacramental life is strong in many of our parishes. With the assistance of retired and international priests, there is a sufficient number of priests. Lay people with liturgical roles are trained by the diocesan Office of Worship. The Directors of our Vocations and Permanent Diaconate Offices thoroughly investigate candidates for Holy Orders. Couples are prepared for Marriage through prescribed courses, offered by our diocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life.
- V. **Catholic Education:** The number of diocesan seminarians has decreased 34%. There are 48 Catholic schools and centers for a total of 12,745 students, with 22

priests and religious teachers and 1,064 lay teachers. Our goal is to create a vocation culture. We have no Minor or Major Seminaries within our diocesan boundaries. Permanent Deacons are educated within the diocese. The education and formation of seminarians through the Major Seminary is a five-year process, including a pastoral year in one of our diocesan parishes. Pastoral care in colleges and universities takes place on campus and in parishes. Catholic school students are eligible to participate in Federal Programs. Religion is not taught in state schools.

- VI. Catechesis:** There are 2,159 Catechists who are trained through the Diocesan Office of Religious Education. Guidelines, based on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, are written and implemented for all Catechetical Programs, dealing with all levels of Catholic Faith.
- VII. Life and Ministry of the Clergy:** The ratio of priests to faithful is one per 1,871. In addition, there are 117 Permanent Deacons. There are 74 parishes averaging 4,103 parishioners. I make priest appointments in consultation with the Priest Personnel Board. The six-year set term policy is not necessarily limited to two terms and can be renewed with my consent. Good pastoral collaboration exists between diocesan and religious order priests. Two priests have left active priestly ministry during the quinquennium. There is an active diocesan committee for continuing formation of the clergy and, since August 2018, a full-time Director of Ministry to Priests. Permanent Deacons enjoy a fruitful relationship with priests and laity. Permanent Deacons have a Continuing Education Program supervised by our diocesan Permanent Diaconate Office.
- VIII. Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life:** There are 104 Religious Priests and 30 Religious Brothers from 28 communities. There are 127 Religious Women from 31 communities. There are 6 Societies of Apostolic Life with 345 members. The vitality of the charism of religious life permeates all the apostolic works and pastoral ministries in the diocese. There is a Diocesan Religious Commission with 11 members.
- IX. Missionary Cooperation:** The faithful are very generous, contributing over 6.6 million dollars to foreign and domestic missions in the quinquennium.
- X. The Laity:** Members of the laity are active in 27 lay associations and 76 youth organizations. Formation takes place through our Lay Pastoral Ministry Institute, diocesan programs, and courses offered through a university located within the diocese, as well as online courses offered by Catholic universities throughout the U.S.
- XI. Ecumenism:** The Catholic Church enjoys good esteem by most non-Catholic ecclesial communities. Joint prayer services are held. The diocese works with ecumenical clergy associations.
- XII. Other Religions:** The diocese has good relations with the Jewish Community as well as representatives of the Muslim Community located within diocesan boundaries. A

Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies has been established in a university located in our diocese, offering numerous study days and seminars.

