“Building a Bridge to the Future”

2016 Diocese of Bridgeport

Parish Pastoral Plan Submission

General Guidelines

1. **Purpose of a Parish Pastoral Plan:**
   1. This guide is designed to help a Planning Task Force develop and implement a two-year strategic plan of action designed to effectively address the challenges faced by the parish. The challenges in question are those identified by the Delegates and Diocesan Bishop through the Fourth Diocesan Synod.
   2. The goal of a parish pastoral plan is to enable each parish to become more vibrant and sustainable in order to support the spiritual life of the parishioners and provide more effective pastoral ministry.
2. **Planning Task Force:**
   1. Each pastor has been asked to assemble a Planning Task Force consisting of lay leaders, including some members of the Pastoral Council, Finance Council and Parish Trustees, to assist him in drafting his parish’s pastoral plan.
   2. All those who served on the Planning Task Force are to be listed in the first section of the parish pastoral plan.
3. **Priorities to be Addressed:**
   1. During the Fourth Diocesan Synod – five global challenges were discerned by the Delegates. Parishes are asked to address at least two of the identified challenges in their pastoral plan:
      1. Liturgy and Worship
      2. Family Life
      3. Evangelization
      4. Leadership
      5. Catechesis and Education
   2. In addition, Bishop Caggiano has asked each parish to look at the following three temporalities and administrative areas and articulate goals to address at least one of the following:
      1. Finances
      2. Buildings and Facilities
      3. Community Life
4. **Process:**
   1. Before creating a pastoral plan, the members of the Task Force should:
      1. Review the parish sacramental and financial snapshots provided by the Office of Strategic and Pastoral Planning.
      2. Parishes were also asked to submit a Parish Self-Assessment to the Office by May 15, 2016.
      3. In reviewing the issues highlighted by the parish snapshots and the Parish Self-Assessment, Planning Task Force members should begin to identify concrete steps that will effectively address each priority area and assemble a plan consisting of specific goals and action steps, to be realized over a two-year period of time, providing a comprehensive framework to effectively address the challenges.
   2. The deadline for submitting a parish’s strategic plan is **September 30, 2016**. Once completed, the plan should be sent via email to the Director of Strategic and Pastoral Planning, Patrick Turner, [pturner@diobpt.org](mailto:pturner@diobpt.org), for review by Bishop Caggiano and the Office of Strategic and Pastoral Planning.
   3. After reviewing the plan, the Bishop will correspond directly with the pastor regarding his decision.
   4. It is anticipated that all parish plans will be publicly available on the Diocesan website after the Bishop has reviewed the plan.
5. **Implementation of your Parish Plan:**
   1. Each parish will be asked to periodically evaluate the progress it makes towards realizing its strategic goals and action steps. It is highly recommended that the Task Force that created the parish’s Pastoral plan also monitor this progress.
   2. The Parish Pastoral Plan should be considered a “living” document. Task Force members will be asked to review and evaluate their submitted plan on at least an annual basis and make adjustments in the plan as goals are achieved and new goals come to the forefront.
   3. Each parish will be given the full two-year timeframe to address the challenges articulated in the pastoral plan. In the event that a parish is unable to take steps to address its strategic goals, further conversations with the Office of Strategic and Pastoral Plan and the Bishop will take place.

# Potential Questions for Discernment by the Parish Planning Task Force:

1. **In light of the parish data snapshots and the Parish Self-Assessment, in what areas should the parish focus in the coming two years?**
2. **If the parish participated in the Disciple Maker Index, are there particular issue areas that were identified by the survey respondents? Do those needs align with the areas identified by the Planning Task Force?**
3. **How can we engage the broader parish community in a discussion about priorities for the parish for the next two years? (Focus groups, Parish Assemblies, Pulpit and/or Bulletin announcements, etc.)**
4. **How will we address any financial costs involved in implementing our goals?**
5. **Who will be responsible for leading the implementation of the action steps?**
6. **What will be the timeline for the action items?**

**Choose two priority areas from among the five Synod Global Challenges and one from the Temporalities and Administrative Challenges –**

