

“Building a Bridge to the Future” 2016 – 2018 Parish Pastoral Plan

Dear Parish Family of Assumption:

As a result of the Fourth Diocesan Synod of 2014—2015, a comprehensive pastoral planning process was initiated throughout the Diocese to build on the good works already present, to respond to challenges to be addressed, and to lay out a road map for its future. Each pastor was asked to assemble a Planning Task Force by November 2015 to address the global challenges and administrative challenges that were approved on March 21, 2015 by the Synod delegates as a priority. The Parish Pastoral Planning Council of Assumption, Westport was convened in July 2015 and started the process of implementing a parish pastoral plan.

The Synod identified five pastoral challenge areas: **Liturgy and Worship, Family Life, Evangelization, Leadership, and Catechesis and Education**. In addition, Bishop Caggiano asked each parish to look at the three following administrative areas: **Finances, Buildings and Facilities, and Community Life**. Parishes were asked to choose two of the five pastoral challenge areas and one of the three administrative areas. The priority areas, rationale and action steps, identified by the Planning Task Force, and approved by Bishop Caggiano are found on the back. All pastoral plans across the Diocese will be posted in December on the Diocesan website: www.bridgeportdiocese/strategic-planning/home.

Assumption has chosen **Evangelization, Community Life, and Family Life** as our challenge areas and we have chairpersons for each of the new ministries. Marian Campana is directing **Evangelization**, September and Bryon Stevens—**Community Life**, and Gretchen and Joseph Mancuso—**Family Life**. We are very grateful for their willingness to serve.

We have great reason to hope for the future of our Diocese and The Church of the Assumption. I urge all of us to become involved in efforts to fulfill the goals established by the Planning Task Force. Our Plan is a work in progress. At the end of the first year, we will evaluate the goals and make revisions as objectives are met and other needs arise.

In a special way, I would like to thank those Planning Task Force members who have given their time and effort this past year to work on this plan.

May God continue to bless this parish and all members of the parish community.

Father Tom

Pastoral Plan for the Church of the Assumption, Westport

Pastoral Challenge to be addressed: Evangelization

Rationale: There is a need and desire to welcome back individuals and families in our community that have stopped practicing or otherwise have limited their activity with the Church. There is also a strong need to explore ways to deepen the faith of current parishioners. We have discovered this desire and the need to provide guidance to accomplish the reaffirmation of our parishioners.

Goals to be achieved: Identify those individuals and families within our community that would be good candidates to evangelize and return back to the Church as well as identify those existing parishioners that need assistance in deepening their faith.

a. Action Step #1 to achieve Goal:

Review various lists available through the parish office; brainstorm with members of various parish ministries, and gather information from the parish staff and volunteers of the Church to help identify existing individuals or families of the parish who might be interested in renewing and deepening their faith.

b. Action Step #2 to achieve Goal:

Social gatherings centered on the Church, informal Bible study groups, prayer groups, Gospel discussion groups represent “soft” approaches to begin to let those that may have interest in returning back to becoming active participants in Church. Additionally, pastoral outreach in the form of home visits by parish priests and deacons would solidify those that need individual efforts by the parish’s clergy.

Pastoral Challenge to be addressed: Family Life

Rationale: There would be a benefit from attracting existing parish families to participate in faith formation and parish ministries. Involvement of the parents in service to the church allows them to model strong family values and set good examples.

Goals to be achieved: Establish the family as God’s “domestic church” through catechesis.

a. Action Step #1 to achieve Goal:

Organize grade level catechesis for parents and students.

b. Action Step# to achieve Goal:

Expand the involvement of parish youth, with their parents as guides and participants in at least one of the parish’s ministries.

Administrative Challenge to be addressed: Community Life

Rationale: There is an essential need to provide a better social environment within the Church’s congregation to allow for individual member communication and a sense of community. It is also key to the parish’s growth. Our ministries are examples of how we reach out and become part of our community. In order to serve our community through our ministries, the parish needs to encourage greater participation.

Goals to be achieved: To plan a variety of social events and service projects throughout the year to foster more parishioners working together. This will encourage and incorporate a greater diversity of ideas and participation into the parish.

a. Action Step #1 to achieve Goal:

Create a welcoming committee to meet and greet new parishioners. This committee would also be responsible for forming a greeters’ group that would welcome parishioners at Mass each weekend and organize ushers to become better ambassadors of the Church.

b. Action Step #2 to achieve Goal:

Plan a Ministry Outreach Information Day throughout the year.

c. Action Step #3 to achieve Goal:

Plan a focus group to determine what kind of social events would interest parishioners. This group would be composed of young families, singles, and senior couples.