

# REPORT FOR THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Mission Leadership Review  
Diocesan Culture and Effectiveness

**February  
2016**

**Episcopal Diocese of Chicago  
Report on Mission Leadership Review &  
Diocesan Culture and Effectiveness  
February 2016**

**Consultant: Gay C. Jennings**

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## SECTION ONE

### INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

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Bishop Lee engaged the services of a consultant to conduct a bi-annual mission leadership review of the bishop's ministry along with a focused review and assessment of the restructuring that began in 2011.

Fourteen individuals were interviewed by the consultant including the bishop, members of the bishop's staff, and members of the Standing Committee. Interviews were telephonic and approximately forty-five minutes in length.

In 2011, approximately 70 diocesan leaders and staff were invited to complete three surveys about organizational culture and organizational effectiveness. These surveys, proprietary to and administered by Human Synergistics, Inc., have been used and validated in a wide variety of organizations and allow comparison of diocesan results with an Historical Average (results from 1084 organizations) and a Constructive Benchmark (172 organizations with constructive cultures).

These same surveys were used in 2016 and approximately 84 diocesan staff and leaders were invited to participate. Those invited included members of the Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, Commission on Ministry, Trustees, Regional Deans, the bishop, and the bishop's staff.

#### **Surveys administered:**

- 1) The **Organizational Culture Inventory (Ideal Culture)** describes the diocese's values in terms of behaviors that people believe should be expected and encouraged in order to maximize the organization's effectiveness, or, in other words, the culture that people believe would be ideal to further the mission and work of the diocese.
- 2) The **Organizational Culture Inventory (Current Culture)** identifies the current operating culture of the diocese. The current operating culture consists of the behavioral norms operative in the diocese, or in other words, what is expected of people in the organization.
- 3) The **Organizational Effectiveness Inventory** assesses factors and conditions that influence, shape, and reinforce the diocese's current operating culture and effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness describes the climate in the diocese.

#### **Of the 84 diocesan leaders and bishop's staff invited to participate:**

- 74% completed the Organizational Culture Inventory (Current Culture)
- 65% completed the Organizational Culture Inventory (Ideal Culture)
- 46% completed the Organizational Effectiveness Inventory

The participation rates are well within the normal range.

## Summary of Findings

In 2011, the qualitative data (interviews with 10 people) and the quantitative data (findings from the Organizational Culture and Organizational Effectiveness Inventories) clearly indicated dissatisfaction with the articulation of the mission and concern for a lack of customer service focus. To use more familiar ecclesiastical language, people believed that the diocese's mission was not clearly understood or communicated to congregations, lay leaders, and clergy. Furthermore, people did not experience the diocesan office as having an outward-oriented focus on serving congregations and leaders.

In 2016, the qualitative data (interviews with 14 people) and the quantitative data (findings from the Organizational Culture and Organizational Effectiveness Inventories) clearly demonstrate a significant shift and both articulation of mission and customer service focus. The scores skyrocketed in 2016 in comparison to the 2011 scores. The Human Synergistics Report states that the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago's mission and philosophy results, when averaged together, are better than the Historical Averages and are better than the Constructive Benchmarks for these measures.

The survey results and the interview data together suggest that people in the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago recognize there has been a cultural shift in the culture, are clear about the mission of the diocese, and appreciate the reorientation of the bishop's staff as a group of highly capable professionals ready and willing to engage with congregations and leaders.

The survey findings suggest work in two areas would have a positive impact on the constructive culture of the diocese: 1) interdependence/working collaboratively, and 2) clarity around goals. More details are found in this report and the Human Synergistics Report.

A common theme in the interviews was a desire to stay on course and build on the current trajectory of the diocese in terms of intense focus on congregational development, sustainability, and vitality. The single most-mentioned need in the interview is continuing and deepening work with congregations at risk. People are concerned about parishes where resources have steadily or precipitously declined. A deepening concern was expressed for ethnic congregations both in Chicago and outside the metropolitan area. Some of those interviewed indicated a need for a strategy for declining/diminishing congregations and a strategy for Latino ministry.

