



# Hawaii Catholic Herald

Diocesan Road Map to the future: July 24, 2009

**MARVIN CHOY AND DIANE LAMOSAO**

## **The church at the crossroads of technology**

The Annual Diocesan Information Systems Conference (DISC) took place June 2-5 in New Orleans. DISC meets each year to promote the spiritual growth of the members, provide data processing expertise and professional service to the local and national church, encourage development of professional relationships, and facilitate the free exchange of ideas and information. It is an opportunity for technology professionals from different dioceses to gather to learn about technology, best practices, and the application of technology in the church. Catholic social teaching calls all of us to be stewards of the goods of the earth, and also the common good and community of people. It is with these teachings in mind that the theme of this year's conference was "Green IT: Moving, Heaven and Earth Closer."

Auxiliary Bishop Frank K. Caggiano of Brooklyn in his keynote address "Go Out to all the Nations, Preach the Good News and Bring Your Laptop!" spoke about how technology is changing the very structure and fabric of human society. Whether it is data sharing, the reach of the Internet, or computer software, there are few people whose lives have not been touched or even fundamentally altered by technology. Bishop Caggiano suggested that technology is a powerful tool that can serve as a key function in overall strategic planning by creating and maintaining an accurate picture of the diocese. He discussed how information technology (IT) has reshaped the way the church plans by allowing the church to better understand the societal, demographic and financial forces that effect it on the local and diocesan levels. He also highlighted that technology should be used to effectively coordinate efforts to address the needs of parishes and schools.

During DISC, we learned how dioceses are using technology in innovative ways to communicate and collaborate. We spoke with our counterparts in other dioceses about the challenges and successes of selecting, implementing, and managing IT systems. In addition to the technical knowledge shared at DISC, we gained insight on how we can use technology to provide greater

efficiency to the diocese and ultimately to the parishes and schools.

The use of technology plays an integral role in the Diocesan Road Map. We are looking for new and improved ways to use technology to help us implement and sustain the Road Map. The use of teleconferencing has a practical application in our diocese which minimizes the cost associated with travel. On June 29, we had a live webcast of the ordination of Father Jon Cabico. These are just some of the examples technology can be used to welcome and reach out to people in the church. As we evaluate and implement tools, applications, systems and technologies to serve as part of the functional infrastructure of the diocese, we must keep in mind how technology serves the broader mission of the church which is to give Witness to Jesus.

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