**Synod Global Challenges – Approved March 21, 2015**

1. **Liturgy and Worship: Every Catholic is called to full, conscious, and active participation (see: *Sacrosanctum Concilium #*14, 41, 48) in the worship life of the Church.** 
   1. *We must foster an attitude of welcome and hospitality that would accompany every occasion of prayer and worship.*
   2. *Special attention must be given to the preparation and delivery of homilies that are relevant, inspirational, engaging and challenging to those who attend Mass and other sacramental celebrations.*
   3. *The cultural and ethnic diversity of each community needs to be reflected and celebrated in its worship life, as well as in all diocesan events.*
   4. *Every ministry associated with the celebration of the sacraments must be revitalized.*
2. **Family Life:** **There is a need to strengthen and support family life, and to empower and assist parents as the primary teachers of the Catholic Faith.** 
   1. *We call for the evangelization of all parents so that they may share their relationship with Jesus and the Church with their children.*
   2. *Parents must be provided education, formation and ongoing support in their dual roles as parents and as the first catechists of their children.*
   3. *Programs and resources must be made available to help families to strengthen the bonds of unity amongst its members.*
   4. *Families that are confronting particular stressors, such as financial difficulties, employment issues, discrimination, immigration status, addiction, grieving and marital breakup, must be afforded effective pastoral care.*
3. **Evangelization:** **We must create concrete plans for evangelization through our parishes, schools, ecclesial movements, and communities.** 
   1. *We call every Catholic to ongoing missionary discipleship.*
   2. *There is an urgent need to create a variety of strategies to engage those Catholics who are marginalized to participate in the life of the Church, and to respect the diversity within our communities of faith.*
   3. *People of good will are invited to be evangelized through our effective witnessing of the Gospel*.

1. **Leadership:** **There is a need to continually call, form, and support clergy, religious, and laity in active leadership roles in the life of the Church.** 
   1. *We must develop a culture that promotes and supports vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life in our Diocese.*
   2. *The ongoing education, formation and support of our clergy is vital, to promote holy and healthy living, and to assist them in their leadership roles*
   3. *Continual efforts must be made to assist Catholics to discern their personal gifts and talents, and to share those gifts with the larger community of faith in a spirit of stewardship.*
   4. *Opportunities and structures must be created to support the ongoing training and formation of lay leaders in our Diocese*.
2. **Catechesis and Education:** **We must renew the ministry of faith formation throughout our Diocese, leading each person to a deepening relationship with the Lord Jesus in and through His Church.** 
   1. *There must be a clear, authentic and faithful teaching of our Catholic faith.*
   2. *Opportunities for faith formation must be offered in holistic and age-appropriate ways.*
      1. *promote knowledge of faith,*
      2. *liturgical education,*
      3. *moral formation,*
      4. *teaching to pray,*
      5. *education for community life,*
      6. *missionary initiation* (1997 *General Directory for Catechesis*).
   3. *We recognize the need for more effective faith formation for our teenagers and young adults.*
   4. *Ongoing opportunities must be offered for all the baptized to grow in their prayer life.*

**Temporalities and Administrative Challenges**

1. **Finances: The parish needs to be fiscally stable and sustainable.**
   1. *Does the parish have a balanced operational budget?*
   2. *Are the trends of giving increasing, in order to support the future activities and mission of the parish? What are the per-capita giving trends?*
   3. *How does the parish plan to address any financial challenges that may arise in the future?*
2. **Buildings and Facilities: The parish buildings need to be in an appropriate condition to support the mission of the parish and its activities.**
   1. *Is there deferred maintenance that must be addressed in the next two years?*
   2. *Are there long-term capital improvements that need to be a priority for the parish?*
   3. *How will the parish pay for these buildings and facilities needs?*
3. **Community Life: Each parish must recognize and celebrate the myriad ways in which the broader family of faith comes together.** 
   1. *How are newcomers incorporated into community life?*
   2. *Is there a space for regular social interaction after Mass?*
   3. *Is the cultural, ethnic and racial diversity of its people respected and celebrated?*
   4. *Are opportunities found to bring the communities together on a regular basis?*

**Specific Instructions for Completing the Pastoral Plan**

1. **Format:** A Parish Pastoral Plan consists of two parts:
   1. Part One: Introductory Information
   2. Part Two: Identification of Priority Area, Statement of Goals, Action steps, and identification of person responsible for action steps
2. **General Instructions:**
   1. Please complete **all** information as completely as possible.
   2. An **electronic** version of the complete worksheet can be found at: <http://www.bridgeportdiocese.org/strategic-planning/home>
3. **Part One: Introductory Information:**
   1. Please list all those who are members of the Task Force and their leadership position in the parish.
   2. If the parish has a mission statement, please include that on the cover page.
4. **Part Two: Statement of Goals and Action steps**
   1. The Bishop has asked that the parish address at least two of the challenges articulated by the Delegates of the Fourth Diocesan Synod. In the appropriate section, please list each challenge chosen with an adequate description as to why this particular challenge was chosen. You are asked to use a separate worksheet for each challenge.
   2. The Bishop has also asked that a brief statement be made as to the status of parish life under the challenges that will not be addressed by this initial pastoral plan.
   3. The Task Force must draft a series of goals and action steps designed to effectively respond to the challenge within a priority area. Please note the following:
      1. A **goal** is a brief statement of what is to be accomplished to comprehensively address the challenge.
         1. There may be more than one goal for each challenge. If so, each goal must have its own series of action steps.
      2. An **action step** is designed to help move the parish, over a specific period of time, to realize its overall goal.
         1. An action step should:
            1. Be clear and measurable
            2. Clearly identify an accountable parish leader for its implementation
            3. List any diocesan offices that the parish believes can offer assistance in accomplishing the objective
         2. There may also be more than one action step for each goal. If so, use the space provided and the additional space worksheet to provide additional details.