Those interviewed universally hold Bishop Lee in the highest regard and deeply appreciate his spiritual and pastoral leadership, his ability to formulate and communicate a vision to the diocese, his management of and care for the bishop's staff, his stewardship of the resources of the diocese, and his witness to the risen Christ bringing a message of hope and transformation to the diocese and the world beyond the diocese.

## SECTION TWO

### 2016 MISSION LEADERSHIP REVIEW

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#### **What is going well in the diocese?**

Each person interviewed readily offered three to five examples of what is going well in the diocese. Generally speaking, there is an energized atmosphere in the diocese with talk of crisis and decline supplemented by more hopefulness. There is a sense that the diocese is working hard to break out of old patterns of being the Church through creative programming, support of new ministries, and providing resources to congregations.

Significant mention was made about the focus on congregational vitality and the outward focus of the bishop's staff and their engagement with congregations and leaders. As one person noted, more and more leaders and congregations see the bishop's staff as the resource they are supposed to be. Because people of the diocese recognize the bishop and the bishop's staff as service-focused, engaged, and respectful of congregations and leaders, more requests are made of the staff. This raises potential questions about the capacity of the staff to respond to all requests and the sustainability of responsiveness. There is some evidence of this concern in the inventory data which is addressed in that section of the report.

More than half of those interviewed mentioned the improved quality of communications in the diocese. People expressed appreciation for the high quality of communications vehicles (weekly e-mail letter, diocesan magazine, website, and social media) along with the high quality and transparency of communication with the people of the diocese. People commented that the diocese is in a good moment with stories being told and excellent communication.

Fundraising and development efforts are notable and have impacted the diocese positively.

Single mentions included work on racial reconciliation, more effective governing bodies, support for multicultural ministries, the restructured ordination process, and the welcome and incorporation of the former Diocese of Quincy.

## **What needs attention in the diocese?**

The single most mentioned need is continuing and deepening work with congregations at risk. People are concerned about parishes where resources have steadily or precipitously declined. Some people interviewed expressed deepening concern for ethnic congregations both in Chicago and outside the metropolitan area. Some of those interviewed indicated a need for a strategy for declining/diminishing congregations and a strategy for Latino ministry.

A little less than half of the people interviewed suggested that it may be time to assess the effectiveness of the way the bishop's staff is structured. A couple of people suggested that the availability of the bishop for conversation is reduced due to some form of gatekeeping or filtering of information. People want the staff to continue to build bridges between the congregations and the bishop's staff, noting there are still some congregations needing focused attention.

A sustainable financial model to fund the ministries of the diocese coupled with fundraising efforts were mentioned as areas needing ongoing attention and development.

Single mentions included ongoing work in melding the two cultures of Chicago and Quincy, assisting more affluent parishes with demographic shifts leading to fewer people willing to take on leadership roles in the parish, assistance for clergy to imagine next steps, and evangelism.

## **What does Bishop Lee do best?**

People recognize Bishop Lee as deeply spiritual and pastoral. He is described as an inspirational leader who calls people to faithful discipleship, generating enthusiasm and love for Jesus and the Church. He is an excellent preacher and liturgist as well as a compassionate pastor.

Everyone interviewed commented on Bishop Lee's many gifts and skills for leadership, management, and interpersonal relationships. One person summed up his interpersonal skills by noting he has the ability to enter the room and connect with a majority of the majority of people present whether or not they are power players. He empowers others and shares power well. Other comments included his ability to consult, listen, collaborate, motivate, and delegate. Bishop Lee is regarded as a consummate fundraiser and a wise steward of diocesan resources.

Even into the ninth year of his episcopacy, there continues to be a significant wellspring of good will and positive energy for Bishop Lee both as a person and as the bishop. This was a significant factor when restructuring and reorganization began in 2011 and continues to bode well for the future as cultural and organizational shifts become more embedded in the fabric of the diocese.

