

**Our Lady of the Assumption, Fairfield, CT**  
**Fr. Peter A. Cipriani, Pastor**  
**Pastoral Plan • September 30, 2016**

**Mission Statement**

*Ad Jesum per Mariam*

“To Jesus through Mary”. As Mary said to the servants at the wedding at Cana, “Do whatever He tells you,” so is our mission at Our Lady of the Assumption Parish. We choose to serve God and His Son through Eucharistic devotion, Liturgy, Catechesis, Evangelization, and works of charity together with the intercession of Mary, Our Lady of the Assumption.

**Members of the Parish Task Force:**

Joe Almeida, Lector and EME

Kathy Almeida, Lector and EME

Kristina Barnaby, parishioner

Paul Barnaby, parishioner

Bernadette Boyle, parishioner

Irene Boyle, parishioner

Michael Cooney, Director of Music

Janet Gardella, Parish Office/Business Mgr

Haylee Glassman, parishioner

Matthew Glassman, parishioner

Frank Macari, DRE

Jillian Plomin, parishioner

Matthew Plomin, parishioner

John Tallent, EME

This pastoral plan was developed by parishioners, lay leaders, parish staff with the collaboration of the Pastor, Fr. Peter Cipriani and clergy. This plan is the results of the following steps:

1. A diocesan-wide Synod that identified 5 Global Challenges for the parish to identify 2 key areas to focus parish development.
2. Identification of a Pastoral Task Force made up of parishioners and lay leadership of the parish.
3. Review parish sacramental and financial snapshots of the parish as provided by the diocese by the Pastoral Task Force.
4. A completed Parish Self-Assessment to accurately assess the current strengths and weaknesses of our parish and to identify priorities in light of the Synod Global challenges.
5. A study of the results of a parish-wide survey (the Disciple Maker Index) to further identify areas of our parish life on which to focus.
6. Identified 2 key areas (as defined by the Synod Challenges) of parish development and develop action steps to address those areas.

**Submitted:**



**Fr. Peter A. Cipriani**

## **Pastoral Challenge # 1: Family Life**

**Rationale for Choosing Family Life:** We know that the Family is the first teacher of faith to our children. It is the family that we choose to support in providing more opportunities to attend mass together, as a family. The lives and schedules of families have become crowded with activities, often at the expense of attending mass. The offering of and attending the Supreme Sacrifice of the mass regularly will feed our parish families and nourish them in the faith. It is in this way we do what Christ asks: "Feed my sheep".

**Statement of the Goal to be Achieved:** To increase mass attendance of families and increase overall parish involvement of families.

### **Action Steps to Achieve Goal:**

1. Provide an additional Sunday evening mass at a time that is more convenient for busy families. This mass will target those who feel that Saturday evening or Sunday morning masses do not work into their schedules. The children's choir will sing at this mass with the hope of attracting families to mass and children to participate in the choir.
2. The children that attend our CCD program in grades 2 and 8 (sacramental years) will attend and play a role in a regularly scheduled Sunday mass at least once per month.
3. Obtain the ability to live-stream masses to the homebound and area nursing homes.
4. In an effort to reach out to our school community, an altar server training program will be initiated specifically for school children in grades 4 on up. These children will be trained to serve at all school masses and parish funerals with the hope that they will join our regular corps of parish altar servers and serve Sunday masses as well.
5. Our council of the Knights of Columbus will institute a monthly or semi-monthly reception in the parish all following all Sunday masses to foster fellowship in the parish community.

### **Timeline for Completion:**

1. An additional Sunday mass will be added during the season of Advent. If successful as measured by attendance and feedback of parishioners, it will be repeated during Lent. After those trial periods, the initiative will be evaluated and a decision will be made as to whether Sunday evening mass will be permanent.
2. Mass attendance and involvement by our CCD children will begin in October and continue throughout the school year.
3. Cameras have been purchased and set in place and test runs have been completed. We need to evaluate by the start of 2017 the ability to live stream on an ongoing basis via a link on our website.
4. School children interested in serving have been identified. Training of the servers will occur in October .
5. The first post-mass reception is scheduled for November.

**Responsible People:** The Pastor, the Director of Music, the DRE, and the Knights of Columbus

**Projected Cost:** Approximately \$150 per reception. Approximately \$200/month for live streaming capabilities. No other costs involved.

