

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

## Part One: Introductory Information

**Parish:**

Church of St. Cecilia

**Pastor:**

Albert G. Pinciario III

**Date:**

September 22, 2016

### Parish Task Force Members:

- 1) Mark Browning
- 2) Lynn Rule
- 3) Charlie Costello
- 4) Regina Denner
- 5) Mary Jo Pittoni
- 6) Frank Caveney
- 7) Elena Copolla
- 8) Mark Kuehn
- 9) Tom Ostaszewski
- 10) Keri La Ra
- 11) Jill Collucci
- 12) Vicki Alton
- 13) Janet McMullin
- 14) Sue Scanlon
- 15) Debbie Ruffin
- 16) Fr. Bert Pinciario



### Leadership Position:

Chairman Finance Committee  
Trustee  
Consultor-Synod Delegate  
Consultor  
Consultor  
Synod Delegate  
St. Cecilia School Parent  
Facilities Expert  
Catechist/ Faith Formation Parent  
Social Media Professional/ School Parent  
Catechist/ PR Professional  
Leader of Adult Bible Study  
Consultor/Former Vacation Bible Coordinator  
Staff (Coordinator of Music and Liturgy)  
Staff (Coordinator of Faith Formation)  
Staff (Pastor)

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

### **Statement on challenges not included in this plan**

**Leadership:** Leadership is being rebuilt and identified within St. Cecilia. Through the Pastoral Planning process, we expect to identify individuals in the parish who will build skills as lay leaders. We will look to the Diocese for leadership training support.

**Family Life:** Evangelization and education for our parents are challenges that we are addressing through Catechesis as well as Community Life. We felt the outreach through these two areas would better meet the needs of our Parish family.

**Evangelization:** We have begun to address strategies to engage the community through our goals listed here. Our Liturgy and Worship goals encompasses these challenges and creates opportunities for increased participation in the Mass.

**Buildings and Facilities:** The overall campus is comprised of a number of aging buildings experiencing increased annual maintenance cost. A significant amount has been spent over the past couple of years to catch up on deferred maintenance. We hope to engage a structural engineer for long term assessment and incorporate results in our financial plan.

**Finance:** We have already begun to implement a number of initiatives to help improve the financial health of the parish, as we could not wait for the Pastoral Planning process. Cash flow continues to be a challenge; therefore, we are trying to increase incoming revenues, as well as reduce expenses wherever possible/practical.

## 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

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

While continuing to monitor, improve and advance our Catechetical programs for youth and those preparing for Sacraments, we acknowledge the need to catechize and engage the parents, teens, young adults and other members of the Church of St. Cecilia.

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

Provide ongoing age and life-situation appropriate opportunities for all the baptized to grow in the knowledge of their faith.

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

Implement a series of educational sessions aimed at Faith Formation and School parents and other interested parishioners. The first, "A Biblical walk through the Mass" has been planned to begin this Fall. The program will run concurrent with Faith Formation classes and we aim to engage Faith Formation parents to take part in these sessions while their children are in class. As we monitor progress of these programs, sessions will be modified accordingly to reach youth and all adults in our parish.

In addition, creating a "Catechism 101" for Faith Formation and School parents, as well as other interested parishioners. We have recently begun using a Lectionary based Catechetical program with grades 1-8. We plan to offer seasonal and Holy day based opportunities mirroring the liturgical year targeting adults and teens. Some of these will run concurrently with times children are attending FF classes. Others will be planned as whole family Catechetical experiences. We will continue and through greater promotion hopefully increase participation in our successful and popular adult and young adult bible study.