## **Where do you want Bishop Lee to focus his time and energy?**

Those interviewed want Bishop Lee to continue serving the diocese as a spiritual and pastoral leader because that leadership is deeply appreciated and critical to the life of the diocese. Because Bishop Lee is an inspirational leader, people want him to be present throughout the diocese in congregations and other settings. A hope was expressed that he might give some time to smaller gatherings of clergy and lay leaders outside of governance meetings.

People want Bishop Lee to continue to focus on congregational development and vitality and help congregations thrive and grow, continuing to cast that vision for the diocese.

A number of people noted Bishop Lee's superb ability to raise funds for the mission and ministry of the diocese. As one person said, people love to give the bishop money. There was a stated desire for this to continue, especially as it relates to providing resources and programs for congregational health, sustainability, and vitality.

Concern was noted about the impending retiring of a member of the Executive Team with hope expressed that a person with the same kind of strength and appeal be called to work with the bishop. Additionally, a few people expressed concern that there seems to be a slight return to some staff working in silos which was a significant concern in 2011. This is confirmed by the data from the surveys and is addressed in that section of this report.

A few people said they would like Bishop Lee to continue to be concerned about social justice with attention to gun violence, immigration reform, and full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

As in previous reviews, people continue to express concern for the bishop's health and wellbeing. People admire and care about the bishop and hope he will continue to be attentive to creating time for himself and his family.

### **SECTION THREE REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF 2011 RESTRUCTURING EFFORTS**

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Two questions in the Mission Leadership Review addressed the restructuring efforts begun in 2011. The narrative coming out of the interviews demonstrates that cultural changes have occurred, which is confirmed by the Organizational Culture and Organizational Effectiveness Inventories.

#### **Restructuring of the diocese began in 2011. Four years later, what is different now?**

The prevalent theme expressed in the 2011 interviews was the hope that change would happen and that Bishop Lee would lead that change. This was expressed in a variety of ways and with a sense of urgency. There was a cry for strong and assertive leadership. Areas of change mentioned included: a clearly articulated vision for the diocese, restructuring the diocesan staff, and the bishop's voice becoming a significant force addressing public issues.

In 2016, those interviewed strongly expressed their opinion that the culture of the diocese has changed, morale is very good, and the mission of addressing congregational vitality is operative and recognized.

Particularly noteworthy are the substantial number of comments about the bishop's staff:

- people expect and get quality and response to calls for help
- energy in the staff is clearly more positive; staff are available and responsive; I get answers; I know who is doing what; at meetings, staff greet us, provide great support and resources; excellent communication
- there is good energy between staff members; they are working well together; positive interaction
- more outward focus; staff are out in the parishes; culture has changed dramatically
- competent staff who share God with us; a needed change
- the staff give an incredible sense of competency and resources; we learn something when they are with us
- the image of the bishop's staff has changed; there is more openness and a greater affinity to work with the staff
- positive change in attitude, capability, and professionalism

Some people noted that fewer staff members are doing more work raising questions of sustainability and capacity. A few members of the staff noted that some working in silos has returned, an observation confirmed by the data from the inventories.

There were other positive comments about changes in the relationship between the diocese and St. James Cathedral, vastly improved communications, the positive impact of the Nicholas Center and how the diocesan building has changed for the better in service of the diocese, and the sense that diversity is not novelty but necessity.

## **What would you like to be different in four more years?**

When asked what people would like to be different in four more years, the prevailing theme in the responses was the hope that there would be continued and deepened progress in addressing the vitality and sustainability of congregations with vitality and excellence not just something dreamed but attained. Strategies for new Latino ministries and congregations at risk will have been created and progress made. People would like the change in the outward focus of the diocesan office to be embedded in the culture and seen as normative rather than unusual. People hope for system-wide thriving along with deeper and broader engagement in the common life of the diocese. A more stable financial base with a growing endowment was mentioned.

More than half of respondents hoped there would be a strategy for supporting and responding to congregations at risk. A recognition that congregations can thrive no matter where they are in the congregational life cycle was expressed as a hope.

Some of the respondents hope that race and racial reconciliation will have been addressed in substantive and systemic ways.

Single mentions were made regarding creation of signature programs for working with congregations; at least two people working on transitions; one or two new church plants; assistance offered to congregations in fundraising.