## **Pastoral Challenge # 2: Catechesis & Education**

**Rationale for choosing Catechesis & Education:** The center of our faith is the celebration of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist during the offering of the mass. In order to deeply participate in that celebration and to pray more fully, it is necessary to have a rich understanding of the teachings of the Catholic faith and specifically of Jesus Christ, Himself, and to understand our role as the body of Christ in this world. In this way we do as Christ asks of us, “Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations...”

**Statement of the Goal to be achieved:** To re-engage, renew, and re-invigorate in our parish community our baptismal call to enthusiastically share Jesus in word and action. For those who practice and live the Catholic faith, it is a call to ongoing growth and renewed conversion. For those who have accepted the faith in name, it is a call to reevangelization. For those who have stopped practicing their faith, it is a call to reconciliation. For children, it is a call to be formed into disciples, through the family’s faith life and religious formation.

### **Action Steps to achieve goal:**

1. Starting with the Advent season, copies of the *Magnificat* will be made available to all parishioners along with instructions on how to get the most out of using it as a companion to mass attendance as well as personal devotion.
2. To further use our parish bulletin as a way of catechizing the faithful through pastoral writings, reflections and resources.
3. To increase membership and expand our bible study classes to include not only scriptural study but catechetical study, as well.
4. To better utilize social media (website, facebook, twitter) to spread the Good News and to provide resources and links to provide additional catechesis and to educate.

### **Timeline for completion:**

1. This is an ongoing initiative with success measured by how many copies are taken from month to month.
2. This initiative has already begun and is also ongoing. Success will be measured by parishioner interaction and engagement in the topics presented.
3. The bible study classes will begin this year (October) with the scriptural study of the Gospel of John with the addition of catechetical studies such as the Bishop Barron Catholicism series in the Winter/Spring.
4. This is also an ongoing initiative. Parishioner engagement can be measured by the number “clicks” certain areas of our website receives or “likes” or “followers” on social media. This will be evaluated on a periodic basis.

**Responsible Person:** Pastor, Rectory staff, Social Media manager

### **Cost:**

1. \$1000/month initially for the *Magnificats*, with good will offerings requested.
2. No costs involved.
3. Approximately \$200 per study.
4. No costs involved.

## **Temporal and Administrative Challenge: Building and Facilities**

**Rationale for choosing Building and Facilities:** We have a large campus that consists of 5 buildings (Church, Rectory, Parish Center, Parish Hall, and School) that constantly poses challenges of maintenance and repair. The upkeep of the physical plant is an ongoing project.

**Statement of Goal to be Achieved:** To keep current on all repairs to the 5 on campus buildings as well as landscaping. Particular projects include:

1. Asbestos abatement in the school building
2. Reroofing of parish center and church tower
3. Replacement with LED lights of flood lighting in all areas of the campus, particularly the parking lot
4. Tree removal of dead and decaying trees that pose a hazard
5. Waterproof the church basement

### **Action Steps to Achieve Goal:**

1. Asbestos abatement in the school building: work with the school to have areas identified as containing asbestos removed.
2. Identify and contract qualified slate roofer.
3. Replace lights on a periodic basis to spread the cost over time
4. Contract a qualified arborist to remove trees by the rectory garage and by the river near the school.
5. Contract CT Basement Systems for proper assessment of the condition of the church basement.

### **Timeline for Completion:**

1. September 2016
2. August 2016
3. June – December 2016
4. September 2016
5. January 2017

**Responsible Person:** Pastor and Office Manager

### **Cost:**

1. \$5,000
2. \$6,000
3. \$5,000
4. \$10,000

## **Status of Synod Challenges Not Addressed in this Pastoral Plan**

**Liturgy and Worship:** This area will also benefit from the initiatives identified in both Catechesis and Education as well as Family Life. Our parish was identified as a warm, welcoming community that embraces the ethnic diversity within the parish. We have strong ministries that support our liturgical worship and sacramental celebrations. Most recently, we have relocated the tabernacle to behind the main altar from a neighboring alcove. Extensive catechesis of the faithful took place. Additionally, Our Lady of the Assumption has served as a Center of Mercy during this year of Mercy. We offered a special mass, confessions and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on a weekly basis.

**Evangelization:** Evangelization was identified as being the next step after Catechesis and Education. It was felt that further education was needed within the parish before we more fully live and spread the Gospel. Efforts have begun to more fully interact with our school community in order to bring more school families into the parish.

**Leadership:** Our current pastoral leadership was seen as serving our parish well in both the results of the DMI and parishioner feedback. This was not identified as a area that currently needs to be addressed.