- XIII. Pastoral Care of the Family:** In the total populace, abortions have fallen to 9,949. The divorce rate has fallen to 10,371. The birth rate has fallen slightly to 32,840. Our Life, Justice and Advocacy Office ministers to families through parishes and other diocesan entities. Thousands of faithful are pro-active in opposing the acceptance of abortion and physician-assisted suicide in our area. Throughout parts of the U.S., laws have been implemented, limiting the practice of abortion and restricting the use of the death penalty for criminals.
- XIV. Evangelization of Culture:** The diocese remains primarily Euro-centric and conservative. Hispanic Catholics comprise the largest minority and continue to increase. The number of Asian Catholics has also increased significantly. Black Catholics, primarily African Americans and Haitians, comprise a smaller percentage, but are making a positive impact. Evangelization movements are present in parishes. Pre-marital sexual relations and cohabitation are common practice and are culturally accepted. Our diverse cultures are served by our diocesan Multicultural Ministry Office. Public displays of religiosity and popular devotions are permitted but are subject to certain limitations in government-run organizations.
- XV. Social Communications:** There is one major secular newspaper and five major secular television stations within our diocese. The most visible presence of the Catholic Church is found in our diocesan radio station and the websites and social media sites offered by our diocese and by nearly all parishes. I offer a weekly reflection on the Sunday Scripture readings and a regular podcast, where I discuss current events. Both are accessible through our diocesan radio station and website.
- XVI. Social Justice and the Social Teaching of the Church:** Social service takes place primarily through Catholic Charities, Diocese of St. Petersburg, Inc. Their services include assistance to the homeless, pregnant women, families in crisis, people with HIV/AIDS, the elderly, victims of natural disasters, the unemployed and impoverished, needy farm worker families and new immigrants to our country.
- XVII. Christian Charity and Human Development:** In each county, approximately one in seven lives at or below the poverty level. The poor include homeless living in abandoned houses and commercial buildings, migrant farm workers, immigrants, families victimized by alcohol and drug abuse, victims of AIDS, disabled and elderly. Catholic organizations which are working to assist them include Catholic Charities, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Daystar, and local parish programs. Federal programs also assist the poor. Within our diocese, there are two hospitals operated by the Veterans' Administration, dedicated to the care of military veterans, including those suffering with Post-Traumatic Stress.
- XVIII. Health Care:** No hospitals are run by the diocese. Four hospitals are run by religious institutions. Eight priests and eight religious women minister in hospitals

and nursing care facilities. Pastoral care of the sick is parish-based. Parish programs train pastoral care volunteers. Our Life, Justice and Advocacy Office handles health care issues and activities.

**XIX. Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerants:** We maintain one office to oversee ministries for Hispanics, Migrants, Vietnamese and Black Catholics. Catholic Charities, along with our diocesan Migrant Apostolate, continues to serve immigrants and refugees relocating into our diocese. The Port of Tampa is cared for by the diocesan Apostleship of the Sea ministry.

**XX. Artistic and Historical Patrimony of the Church:** Having been established in 1968, our diocese recently celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since it is relatively young, artistic patrimony is limited. Documents of historical value are carefully kept and systematically organized. Our archives are maintained by an archivist within our diocesan chancery. As needed, the diocesan Office of Worship serves in a consultative role in the construction or renovation of churches.

**XXI. Financial State of the Diocese:** The ordinary resources of the diocese are sufficient to meet the day-to-day needs of the diocese. Although our balance sheet reflects over \$115 million in Net Assets, most of these assets are restricted, endowed or otherwise encumbered funds to be used for specific restricted purposes within the diocese. There is currently a surplus of over \$10 million in unrestricted funds. The diocese operates in accordance with canons 1262-1263 and canon 1274, §3. The Finance Office is vested with the responsibility of recommending and implementing approved financial policies and procedures. Major Policies and Procedures are subject to the approval of and my Diocesan Finance Council. Acts of Extraordinary Administration are also subject to the approval of my College of Consultors. Also, our diocesan chancery is subject to an independent annual audit and financial reporting to the Metropolitan of our Province in accordance with a Resolution of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

**XXII. General Assessment and Outlook for the Future:** The growth rate of our diocese is slower in some regions than in others, with a greater increase of Hispanic and Asian families. The number of diocesan priests is slightly lower, due to a higher number of retirements than ordinations. Yet, a significant number of extern and religious priests have incardinated into the Diocese during the quinquennium. Our number of seminarians has decreased by 34%, making the promotion of vocations to the priesthood remains an even higher priority. Our diocesan pastoral plan also assigns priority to the areas of youth and young adult ministry, ministry to families and community outreach, living our baptismal call to be missionary disciples. Some have abandoned the practice of their Catholic faith in the past eight years, yet most Catholics have remained faithful throughout these difficult years and appreciate the efforts of the diocese to provide accountability and transparency in its reporting of incidents of sexual abuse by Church officials. With God's help and the continued commitment of the faithful, we can more effectively communicate and courageously live the Gospel now and in the future.