## SECTION FOUR

### ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE & ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS INVENTORIES

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In 2011, organizational culture and organizational effectiveness inventories, proprietary to Human Synergistics, Inc., were administered to diocesan leaders and the bishop's staff. The results created a baseline from which the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago can measure improvement over time. The inventories, described in the Introduction, were administered again in late 2015 and early 2016.

Graphic representations of some of the data are included in an appendix.

#### A. IDEAL CULTURE

The Organizational Culture Inventory measures three types of organizational cultures: Constructive, Passive/Defensive, and Aggressive/Defensive.

**CONSTRUCTIVE** – members are encouraged to interact with others and approach work in ways that will help them meet their higher-order satisfaction needs, and are characterized by *achievement, self-actualizing, humanistic-encouraging, and affiliative* styles. Constructive cultures are generally collaborative, cooperative, participative, supportive, and relationship-oriented.

**PASSIVE/DEFENSIVE** – members believe they must interact with people in ways that will not threaten their own security, and are characterized by *approval, conventional, dependent, and avoidance* styles. Passive/Defensive cultures are generally conservative, bureaucratic, non-participative, and conflict avoidant with centralized decision-making and a negative reward system.

**AGGRESSIVE/DEFENSIVE** – members are expected to approach their work in forceful ways to protect their status and security, and are characterized by *oppositional, power, competitive, and perfectionistic* styles. Aggressive/defensive cultures are generally confrontational and non-participative.

The Ideal Culture describes the diocese's values in terms of behaviors that respondents believe should be expected and encouraged in order to maximize the organization's effectiveness, or, in other words, the culture that people believe would be ideal to further the mission and work of the diocese. Culture may be defined as shared beliefs and values that lead to norms and expectations for members.

Respondents reviewed 120 statements which described some of the behavioral styles that members of an organization are expected to adopt in carrying out their work and interacting with others.

There was significant agreement among respondents regarding the Ideal Culture for the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago in 2011 and 2016 with the majority of respondents choosing the **Humanistic-Encouraging** and **Self-Actualizing** as either the primary or secondary style.

- 1) **Humanistic-Encouraging** (Constructive Cluster), which involves expectations for being **supportive, constructive, and open to influence** in dealings with one another. Organizations with a Humanistic-Encouraging culture place a high value on people. The philosophy embraces the notion that **continuing growth, development, and personal well-being** of members is beneficial to individuals and the organization as a whole.
- 2) **Self-Actualizing** (Constructive Cluster), which involves expectations for gaining **enjoyment** from work, **personal development**, and taking on **new and interesting activities**. Organizations with a Self-Actualizing culture value **creativity, innovation, and high quality products and services**.

## B. CURRENT OPERATING CULTURE

### 2011

Respondents identified the primary and secondary styles of the current operating culture as **Humanistic and Encouraging** and **Affiliative** which are found in a **Constructive Culture** cluster. **Humanistic and Encouraging** is characterized as **supportive, constructive, and open to influence in dealings with one another**. **Affiliative** is characterized by **constructive personal relationships, personal satisfaction of members, and a low stress level**.

The primary gaps between the Ideal Culture and the Operating Culture were found in the **Achievement** and **Avoidance** styles.

The items in the **Achievement** style with the largest gaps included **pursuit of a standard of excellence, the setting of moderately difficult goals, and knowing the business**.

The secondary gap is **Avoidance** and is found in the **Passive/Defensive Culture** cluster. The **Avoidance** items with the largest gaps included **make popular rather than necessary decisions, take few chances, and wait for others to act first**.

The survey results reinforced the interview findings in which avoidance was a recurring theme. Coupled with dissatisfaction in the areas of **Articulation of Mission** and **Customer Service Focus** (see **Causal Factors** in the next subsection) was a sense of urgency that change needed to happen and people were impatient.

