

STEERING COMMITTEE WORK - Cover Letter
March 14-15, 2003

The Steering Committee of the Diocese of El Camino Real was established by Diocesan Convention in the Strategic Plan adopted in convention in January 2002. The Steering Committee is composed of the bishop and two members of each major elected body of the diocese. Those selected to sit on the Steering Committee by their sending organizations are: Mr. Frank Snow and the Rev. Maly Adams from Diocesan Council, Mr. Beck Grabau and the Rev. Robert Seifert from Diocesan Corporation, Mr. Jerry Witherspoon and the Rev. Linda Taylor from Commission on Ministry, Ms. Ginger Redman and the Rev. Chris Creed from the Standing Committee, and the Rev. Ernest Cockrell, appointed chairman and continuing member by the Steering Committee.

Over the past year the Steering Committee began the task of clarifying communication and authority in its work with the bishop. The committee met three times and began working with the results of its research and data gathering about the workings of the diocese. After consulting with the bishop near the end of the year, the chairman of the Steering Committee contracted with the Rev. Al Bamsey of the Alban Institute to facilitate a two day meeting of the Steering Committee, assisted by a few others with planning skills, to develop goals and make concrete plans for its work over the coming year.

The Steering Committee met in Salinas on March 14-15, 2003 to develop its goals and make concrete plans for its work over the coming year. The chairman of the Steering Committee asked the Rev. Wendy Smith (Chair of Diocesan Council) and Dr. Gordon Gritter (President of the Standing Committee) to assist the Steering Committee with their planning skills and their wide experience in the diocese. Three members of the Strategic Planning Commission (Ms. Joanna Shreve and the Rev.'s Tom Woodward and Harriet Linville) were also invited to assist the Steering Committee because they had been involved in the creation and oversight of the Strategic Plan and had just completed an extensive survey of the diocese in regard to the wishes of the laity in participation in the very processes the Steering Committee was to address. Canon James Thomas represented the bishop's office at the meeting. After consultation with several people, the chairs of the Steering Committee and Strategic Planning felt this group would be extremely helpful in providing an overview of the many strands of the work ahead of clergy, diocesan institutions and lay people in response to the goals of the Strategic Plan, rather than having a number of different groups plan overlapping sessions.

The planning meeting began with dinner on March 14 and continued with the setting of ground rules which balanced the need for confidentiality and the desire for full disclosure. Al Bamsey led the group through a planning process using small groups, brainstorming and the materials generated through the Strategic Planning Commission. After goals were set, the committee made them as concrete as possible by assigning them start dates and completion dates and described participants, means of evaluation and a process for disseminating the work product (which is attached).

The Rev. Ernest Cockrell
Chair of the Steering Committee

STRATEGIC GOALS
To Move the Work of the Strategic Plan Forward
March 14-15,2003

The following goals were adopted by the Steering Committee of the Diocese of El Camino Real at its planning retreat, March 14-15, 2003, assisted by others described in the cover letter. These goals were set in response to our charge in the Diocesan Strategic Plan (2002) which was based on the Diocesan Evaluation done in the previous year. We will focus on the first three goals and then, when they have been accomplished, address the remaining three goals.

GOAL ONE: Build means of open and regular communication among major bodies of the diocese and between the diocese and congregations, taking into consideration the concerns presented through the Strategic Planning Commission's recent report (see attached).

PART ONE: Communication Among Major Bodies of the Diocese

Start Date: March 20, 2003 Diocesan Council Meeting

Who will do it? Diocesan Council

Who else needs to be involved? representatives of DIEM, representatives from the major elected bodies of the diocese (COM, Corporation, Diocesan Council, Standing Committee), bishop

How will you know when it is accomplished? When action plan is presented to Council.

Completion Date: June 30, 2003

PART TWO: Communication Between Diocese and Congregations (How can we best communicate different matters? What forms of communication do we need? What are appropriate mailing lists and how do people attain access to them? Role of the deaneries, etc.)

Start Date: March 20, 2003, Diocesan Council Meeting

Who will do it? Diocesan Council

Who else needs to be involved? Janis Higginbotham (Communications Officer of the diocese), Greg Kintz (Convener of the West Valley Deanery), two members from Strategic Planning Commission, a representative from SLO Deanery, other deanery representatives as needed.

How will you know when this is accomplished? Action Plan, with policy recommendations and strategy presented to Diocesan Council.

Completion Date: June 30, 2003

GOAL TWO: Develop a process to clarify and update the roles, responsibilities, authority and accountability of major bodies of the diocese and of the bishop, including the provision of opportunities for clergy and laity to understand and participate in this process. This work shall be reported to Diocesan Convention.

Start Date: June 2002.

Who will do it? Steering Committee

Who else needs to be involved? We will involve others through open meetings, by circulating drafts through a deanery process, and when feasible, inviting comments and suggestions through publishing work in process on a web site.

How will you know when the goal is accomplished? The goal will be accomplished when we have a draft report after one tri-deanery presentation, and when there exists a definition for all bodies of roles, responsibilities, accountability, authority, genesis, reporting relationships, communications (body-link, frequencies), and a policy assuring an appropriate balance of confidentiality and disclosure in the work of the bishop and major bodies of the diocese.

Completion Date: Convention 2004

GOAL THREE Develop a facilitated process to deal with personal and interpersonal pain from these past years for both clergy and laity.

Start Date: [left blank]

Who will do it? Strategic Planning will plan the process and engage the facilitator.

Who else needs to be involved? The process will involve the widest possible participation around the diocese. The four major elected bodies of the diocese will be consulted and a trained, an outside facilitator will be hired for the process.

How will you know when this goal is accomplished? We will know the goal has been reached when the focus in our diocesan life has changed from leave taking to thinking about the future in our conversations.

Completion Date: Two years into the new episcopate.

GOAL FOUR Develop a plan to broadly educate clergy and laity about opportunities and responsibilities already available in the diocesan structure and encourage their participation in them as we deal with emerging issues. This plan will also involve the development of a process that will permit all people of the diocese to learn about and understand the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.

GOAL FIVE Reflect on how we have selected our bishops and have enabled our situations with the bishops. What do we have to learn or unlearn to ensure that the good people we elect as our bishops succeed?

GOAL SIX There is no clear mission agenda for the diocese. We need to determine the overarching goals for the diocese and articulate a compelling vision for ourselves and for those who will come after us.