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

- Timeline for completion : “A Biblical walk through the Mass” begins October 2016 with additional sessions throughout the school year.
- We aim to roll out Catechism 101 and whole family Catechesis with the beginning of Advent.
- Responsible person/Task Force: Gina Denner/Vicki Alton/Tom Ostaszewski/Deborah Ruffin (staff)
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any): Office of Catechesis
- Projected Costs (if any): minimal

**b. Action Step #2 to achieve Goal:** Explore resources and ‘best practices’ in order to find relevant ways to meet the needs of our youth and teens. Building on the success of ‘RAIN DOWN’, a gathering for area youth preparing for Confirmation, which began as a collaborative effort between the Church of St. Cecilia, St. Mary and Our Lady of Montserrat Parishes, we hope to strengthen the collaboration among local parishes and thus better engage and attend to the needs of our youth. We are very excited and will support and participate in the programs beginning soon at Trinity Catholic High School.

As a long term goal we hope to be instrumental in the formation of a multi-parish and perhaps city-wide effort to minister to the spiritual, catechetical and liturgical needs and concerns of our youth. In time we would investigate the feasibility of contracting a coordinator of youth ministry for the region and the formation of a youth board with representatives from all participating parishes.

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

- Timeline for completion : begun to look into collaboration with local programs. Establishing a stronger youth group by the end of this school year.
- Responsible person/Task Force: Gina Denner (Diane McNamara, Patty LeFort, Mary Alice Noone?, Tom Ostaszewski, Mark Browning)
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any): assisting with collaboration
- Projected Costs (if any): minimal

## 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:

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

**B. Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:** Building on the strengths realized in the DMI, we recognize the need to foster greater understanding, awareness and participation among the laity in the various Liturgical Ministries and in the rich variety of communal and personal prayer and worship.

**C. Statement of the Second Goal to be achieved:** To find ways to further engage parish members and visitors and to create opportunities to better understand Liturgy and Worship thus allowing for members to enter into full, active and conscious participation in both communal and personal prayer, worship and Liturgy.

**a. Action Step# 1 to achieve Second Goal:** Increase catechesis and participation in the numerous opportunities for Liturgical and spiritual enrichment we presently offer.

- i. Evenings/afternoons of reflection and instruction for current and new Liturgical ministers
- ii. Seasonal Vespers
- iii. Seasonal evenings of reflection and reconciliation
- iv. Yearly Parish mission
- v. Weekly Bible study for adults and young adults
- vi. Weekly Lectio Divina
- vii. Weekly Men's Breakfast Prayer Group

- b. Further utilize social media to promote and encourage participation in all Liturgical celebrations
- c. Collaborate with Faith Formation programs intended to increase parishioners' understanding and appreciation of Liturgy and communal worship
- d. Preach often on the shared responsibility to joyfully offer our time, talent and treasure in order to accomplish the 'work of the church.'
- e. Enable and empower more parishioners to leadership roles in the various Liturgical ministries and Parish life.

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

- Timeline for completion: one year to ongoing
- Responsible person/Task Force: Lynn Rule
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any): leadership institute
- Projected Costs (if any): n/a

f. **Action Step #2 to achieve Second Goal:** Expand participation in the liturgy by inviting families to participate in greeting, ushering, lecturing or bring up the Offertory. Providing this opportunity for families to be engaged as one unit in their participation

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

- Timeline for completion : recruitment to begin immediately with training to follow...
- Responsible person/Task Force: Mary Jo Pittoni
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any): n/a
- Projected Costs (if any): n/a

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:**

Buildings and Facilities

**Community Life**

Finances

**B. Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:** The Church of St. Cecilia is a parish of many different and diverse individuals and communities. Historically, these groups have operated independently of one another. For this parish to become a true spiritual family we will work to find ways to bring all together, celebrate the diversity that exists and participate in our Lord's desire that we all be one.

**C. Statement of the Third Goal:** Utilizing the fact that we are entering our 90<sup>th</sup> year as a Parish, we hope to create activities and opportunities that will deepen our parishioners' awareness and understanding of the various groups, ministries, activities and workings that exist in our community by highlighting at all times that we are ONE community and share ONE faith. We will also stress the truth (fact) that the work of the Church requires the free sharing of each individuals' gifts, talents and treasure.