## 2016

As in 2011, respondents identified the primary and secondary styles of the Current Operating Culture as **Humanistic and Encouraging** and **Affiliative** which are found in the **Constructive Culture** cluster. **Humanistic and Encouraging** is characterized as **supportive, constructive, and open to influence in dealings with one another**. The **Affiliative** style is characterized by **constructive personal relationships, personal satisfaction of members, and a low stress level**.

The primary gaps between the Ideal Culture and the Current Operating Culture were found in the **Approval** and **Achievement** styles. The primary gap is **Approval** found in the **Passive/Defensive Culture** cluster. The **Approval** items with the largest gaps include: **make popular rather than necessary decisions, take few chances, and wait for others to act first**.

The secondary gap is **Achievement** found in the **Constructive Culture** cluster. The items with the largest gaps include: **the pursuit of a standard of excellence, the setting of moderately difficult goals, and knowing the business**.

The difference between 2011 and 2016 is striking. The **Avoidance** style is significantly reduced and is no longer a primary or secondary gap. And, even though **Achievement** is identified as the secondary gap, there was a statistically significant increase in the **Achievement** style since 2011. As will be seen in the next section on Causal Factors, the scores suggest focused attention is needed in the areas of **Interdependence** and **Goal Clarity**. Should attention be directed to these two factors which shape and reinforce the culture, a boost in the **Achievement** style is probable and would likely have a positive impact for individuals, groups, and the diocese as a whole.

### C. CAUSAL FACTORS

**Causal Factors** are those things that shape and reinforce the current operating culture and impact the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago's effectiveness. The **Organizational Effectiveness Inventory** assesses thirty-one specific factors found to be causally related to culture. Five general categories are assessed:

- Mission and Philosophy (**Articulation of Mission & Customer Service Focus**)
- Structures
- Systems
- Technology (Job Design)
- Skills/Qualities

Two critical causal factors – **Articulation of Mission** and **Customer Service Focus** - were identified as below average in 2011. Interviews underscored the findings of the OEI. **Articulation of Mission** is characterized as the extent to which the organization's mission is clearly defined, illustrated by members, communicated by management, and understood by the organization. **Customer Service Focus** is

characterized as the extent to which members believe that they are responsible for identifying and satisfying the needs of customers or clients.

The 2016 survey findings show that there has been a significant shift in both **Articulation of Mission** and **Customer Service Focus** (in the Mission and Philosophy cluster of Causal Factors). The scores skyrocketed in 2016 in comparison to the 2011 scores. The Human Synergistics Report states that the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago's mission and philosophy results, when averaged together, are better than the Historical Averages and are better than the Constructive Benchmarks for these measures.

Most of the people interviewed in 2016 made positive comments about the mission of the diocese (they could easily articulate the mission of congregational development and vitality) and they routinely praised the bishop and bishop's staff for their outward focus and commitment to providing resources, information, guidance, and expertise to congregations and leaders. The interviews suggest a significant turnaround, and the data confirms a significant shift from disappointment to appreciation and trust.

The 2011 report given to Bishop Lee made a dozen recommendations including items related to vision and mission, congregational focus, leveraging the bishop's best gifts and skills, reorganization of the staff, and concentrating on the diocesan office as a service-providing organization. Almost every recommendation was implemented over the last five years leading and can likely be viewed as contributing factors to the change from 2011 to 2016.

The most favorable items in Causal Factors include **Upward Communication** and **Organizational Bases of Power**.

**Upward Communication** refers to the effectiveness with which information is sent upward from members and employees to people in higher-level positions. Put another way, diocesan leaders and staff believe their ideas, opinions, and information is being heard and received by those in top-level positions including the bishop.

**Organizational Bases of Power** refers to the extent to which members and staff are influenced because of their supervisors'/managers' control over outcomes. A favorable score for this item means respondents likely feel free from manipulation or coercion of an inappropriate nature.

The least favorable items in Causal Factors include **Interdependence** and **Goal Clarity**.

