

# Diocese of Bridgeport Parish Pastoral Plan “Building a Bridge to the Future”

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## Part One: Introductory Information

<b>Parish:</b>	Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church – Wilton
<b>Pastor:</b>	Fr. Reginald D. Norman
<b>Date:</b>	August 18, 2016

<b>Parish Task Force Members:</b>	<b>Leadership Position:</b>
1) Fr. Reginald Norman	Pastor
2) Kathleen Rooney	D.R.E.
3) Kathy Rooney	Parishioner/Synod Delegate
4) Paul Niche	Ushers Organizer
5) Tony Ruggi	Past Grand Knight – K. of C.
6) Marie DeSantis	Parishioner
7) Brian Sullivan	Finance Committee - Chair
8)	
9)	
10)	
11)	
12)	

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.*

A. Pastoral Challenge to be addressed:

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

B. Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:

The Disciple Maker Index survey results and the initial Self-assessment indicate that this is an area of great concern for our parish. In addition, it was felt by the committee, that the better people understand their faith, the more comfortable they are with sharing it and working to Evangelize the faith to others.

C. Statement of the First Goal to be achieved:

Re-evaluate our current programs of Catechesis and Education and modify them to meet the needs of the community as it continues to grow.

a. Action Step# 1 to achieve the Goal:

Host a listening session for the parish community to allow them to voice their needs, concerns and ideas. Recognize that the best solution will come from within and allow a partnership with the parishioners to develop and deliver a new and innovative long term plan to change the current offerings.

- Provide programs like “Caffeine with the Clergy” for parents during CCD classes.
- Redevelop CCD program for youth.
  - Consider moving Confirmation to 9<sup>th</sup> grade to align with neighboring parishes and lighten the load on high school students. Confirmation preparation classes would be integrated into the 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum.

- Allow high schoolers to be lectors and Eucharistic Ministers at their school and church at an earlier age by confirming in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Start a class to train the parents what their children are learning and to be Catechists.
- Make more programs available online, similar to the online curriculums at many colleges (for parents and students).
- More programs to explain the faith including:
  - Theology on Tap
  - Breakfast of Champions
  - Bible Studies -age and topic appropriate.
  - More devotions.
  - Ask a priest session
  - Church tours
  - Program “Why we do what we do in the Church”.
  - Expand RCIA program to solicit and invite more people.
    - Local ad to come to a meeting for “Do you have questions about the Catholic Church? Have you ever wondered?” meetings.
    - Meeting to explain the process for curious individuals.
  - Soul Suppers
- Join in on the upcoming Diocese program for Catechesis.
- Work with college interns on Marketing and Communications.
- Consider working with the local nuns to teach and show the values of vocations especially for young ladies.
- Invite outside groups into our space to rent or use and then show them what we do. Collaborate with groups like Young Life and those who do not have sufficient space but offer programs that are aligned with Catholic teaching.
- Service/Community Hours should encourage the work to be complete in church. Confirmation: Either 20 hours in church service or 30 hours outside of church. Engage children in Diocese Youth Corp.
- Encourage older children to tutor younger children and form a bond.

### Summary Information for Action Step #1:

- Timeline for completion: Long term -- five years and ongoing.
- Responsible person/Task Force: Current task force with new members to be added.
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
- Projected Costs (if any): Will vary and hopefully be self-sufficient.

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

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

### A. Pastoral Challenge to be addressed:

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catechesis and Education | X <b>Family Life</b>                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelization           | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership          |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Liturgy and Worship |

### B. Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:

The family is at the core of the church. We bring our smaller family units to gather together as God's family. The family is where you learn, grow and have a haven. We believe that a stronger family will build a stronger church and community. The survey results also showed this as an area for growth.

### C. Statement of the Second Goal to be achieved:

Provide opportunities for the family to grow, learn and be welcomed as part of God's larger family.

#### a. Action Step# 1 to achieve Second Goal:

Again, provide listening sessions to hear and learn from the community.

- Our teens are drawn to many activities and interests (primarily sports), in addition to having a great deal of pressure which makes forming a church youth group a low priority for them and attendance is sporadic.

- With this pressure and activity load, we acknowledge that there is an even greater need for a spiritual relationship with God.
  - Find times that are good for everyone.
  - Have independent study activities and then come together as a group.
  - Do Online activities.
- We need to re-establish the family feeling that was once prevalent in our parish.
  - Provide more social activities to introduce parishioners.
  - Provide more coffee and doughnut opportunities after Mass.
- We must work with parents to have them take responsibility and be more involved with their children's faith formation.
  - Mandatory classes for parents of children making sacraments.
  - Optional classes for all others to teach about the faith.
- Provide reasons for families to attend religious education during non-sacramental years. Create a program for each grade to have a major occasion each year.
  - Third Graders to read at Children's Station of the Cross.
  - First Graders in Christmas Pageant.
  - Fifth Graders can be altar servers.
- Tying the school and the moral fibers it provides to the parish family.
- Re-establish the pride and ownership to being part of a parish.
  - All person will be treated with respect and dignity by all members of parish and staff.
    - Conduct training programs when needed.
    - More socialization so people get to know each other.
    - Launch the proposed Greeters Ministry.
    - Name Tags??
    - Continue annual State of the Church Meeting.
- Themed masses that will allow the family to participate together.
- Family Bible Study.
- Assist young families in attending mass by providing child care assistance during mass.
- Personally invite people into the ministerial life of the church.
  - Term limits.