**a. Action Step# 1 to achieve Third Goal:** Set up a monthly "Ministry spotlight" which would highlight one of the many ministries of our Parish. At each Mass over the weekend, those who participate in that month's spotlighted ministry would be called forward and be "re-commissioned". In addition, this ministry would sponsor a coffee after Masses to answer questions anyone may have and reach out to parishioners to share their talents.

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

- Timeline for completion: beginning November continuing through the next 12 months.  
Repeating the cycle again next year
- Responsible person/Task Force: Lynn Rule
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any): n/a
- Projected Costs (if any): none – coffee and pastries to be donated by sponsoring ministry

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

**A. Action Step #2 to achieve Third Goal:** In collaboration with St. Cecilia school we will work to resurrect our Vacation Bible School program. Our VBS program ceased to be offered when the coordinators stepped aside. This was a wonderful opportunity for our youth to deepen their faith and for our teens to interact with children and adults. By reaching out directly to the parents of the school and faith formation children, (since they are the “campers”) we hope to generate enthusiasm, leadership and guidance in order to staff and oversee this opportunity for further faith development and community growth

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

- Timeline for completion: program established to run at end of June
- Responsible person/Task Force: Elena Coppola, Keri La Ra, Lynn Rule, Janet McMullen
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any):n/a
- Projected Costs (if any): cost to be absorbed by attendees



**A: Action Step #3 to achieve Third Goal:** Before we can begin to increase engagement of the parish members, we first need to confirm exactly who are “active members” of the parish. An updated census will help us to actively target the correct population of Catholics in our neighborhood and enable us to address pastoral needs of which we are presently unaware.

- Assemble a team to update the parish membership via telephone. A script will be used in order to ensure a consistent message. This contact point will allow us to not only confirm parishioners, but provide an opportunity to invite folks back to Mass, answer any of their questions, and determine if transportation is also an issue.
- to maintain accurate records and to welcome any visitors to our parish, set up a “visitors book” at all entrance ways and encourage those who are visiting our parish to sign in. Those who visit often would be contacted and invited to be a parishioner.

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

- Timeline for completion: 6 months to establish team, call and edit lists
- Responsible person/Task Force: Mary Jo Pittoni, Frank Caveney,  
Charlie Costello, Jill Collucci
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any): confirming boundaries of the Church of St. Cecilia
- Projected Costs (if any): n/a

**A: Action Step #4 to achieve Third Goal:** Increased communication and sharing of resources and activities between St. Cecilia School and the Church of St. Cecilia.

1- mutual publicity of events and activities

2- greater participation and visibility in all activities of both communities

**Summary Information for Action Step #4:**

- Timeline for completion: immediate and ongoing
- Responsible person/Task Force: Fr. Bert/ Dina Monti/ Becky Bell (H.S.A.)/ Elena Coppola
- Diocesan Office assisting (if any): n/a
- Projected Costs (if any): n/a

## **Optional Question:**

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

The day to day financial needs of the Parish prevent us, at this time, from addressing a number of capital and pastoral needs. We are attempting a ‘soft’ increase revenue drive and continuing a stewardship and gifting campaign called ‘St. Cecilia Sings’, which has allowed us to address some of the less costly improvements necessary.

With the present economic hardships and changing demographics of this area of Stamford a major capital drive is not feasible at this time. It is our hope that with a growth in community ‘spirit’, and a more accurate accounting of who are the people of the Church of St. Cecilia, we will be able to address the following capital and pastoral needs within a year or two. These needs include:

- 1- Resurfacing and redesign of the parking lot
- 2- The need for handicap accessibility – including an elevator
- 3- Painting of the interior of the Church and refinishing of the floors in Church

Since the combined estimated costs of these plant improvements is more than \$1,000,000.00 it is impossible for us to address these needs at the present time.