**Interdependence** refers to the degree to which people must make decisions and cooperate with others in order to carry out their jobs. The interviews indicated some mild concern that some people and groups may be beginning to work more separately rather than collaboratively. The data confirms this. The data refers to both members of the staff and diocesan leaders, so it isn't valid to suggest this is a challenge only for the bishop's staff. It could be that as the bishop's staff has become more responsive to and engaged with congregations and leaders, there are more requests for assistance and resources. This raises

the question of capacity – are there sufficient staff to accomplish the work requested by congregations and lay leaders?

The bishop and others may need to look at how the work is structured among staff, diocesan leaders, and governing bodies. Staff positions may need to be reviewed and possibly re-engineered. Governing bodies may need to look at how they function interdependently with the bishop, the staff, and especially other governing bodies.

The second least favorable causal factor was **Goal Clarity**. **Goal Clarity** refers to the extent to which goals are clear and specific rather than somewhat clear and ambiguous. Currently, members of the bishop's staff set individual goals on an annual basis. One aspect of goal clarity which could be addressed in the future is for individual goals to be aligned with team/department goals and corporate goals established by the bishop in consultation with others. In a similar fashion, governing bodies may wish to set annual goals if they do not already to so. Such goal setting would appropriately be done in consultation with the bishop in order to ensure alignment with diocesan goals.

#### **D. OUTCOMES**

The Organizational Effectiveness Inventory also assessed the effectiveness of the diocese at the individual, group, and organizational levels along criteria that influence long-term performance.

- **Individual Outcomes** – The data is a measurement of the extent to which the diocese has a positive, rather than a negative, impact on its members. Positive measures include role clarity, motivation, satisfaction, and intention to stay. Negative measures include role conflict, stress, and job insecurity.
- **Group Outcomes** – The data is a measurement of the extent to which the diocese effectively integrates and coordinates the efforts of its members and units. Specific measures include intra-unit teamwork and cooperation, inter-unity coordination, and department-level quality.
- **Organizational Outcomes** – The data is a measurement of the diocese's effectiveness with respect to its external environment. Specific measures include organizational-level quality and external adaptability.

The most favorable scores for the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago in 2011 were **Intention to Stay** and **Stress**. **Intention to Stay** refers to the extent to which members plan to remain with the organization. **Stress** refers to the extent to which members feel they are being pushed beyond their normal range of comfort by organizational demands, pressures, or conflicts. On this metric the diocese scored low compared to other organizations. A low score indicates lower stress and is generally regarded as an indicator of a favorable culture.

The least favorable scores for the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago in 2011 were **External Adaptability** and **Organizational-Level Quality**. **External Adaptability** refers to the extent to which the organization effectively recognizes and responds to changes in its external environment. **Organizational-Level Quality** refers the extent to which members believe the organization provides high quality services and products to external clients. The change in **Outcomes** from 2011 to 2016 is notable. The Human Synergistics Report states that overall, Episcopal Diocese of Chicago's results along the positive individual outcomes (when averaged together) are better than the Historical Averages and are better than the Constructive Benchmarks. In addition, the results along the negative individual outcomes are better than the Historical Averages and are better than the Constructive Benchmarks.

Of particular note is the significant positive change in the scores for **External Adaptability** and **Organizational-Level Quality** which were the least favorable scores in 2011. The survey respondents believe in the high level of quality of services provided by the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, and they believe the diocese has the ability to respond to changes in the environment, a critical quality for the 21<sup>st</sup> century Church.

## E. SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTION

At the request of the consultant, Human Synergistics added a supplemental question. There was a positive increase in the extent to which respondents believe the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago is on the right track.

*To what extent do you believe the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago is on the right track?*

### 2011

| Q1  | N     |         | Mean | Std. Deviat |
|---|-------|---------|------|-------------|
|   | Valid | Missing |      |             |
| To what extent do you believe the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago is on the right track? | 65    | 0       | 3.51 | 1.033       |

### 2016

| Q1  | N     |         | Mean | Std. Deviat |
|---|-------|---------|------|-------------|
|   | Valid | Missing |      |             |
| To what extent do you believe the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago is on the right track? | 62    | 0       | 4.23 | .913        |

The scale was 1. Strongly Disagree to 5. Strongly Agree

\*For the standard deviation the smaller the number, the higher the agreement.