Diocese of Bridgeport Parish Pastoral Plan

“Building a Bridge to the Future”

Part One: Introductory Information

**Parish: St. Gregory The Great, Danbury, CT**

**Pastor: Fr. Angelo Arrando**

**Date: September 30, 2016**

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

* **Anthony Hellmann Co-chairperson**
* **René Hellmann Co-chairperson**
* **Frederick A. Ray Co-chairperson**
* **Linda J. Ray Co-chairperson**
* **Peter Buzaid**
* **Frank Salvatore, Jr.**
* **Kathleen Kelly**
* **Suzanne Curra**
* **Patty Barrows**
* **Elena Buzaid**
* **Dennis Rodney**
* **Thomas Nipper**
* **Nicole DiMauro**
* **Katherin Sniffin**
* **Gregory Rabito**

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

**St Gregory the Great Mission Statement**

We, the faith community of Saint Gregory the Great, belong to the universal Roman Catholic Church and are established in the Diocese of Bridgeport. Like all members of the Church of Jesus Christ, we have entered into a baptismal covenant with God, our Father, through the death and resurrection of Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit. By its very nature, our baptismal covenant calls us to gather in Jesus’ name, so that we may become more the body of Christ for others. As the Christ, we are committed to:

* Know our God personally
* Give witness to others of God’s mercy and love in our lives
* Celebrate together our common faith experience in the Lord
* Lead others to experience God’s mercy and love
* Celebrate the sacredness within our family, work and community life

Therefore, we are always challenged to share all we have (our time, talent and treasure) with one another, especially the poor, so that we may fulfill our mission as the Christ for our generation.

In pursuit of our mission, we, as a faith community, commit ourselves to the following goals:

1. SPIRITUAL LIFE AND WORSHIP: to experience and celebrate the mystery of the Risen Lord through Word and Sacrament
2. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND FORMATION: to root our communal and personal experience of the Risen Lord in the Scripture and Tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and to share our faith story/ journey as it is lived out in all of our activities.
3. PARISH AND COMMUNITY LIFE: to create an environment through common prayer and work whereby each member can better understand his/ her relationship to the Universal Church and to the mission of salvation in Jesus Christ. Both the local parish and the universal church are called to witness the unity of the Kingdom.
4. CHRISTIAN SERVICES: to serve the needs of the “least of our bretheren” as witnessed in Matthew 25:1-22
5. ADMINISTATIVE SERVICES: to share our time, talent and treasure to realize these goals and to administer well the resources entrusted to this faith community.

Adopted by St. Gregory the Great Advisory Council – August 30, 2001

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

* **Pastoral Challenge to be addressed:**

**Liturgy and Worship**

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

The core purpose of our being is to promote a greater sense of worship within St. Gregory the Great’s faith community. Selecting the Pastoral Challenge of Liturgy and Worship supports our desire to advance an increased sense of welcome and inclusiveness at St. Gregory The Great Parish.

* **Statement of the First Goal to be achieved:**

One goal is to increase attendance at weekend masses and to have every parishioner participate more fully in the mass.

* + **Action Step# 1 to achieve the Goal:**

The Task Force recommends changing the mass schedule. Options to consider would be to eliminate the mass with the least attendance and designate a children’s mass on Sunday morning. Another possibility would be to have a teen/young adult mass on Sunday afternoon at 4:30 or 5:00. The Task Force would also like to investigate ways to establish a connection with the presider at these special masses.

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

* Timeline for completion: January 2017

* Responsible person/Task Force: Fr. Angelo Arrando and Task Force
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): N/A
* Projected Costs (if any): N/A
  + **Action Step #2 to achieve Goal:**

In order to foster a greater sense of community we envision having a greeter at each church door. We would also like to start an after mass social time in the foyer of the church. Volunteers will be asked to supply coffee and goodies. This will be done on a monthly basis, rotating among the different masses. This committee will also Hospitality/ Fellowship

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

* Timeline for completion: January 2017

* Responsible person/Task Force: Fred and Linda Ray
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): N/A
* Projected Costs (if any): Minimal/Provided by the volunteers/ offset by donations
  + **Action Step #3 to achieve Goal:**

Establish a pre-mass intercessory prayer group to pray for the sick, deceased, and any special intentions. The prayer community will meet twenty minutes prior to the start of mass. A group of students from St. Gregory’s School will attend the prayer group on their monthly mass. We can also consider participation by St. Gregory’s Youth Group during the weekend masses. One of the weekly masses will be chosen to host the prayer group. The rosary, or other selected prayers will be said by the attendees. Parishioners may write prayer requests in a book provided in the chapel.