* + 1. The Planning Task Force is also encouraged to consider the financial costs involved in implementing the goals and action steps and if possible, to identify those costs.
  1. **Part Three: Signature:** The pastor is asked to sign the Parish Pastoral Plan before submitting the document to the Office of Strategic and Pastoral Planning.
  2. Please **email** an electronic copy of the completed parish Pastoral plan by **September 30, 2016** to the Vicar for Strategic Planning, [frdogali@diobpt.org](mailto:frdogali@diobpt.org) and the Director of Strategic and Pastoral Planning at [pturner@diobpt.org](mailto:pturner@diobpt.org)
  3. Please contact the Office of Strategic and Pastoral Planning at 203-416-1633 if there are any questions regarding utilizing the reporting tool.

Diocese of Bridgeport Parish Pastoral Plan

“Building a Bridge to the Future”

Part One: Introductory Information

**Parish:**

**Pastor:**

**Date:**

**Parish Task Force Members: Leadership Position:**

Add additional lines if there are more Task Force members

**Signature of the Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Pastoral Challenge #1: Worksheets for Parish Goals and Action Steps

***Please note: One Worksheet must be completed for each pastoral challenge to be addressed.***

1. **Pastoral Challenge to be addressed:**

* Catechesis and Education
* Evangelization
* Family Life
* Leadership
* Liturgy and Worship

1. **Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:**
2. **Statement of the First Goal to be achieved:**
   1. **Action Step# 1 to achieve the Goal:**

**Summary Information for Action Step #1:**

* Timeline for completion :

* Responsible person/Task Force:
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any):

***(Please complete this page only if the parish plan proposes additional action steps to realize its First Goal)***

* 1. **Action Step #2 to achieve Goal:**

**Summary Information for Action Step #2:**

* Timeline for completion :

* Responsible person/Task Force:
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any):
  1. **Action Step #3 to achieve Goal:**

**Summary Information for Action Step #3:**

* Timeline for completion:

* Responsible person/Task Force:
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any):

***(Please repeat the sections above if you propose additional action steps to complete First Goal)***

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Pastoral Challenge #2: Worksheets for Parish Goals and Action Steps

***Please note: One Worksheet must be completed for each pastoral challenge to be addressed.***

1. **Pastoral Challenge to be addressed:**

* Catechesis and Education
* Evangelization
* Family Life
* Leadership
* Liturgy and Worship

1. **Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area**:
2. **Statement of the Second Goal to be achieved:**
   1. **Action Step# 1 to achieve Second Goal:**

**Summary Information for Action Step #1:**

* Timeline for completion:
* Responsible person/Task Force:
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any):

***(Please complete this page only if the parish plan proposes additional action steps to realize its Second Goal)***

* 1. **Action Step #2 to achieve Second Goal:**

**Summary Information for Action Step #2:**

* Timeline for completion :

* Responsible person/Task Force:
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):

* Projected Costs (if any):
  1. **Action Step #3 to achieve Second Goal:**

**Summary Information for Action Step #3:**

* Timeline for completion :

* Responsible person/Task Force:
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any):

***(Please repeat the sections above if you propose additional action steps to complete Second Goal)***

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Temporalities and Administrative Challenge: Worksheets for Parish Goals and Action Steps

***Please note: One Worksheet must be completed for each temporalities challenge to be addressed***

1. **Temporalities and Administrative Challenge to be addressed:**

* Buildings and Facilities
* Community Life
* Finances

1. **Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:**
2. **Statement of the Third Goal:**
   1. **Action Step# 1 to achieve Third Goal:**

**Summary Information for Action Step #1:**

* Timeline for completion:
* Responsible person/Task Force:
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any):

***(Please complete this page only if the parish plan proposes additional action steps to realize its Third Goal)***

1. **Action Step #2 to achieve Third Goal:**

**Summary Information for Action Step #2:**

* Timeline for completion:

* Responsible person/Task Force:

* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):

* Projected Costs (if any):

* 1. **Action Step #3 to achieve Third Goal:**

**Summary Information for Action Step #3:**

* Timeline for completion:

* Responsible person/Task Force:
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any):

***(Please repeat the sections above if you propose additional action steps to complete Third Goal)***

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**Optional Question:**

1. **If you had the ability to respond to a third pastoral challenge, which would you choose and why?**