



## Summary

On September 14, 2011, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, the Most Reverend Richard W. Smith, Archbishop of Edmonton, released his Pastoral Letter on the Pastoral Priorities of the Archdiocese of Edmonton. He begins by reminding us of the importance and purpose of the *Nothing More Beautiful* initiative, and then sets out to demonstrate how he wishes to see the graces and blessings flowing from this endeavour translated into pastoral priorities for the future. The Archbishop draws from the very structure of the *Nothing More Beautiful* presentations the lesson that our Christian life together, as well as any planning for the future, must be based upon the secure foundation of knowing and loving Christ and following him in lives of authentic discipleship. For the months and years to come the Archbishop sees the three pastoral priorities flowing from *Nothing More Beautiful* as evangelization, faith formation, and vocations promotion. Over the next two years the Archdiocesan pastoral offices will be preparing plans and strategies for their implementation.

We invite you to read the Pastoral Letter in its entirety, found on the Archdiocesan website at <http://www.caedm.ca>.

Following is a brief summary of the Archbishop's three pastoral priorities:

1. **Evangelization** – The Church exists to evangelize, and though the Church has done this from her very beginning, in recent decades, both Blessed Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI have been calling us insistently to a “new evangelization.” What is this new evangelization? Traditionally, we have thought of evangelization as missionary outreach to those who have not yet heard the Gospel. In our day, however, the new evangelization must be directed not only to those who do not yet know Jesus Christ but also to the many baptized Christians who have grown lukewarm in their faith, have left the Church, or who, although they participate in the life of the Church, do not know her teachings or follow them only selectively. The new evangelization of today must seek to re-evangelize the baptized and welcome home to the Christian community those who have strayed.

2. **Faith Formation** – Related to the first priority of evangelization, and flowing from it, is the Church’s mission to build upon and deepen the initial conversion to Jesus Christ by forming disciples, both individually and collectively, in the faith of the Church. This will involve: introducing and deepening the peoples’ knowledge of Scripture and Tradition; aiming liturgical education at the full, conscious and active participation of the baptized; instructing people on how to walk in the footsteps of Christ through a life of conversion; encouraging a life of contemplation and prayer; engaging with our society by modelling simplicity, humility, preferential option for the poor, fraternal correction, common prayer, mutual forgiveness, communal love, and ecumenical openness; and forming Christian witnesses to bring the Gospel to their professional, cultural and social lives.
  
3. **Forming a Culture of Vocations** - The baptized share in common the universal call to holiness and mission. And while Communion in the love of Christ leads us to ever deeper conversion, it also impels us towards our brothers and sisters in lives of service; embraced and lived out in a multiplicity of ways among the people of God. Most are called by Christ to the lay apostolate. Yet from among the people of God, Christ also calls certain individuals to particular roles of leadership in the sacrament of Holy Orders or of witness in the consecrated life. Though dioceses have entrusted vocations ministry almost exclusively to a Vocations Director, this can no longer be the case. In virtue of our communion in Christ, we all bear a certain responsibility for each other, which includes a readiness to support one another in our response to the summons of Christ.

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