

a richness that is realizable only through the cooperative expression of differences. Cannot, then, the music of New Orleans serve as a powerful symbol of the beauty that is possible when diversity is allowed to flourish in a community that welcomes, values, nurtures and celebrates the gifts and differences of people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds? How wonderful it would be if all the churches that once had segregated areas for worship could truly become vibrant, multi-racial, multi-cultural communities of faith. What a grace it would be if we could find better ways to share and benefit by the rich and varied cultural gifts, traditions and expressions in spiritual, liturgical and pastoral life.

If Katrina should enable us to develop public schools which truly teach the mind and form children in virtue; if Katrina should make it possible for us to provide health care for all our citizens including the most vulnerable; if Katrina should goad us into truly working together for flood protection, public transportation, economic development and housing communities which are mixed-income, interracial and culturally uplifting; if Katrina should give rise to more citizens and public officials who truly want to serve the common good, then God will have enabled us to transform tragedy into victory.

I pray that we might, as a Church and a community, become a place welcoming to linguistically, racially and culturally diverse people, a place of beauty, a place of safety, a place of peace, a place for spiritual enrichment and renewal. God grant us the grace, the wisdom and the courage to realize this vision.

Pastoral Plan of Action

In order to ensure that the Church's teaching, contained in this pastoral letter, permeates ever more fully our thinking and our lives, I present the following

plan of action for our Archdiocesan administration, parishes, schools and ministries:

Commitments of the Archdiocese

1. That the Archdiocesan Office of Worship, in collaboration with the Office for Black Catholics, the Hispanic Apostolate and the Asian leadership, plan a commissioning service to dedicate ourselves to the formation of a new New Orleans that truly welcomes all as brothers and sisters.
2. That the Office of Worship, in collaboration with the Office of Black Catholics, the Hispanic Apostolate and the Asian leadership, promote liturgies throughout the Archdiocese that reflect the religious and cultural symbols, music and heritage of our many different Catholic people.
3. That Catholic Charities, in consultation with the Office of Continuing Education of the Clergy, the Office of Religious Education, the Office for Black Catholics, the Hispanic Apostolate and the Asian leadership, identify and develop effective programs in racial and cultural education for priests, deacons, archdiocesan and parish staffs, religious, teachers and catechists.
4. That the Archdiocesan Administrative Council, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources, prepare a protocol for recruiting both personnel for leadership/administrative roles as well as volunteers to serve on consulting boards so that the racial and cultural diversity and gifts of our Catholic community can be better represented.
5. That the Finance Office develop an Archdiocesan policy which promotes a more effective consideration and engagement of Black, Hispanic, Asian and Native American professionals, contractors and vendors, especially in our rebuilding effort.
6. That all Catholic entities refrain from holding meetings or events in clubs or