

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

Part One: Introductory Information

Parish:

SACRED HEART GEORGETOWN

Pastor:

REVEREND DAVID LEOPOLD

Date:

Parish Task Force Members:

Leadership Position:

- 1) Father David Leopold
- 2) Steve Archer
- 3) Edmond Lawlor
- 4) Anna Lisciandra
- 5) Rodolfo Leon-Paez
- 6) Richard O’Neill (emeritus)

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:

X Catechesis and Education

Evangelization

Family Life

Leadership

Liturgy and Worship

Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:

As the gospel of John 17:21 reads: “May they all be one, even as you Father are in me and I in you.” Catholics today are hungry for Christian unity and for a vigorous Catholic Church in America, but unity and vigor can only be enhanced if one understands what it means to be Catholic. It is imperative that current childhood generation, their parents *and even* their parents be educated about their faith to combat decline of Catholicism in America.

The generation that grew to adulthood during the 1970s through the early 2000s, however, encountered generally weak Catechesis, and may not have the knowledge to inform the next generation(s). Very few adults, and fewer teens, were and are exposed to continuing religious education beyond the liturgical readings and homilies, even if they attend weekly Mass on a regular basis. Although Sacred Heart Parish has a very good Children’s Religious Education Program, most of the children quit church activities after they make their Confirmation. Once confirmed, our teens no longer receive effective moral formation guidance at a time in their life when they are exposed to a growing number of moral challenges.

We believe Catechesis and Education must be undertaken for *all* age groups. This effort needs to be local, and it must cover the Catholic Church tenets, sacraments, history, and scripture meanings, and importantly, provide context for Catholics at all ages in their life.

C. Statement of the First Goal to be achieved:

GOAL: Sacred Heart Parish should launch an education of Catholic faith program by the end of 2017, based on the CCC and General Directory for catechesis. The clergy and the lay catechists of Sacred Heart should lead this program.

a. Action Step# 1 to achieve the Goal:

Identify one Clergy Member and a team of Lay Persons to undertake to develop or acquire the body of knowledge to support such a program. The Clergy Member might be from Sacred Heart Parish, or perhaps from the Seminary, or an area Christian University, or other sources.

b. Action Step #2 to achieve the Goal: The Clergy Member and the Lay team would develop the program and ensure it addressed the needs of the following demographics (in order of the size of demographic group in the event implementation needs to be staggered):

- 1) Senior parishioners
- 2) Adults of current minor children
- 3) Empty nesters
- 4) Young people (pre-adolescence, adolescence)
- 5) High school and College

This team should access any Diocesan expertise as well as best practices developed across the Diocese, but also sources outside either.

c. Action Step #3 to achieve the Goal: Implement the program, either wholly or in staggered phases.

Summary Information for Action Step #1: Complete by March 31, 2017. It is thought that this would be a great project for a new seminarian.

Summary Information for Action Step #2: Complete by December 31, 2017. Timeline and resources for implementation would be specified in this Step.

Summary Information for Action Step #3: Begin implementation by June 30, 2018, which includes identifying any individuals required and sourcing them. Practically speaking, it may be advisable to begin in September 2018.

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:

Catechesis and Education

Evangelization

X Family Life

Leadership

Liturgy and Worship

B. Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:

A deterioration of the close family unit and the greater community family has had a significant negative impact on our American society and has left people to search for other sources for support, counsel, and moral direction in an increasing secular society.

The family is at the core of Catholic theology. Marriage, parents and children that attend church together on a regular basis, understand and discuss Catholic teachings, and serve others together create a healthy, vibrant local church. But Catholic Family Life cannot begin and end at the Church doors at Mass. Strong Catholic families make strong communities.

C. Statement of the Second Goal to be achieved:

GOAL: Create a Sacred Heart Parish environment that promotes a sense of Sacred Heart community.

- To protect our most impressionable Parishioners, educate parents to provide them with materials and methods to promote a strong family life, a strong Parish life, and keep them close to the Lord and His Church.

- Create Parish service programs that unite parishioners and give them an opportunity to come together and serve others in tangible ways.