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

* Timeline for completion: November 2016

* Responsible person/Task Force: Deacon, priest, Patty Barrows, Suzanne Curra
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): N/A
* Projected Costs (if any): N/A

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

* **Pastoral Challenge to be addressed:**

**Leadership**

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

Driving change in the Parish requires strong leadership starting with the Pastor. A committed, effective group of lay leaders responsive to the needs of the parish is almost equally important in addition to the Pastor.

* **Statement of the Second Goal to be achieved:**

The Pastor shall lead Saint Gregory’s in the tradition of the teachings of Vatican II which have been an integral part of the Parish since its founding. The Pastor shall be present and available to the parishioners at least 5 days a week to respond to parishioners, the school and the lay council, committees and groups of the Parish. The parish shall revitalize and strengthen the Lay Advisory Council and its role in implementing the Parish plan.

* + **Action Step# 1 to achieve Second Goal:**

A detailed description of the Pastor’s role and the parishioner’s expectation for the Pastor in guiding and implementing the Parish plan must be presented and be agreed to by the Parish. Ensure that a committed, representative group of Parishioners is included to have input into the selection of a new Pastor.

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

* Timeline for completion: February 2017
* Responsible person/Task Force: Task Force, Father Arrando, Lay Advisory Council
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): N/A
* Projected Costs (if any): Printing costs
  + **Action Step #2 to achieve Second Goal:**

The Lay Advisory Council must follow the dictates of the Parish Constitution. There should be new elections with new members. All standing committees need to be reevaluated. Parishioners need to be consulted, informed, collaborated with and recruited to step up and participate on the Council. The council shall advise and consult with the pastor before decisions are made.

The responsibilities of the Council shall include:

1. Implementing the Parish Plan;
2. Provide honest feedback to the Pastor on setting and achieving Parish goals;
3. Review, assess for effectiveness and if necessary restructure Parish standing committees and organizations to insure that they serve current needs and that they are implementing their part of the Parish Plan;
4. Revitalize and emphasize the Social Concerns standing committee to provide service opportunities. This is an area where Parishioners need to be informed, engaged and recruited to participate in.
5. To be responsible to review and assess Parish communications i.e., website, bulletin and social media.

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

* Timeline for completion: June 2017

* Responsible person/Task Force: Task Force, Lay Advisory Council
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): N/A

* Projected Costs (if any): N/A

Pastoral Challenge #3: Worksheets for Parish Goals and Action Steps

**Pastoral Challenge to be addressed:**

**Catechesis and Education**

**Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:**

Catechesis and Education was identified as a priority by the members of the task force through personal observations, the data collected from the Parish Survey and in discussion with members of the school and parish.

**Statement of the Third Goal to be achieved*:***

St. Gregory the Great Parish community, including the school and religious education program, should be a priority in our lives. We need to connect all ages and all constituencies in the greater community with the faith life thus deepening the relationship with Jesus Christ while utilizing a collaborative approach to strengthening the relationship between school and parish.

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

Pilot a committee to oversee the integration of school and parish programs. Utilize the religious education director to coordinate regular meetings with the school principal and youth group leader and others as deemed necessary. This committee will serve to integrate more closely the school and church programs in a collaborative manner.

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

* Timeline for completion : November 2016

* Responsible person/Task Force: DRE, René Hellmann and Suzanne Curra
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): as needed
* Projected Costs (if any): Initially no cost, but if programs are implemented, those costs would be incurred.

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

Generate a list from the survey of the different faith groups proposed by the parishioners and look at feasibility and interest in a proposal.

Identify for each age level one or more feasible programs that would add to the faith life of the parish.

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

* Timeline for completion: November 2016

* Responsible person/Task Force: Sharon Hoyt and Katherin Sniffin
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): none
* Projected Costs (if any): Initially no cost, but if programs are implemented, those costs would be incurred.

**Action Step #3 to achieve Goal:**

Task Force will recruit individuals to serve on a committee whose purpose is to research and run faith programs for members of all ages.