- Invite people to rotate their activities.
- Show families the rewards and values of the sacraments.
  - Many young families did not grow up in a church that has a family feeling and thus they are afraid to commit.
- Remind/Encourage and invite teens for input on the music, themes and delivery of the teen mass. Give them more music choices that would be inviting but stay true to church tradition (Contemporary Church music).
- Witness talks and articles in the bulletin to show others how their Catholic Faith has been important to their life. Include teen witnessing.

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

- Timeline for completion: Long term – five years and ongoing
- Responsible person/Task Force: Current task force with new members to be added.
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
- Projected Costs (if any):

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*

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buildings and Facilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Community Life</b> |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Finances                         |

**B. Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:**

Community Life is the bridge between Family Life & Catechesis and Education. Our survey also indicates that this is needed. Our community faces two major challenges: The consumer mentality of what is in it for me and the differing needs of the generations we serve. Our town has three distinct groups: The seniors/life-long residents who do not like change and want things to stay the same; the Mid-life group who are graduating children from high school/college and may be transitioning over and the Young families who may have moved here for the education and environment. Each group has a different priority and they don't always agree and thus we have to commit to programs that meet all three groups needs and hopefully do some intergenerational work.

### **C. Statement of the Third Goal:**

To provide opportunities that are welcoming to all groups of the parish while respecting the different needs and priorities of individual families. To facilitate local families in their desire to be a rock of foundation for their individual needs and allow them to bring their collective talents to the parish family.

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

- Advertise in different media. Including: Snapchat, Instagram & Facebook.
  - Evangelize through the bulletin and mass media.
  - Better advertising and communications.
  - Publicize committees and the need for a parish rep.
    - We need to update our database on people's skills and talents.
    - Create new committees and ask people with those talents to be on them.
    - Don't wait for people to sign up but call them and ask them.
  - Continue attending all ecumenical services.
- Continue special themed masses and add new ones:
  - Special needs.
  - Blessing of Expectant Families
  - Anointing of the Sick
  - Dedicated children's weekly mass at 9am. Expand it to include bible school in the parish center for young children with babysitting option.

- Dedicated Teen/Family weekly mass at 4:30 pm. Expand this to include special masses and adoration after or before big social events like meals or movies. Mass and a Movie, Mass and video games.
  - Lenten/Advent Penance Service
- Continue new means of communication including:
  - Updated Website
  - Enhance Parish App
  - Consider program like Constant Contact with notifications.
  - Develop Facebook, Twitter, Instagram accounts.
  - Hire Media Specialist to manage all the social media.
  - Be involved with Wilton 411.
  - Have “Understanding Social Media” talks.
- Public participation to dispel myths about the Catholic Church.
  - National day of Prayer
  - Memorial Day Parade
  - Wilton Clergy Association events
  - Create our own prayer days to support local
    - Teachers
    - Police
    - Firefighters,
    - Politicians (Town and State officials)
    - Athletes
  - Continue work with WI-Act (Stop Hunger) and collaborate with others on town projects to help our residents in need.
  - Re-institute mission trips and collaborate with local churches to do a joint trip as the students go to school together and should work on mission trips together.
  - Occasional meetings with Fr. Reggie and teens to just talk. Provide food, movies, games and sports.
  - Basketball league through OLF (Fatima team vs. travel teams). Invite alumni back during break to get together.
  - “Challenge your beliefs” monthly meeting with just youth.



- Afterschool club for local elementary children to be run by new Elementary Youth Minister.
- Y.D.P. – Youth Development Program – one or two youth from each grade to meet with Pastor and then hold individual grade forums to discuss needs.
- Better use of OLF App to notify of events.
- Parent proms to help married couples celebrate their union.
- Coffee with the priest – similar to Theology on Taps to just talk.
- Senior year trip for all HS seniors to cap off the year.
- Continue breakfast with Pastor for all Graduating Seniors and college students to discuss whatever topic they choose. One on One.
- Continue Grieving support group and Lunch with the Pastor for widows to check in and comfort.

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

- Timeline for completion: Long-Term – five years and ongoing
- Responsible person/Task Force: Current task force with new members to be added.
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
- Projected Costs (if any):

**Optional Question:**

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

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## *EVANGELIZATION*

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- Reach out to new families and invite them to the church.
  - Focus on Catholics first and the others will follow.
  - Teach them the faith or welcome them to worship with us.
- Have more ministry fairs to show people what is out there.

- Have a monthly Lunch for newcomers.
- Continue work of welcoming committee.
- Continue distributing books for the entire parish.
- Continue finding and bringing in External speakers like Matthew Kelly.
- Provide programs like “Caffeine with the Clergy” for parents during CCD classes.
- Continue special themed masses and add new ones:
  - Special needs.
  - Blessing of Expectant Families
  - Anointing of the Sick
  - Dedicated children’s weekly mass at 9am
  - Dedicated Teen/Family weekly mass at 4:30 pm
  - Lenten/Advent Penance Service
- Create a welcoming and “at Home” feeling in our church.
  - Point out/acknowledge visitors.
  - Create a visitors Packet.
  - Give a visitor’s tour of the church.
- Ensure that all who come into contact with any part of our church will be welcomed, respected, and treated with dignity by all parish members and staff.