- Organize Parish social events that not only help Parishioners get to know one another “across the Masses” but also result in Sacred Heart Parish traditions around the calendar.

a. **Action Step# 1 to achieve Second Goal:** Identify one Clergy Member and teams of Lay Persons to undertake to develop these three “sub goals”. It is strongly advised that the teams be cross-generational to ensure programs appeal to all generations of Parishioners.

b. **Action Step #2 to achieve Second Goal:** Develop the three sub goals, including robust idea generation, the identification of resources and proposed timelines. This team should access any Diocesan expertise as well as best practices developed across the Diocese, but also sources outside either.

c. **Action Step #3 to achieve Second Goal:** Implement the sub goals, either wholly or in staggered phases.

Summary Information for Action Step #1: Complete by March 31, 2017. Three teams, one for each sub group. The most difficult part of this effort might be getting new team participants involved from a small Parish.

Summary Information for Action Step #2: Complete by September 30, 2017. Idea-generation, well thought out events and plans. Timeline and resources for implementation would be specified in this Step. Service and social events should recognize that Parishioners might need 3 months or more notice ahead of events to be able to schedule into personal calendars. (As Events become traditions, advance notice takes care of itself.)

Summary Information for Action Step #3: Begin implementation by the Christmas season of 2017.

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:

X Buildings and Facilities

Finances

Community Life

B. Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:

Over the recent past, our parish financial reserve as been significantly reduced by unplanned expenditures to repair and update our aging physical plant. Although the buildings are in a satisfactory condition, provision must be made for future needed repair and replacement. We need to maintain our physical plant before one problem becomes more than one problem. Such infrastructure will require significant monetary outlays that will require extra-ordinary capital planning.

Statement of the Third Goal:

GOAL: Repair and maintain and Sacred Heart Parish aging physical plant, noting that the church and James Corcoran House are 19th century structures, and to finance such work, develop a corresponding capital expenditure plan.

a. **Action Step# 1 to achieve Third Goal:** Our Pastor with input from our Finance Council and Parish Council Building Committee, will form a Capital Improvement Committee and identify a Committee Chairperson.

b. **Action Step #2 to achieve Third Goal:** The Capital Improvement Committee will develop a capital expenditure plan to address the mid-to-longer term repair and maintenance needs, and ensure that our financial reserve is no longer subject to unexpected capital improvement and repair expenditures. This will likely require a Capital Campaign. If so, this Committee will identify how is the Capital Campaign to be run (personnel, phases, timeline, etc.), and what is to be covered by the Capital Campaign proceeds. Because such a campaign may not yield anticipated results, the Committee will decide the prioritization of how funds will be expended.

c. **Action Step #3 to achieve Third Goal:** Undertake the capital expenditure plan, including a Capital Campaign, if required.

d. **Action step #4 to achieve the Third Goal:** Begin to expend capital expenditure plan, i.e., including any Campaign funds, to repair/improve infrastructure in priority order under the direction of the Capital Improvement Committee and guidance of the Finance Committee and Parish Council Building Committee.

Summary Information for Action Step #1: Timeline for completion: Capital Improvement Committee and Chairperson should be identified by March 31, 2017. Led by our Pastor, the Finance Council and Parish Council Building Committee will have responsibility to organize Capital Improvement Committee, and would identify a Parishioner or non-Parishioner to lead the potential Capital Campaign. (Note that the Building Committee should be enlarged to address the complexity of the effort.) It is suggested that any organizer that the Capital Improvement Committee chooses should have strong, prior experience in running a capital campaign. The Capital Improvement Committee should access Diocesan Office assistance if any exists, to provide “lessons learned” on running a capital campaign or other Parish experience.

Summary Information for Action Step #2: Planning phase should be concluded by 12/31/17. Ability to identify able contributors within the Parish *and* outside the Parish will be key. Committee might consider the appeal of the historic Sacred Heart Church to the area towns and their financial support.

Summary Information for Action Step #3: The capital expenditure plan, including the potential Capital Campaign, would be undertaken during the 2018 calendar and may be a full year effort. The Capital Campaign itself may have several phases; some early phases could be “silent” during which period significant contributors might be identified. Often a campaign has reached significant financial milestones before a wider, public Campaign is announced (to help ensure success).

Summary Information for Action Step #4: Begins in 2019.