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

* Timeline for completion : March 2017

* Responsible person/Task Force: Recruiter
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any): Initially no cost, but if programs are implemented, those costs would be incurred.

**Action Step #4 to achieve Goal:**

Provide opportunity for school and religious education classes to attend liturgy, sacraments and faith opportunities on a more regular basis.

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

* Timeline for completion: January 2017

* Responsible person/Task Force: Pastor, DRE and Suzanne Curra, principal
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): N/A
* Projected Costs (if any): Initially no cost, but if programs are implemented, those costs would be incurred.

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

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

**Finances**

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

The finances of any parish are reliant on its parishioners’ generosity. At St. Gregory the Great, there are 1,600 families listed in our directory. Looking at the parish financial snapshot, it is apparent that only about one-third of that number participate in giving on a weekly/monthly basis. Less than one-third participate in the Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA). This puts our parish in a financial situation that sees monthly deficits. No parish can continue to thrive or meet the goals of this pastoral plan if it is financially stressed.

* **Statement of the Temporalities Goal:**

The financial viability of our parish needs to be actively engaged to ensure our continued ability to meet the spiritual needs of our faith community. As we begin meeting our pastoral plan and our parishioners become more engaged in our parish, we look to make sure the members of our faith community understand the financial status of our parish. We will do this by instituting more transparency in the financial status of the parish. By doing this we hope the parishioner finds that the parish is using their money in a fiscally prudent manner. This transparency may also help those who don’t participate understand that the continued viability of our parish is reliant on all parishioners giving to the parish.

**Action Step# 1 to achieve Temporalities Goal:**

There will be regular communication of the quarterly/annual financial statements as well as posting the income and expenses for each month regularly.

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

* Timeline for completion: Will be an ongoing action step.
* Responsible person/Task Force: Chair of the Finance Committee
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any): *\*Need printing cost for bulletin inserts\**

**Action Step #2 to achieve Temporalities Goal:**

Twice a year the Finance Committee with the support of the Parish Lay Advisory Council will hold informational sessions in a town hall meeting setting where parishioners can come to hear the financial status of the parish and ask questions.

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

* Timeline for completion: This will be an ongoing action step, but the plan for the first meeting will be in February 2017 to discuss the first six months of the 2017 Fiscal year.
* Responsible person/Task Force: Chair of the Finance Committee/President of the Lay Advisory Board/Pastor
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): We would invite the Diocese Chief Financial Officer or designee to sit in on these if interested.
* Projected Costs (if any): ***\*Need printing cost and possible cost of coffee/soda/water and pastries\****

**Action Step #3 to achieve Temporalities Goal:**

Explore ways to engage non-giving parishioners in order to increase the number of parishioners who give on a regular basis.

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

* Timeline for completion: Begin the process in the winter of 2016-17. Look to present the program in April of 2017. Further goals related to completion are dependent on how the group decides to engage non-giving parishioners.
* Responsible person/Task Force: Chair of the Finance Committee/President of the Lay Advisory Board
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any): To be determined

**Pastoral Challenge to be addressed:**

**Buildings and Facilities**

**Rationale for Choosing this Priority Area:**

We have several needs to be addressed in the parish concerning space. Because of the location of the parish offices, it is not safe for cars to drive to the parish office during parts of the school day when children are outside. In addition, we are in need of bigger/ better/ additional meeting/ event spaces.

**Statement of the Buildings and Facilities Goal:**

Turn the convent into meeting and office space

**Action Step# 1 to achieve Buildings and Facilities Goal:**

Explore feasibility of utilizing convent for parish office and meeting space.

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

* Timeline for completion: December 2016
* Responsible person/Task Force: Paul Valeri, Task Force and Lay Advisory Council
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any): none
* Projected Costs (if any): N/A

**Action Step# 2 to achieve Buildings and Facilities Goal:**

Contingent upon completion of Action Step #1, the relocation of the parish office to the convent

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

* Timeline for completion: June 2017
* Responsible person/Task Force:
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any):

**Action Step# 3 to achieve Buildings and Facilities Goal:**

Build parish hall. Parish to explore the possibility of completing a parish hall

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

* Timeline for completion:
* Responsible person/Task Force: Lay Advisory Council, Finance Council
* Diocesan Office assisting (if any):
* Projected Costs (if any):