

Plainville-Wrentham Catholic Collaborative St. Martha Parish and St. Mary Parish



Pastoral Plan July 2017 – June 2020

“Go therefore and make disciples”



Our Collaborative Purpose

Our Saint Martha - Saint Mary Collaborative purpose is to help each other to know, love, and serve the Lord, to inspire spiritual growth as disciples of Jesus, serve those in our community, share His Good News in word and deed, worship the Lord, and celebrate as a vibrant family that places Christ at the center of our lives and communities.

Our Collaborative Values:

Love, Compassion, Welcoming, Boldness

Love – We strive to treat all people as God’s children with love and respect.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples...” **John 13:34-35**

- We will treat all we meet with kindness and welcome everyone as if they were a member of our own immediate family.
- We will be open to understanding other people’s perspective and experiences without judgement.
- We will look for opportunities to show God’s love through our inconspicuous acts, both planned and unplanned.

Compassion – We strive to be kind to everyone we encounter and share compassion and empathy to help bring people closer to God and the church.

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. **1 Peter 3:8**

- We will have a concern for the suffering or challenges of others, accompanied by a strong desire to help and to demonstrate empathy for all people.
- We will encourage all to have faith and trust the Lord with our compassion and understanding.
- We will take the time to consider those who feel excluded and work to find ways to include them.

Welcoming – We aspire to welcome others and bring God’s gifts of love, joy and peace to all people.

“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.” **Matthew 10:40**

- We will view all who enter our churches, including newcomers, as precious assets to our parishes.
- We will move into the pew so others can share the pew and feel welcome.
- We will strive to make every event hosted by the parish or collaborative a positive and welcoming event.

Boldness – We trust God and strive to take bold steps with great enthusiasm to grow and share our faith as disciples of the Lord Jesus.

That speech may be given me to open my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel. Ephesians 6:19

- We will speak freely about our relationship with God.
- We will teach parishioners to be able to express why the Catholic Church and its teaching are important to us when the occasion presents itself.
- We will have the courage to invite others to attend Mass with us and become more active in parish life.

Our Collaborative Vision

Picture this...

Our parishes are filled with Catholics engaged in their faith through a welcoming atmosphere, inspiring music, meaningful homilies, and sacramental celebrations. A growing number of parishioners are becoming intentional disciples of Jesus Christ, realizing that growing in a relationship with Him is a lifelong process. As disciples, we continually reach out to others, inviting them to partake in both spiritual and outreach activities.

Our Collaborative Priorities for 2017 - 2020

Over the next three years, the Pastoral Team (priests, deacons and staff), the Pastoral and Finance Councils, and the parishioners of the Collaborative of St. Martha Plainville and St. Mary Wrentham will focus our efforts on the following three pastoral priorities and associated goals in order to fulfill the vision of Disciples in Mission and foster the New Pentecost in our local church.

- Strengthening and Growing the Sunday Experience
- Vocations and Discernment, Especially Diocesan Priesthood
- Faith Formation of Adults and Families

Priority: Strengthening and Growing the Sunday Experience

The parishes of St. Martha and St. Mary have identified, "The Sunday Experience", as one of our top priorities. We learned through the Disciple Maker Index survey that:

1. 70% of respondents feel that vibrant and engaging Sunday Mass drives people to recommend the parish as well as help people grow spiritually. (21% strongly agree and 49% agree)
2. 84% of respondents want to connect and belong to the community. (37% strongly agree and 47% agree)

Our top priority is to develop a structure of people, roles, and activities that support the Sunday Experience, centered on the Mass but extending beyond: "From the time people first think about going to Mass through the time they get home again..." By shared planning and implementation, our parishes will be recognized as actively connected communities, and others will be drawn to and benefit from our Sunday Experience.

"Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily..." Acts 2:46-47

- **Goal: Sunday Experience Team** – Train a Sunday Experience Team for the collaborative by April 30, 2018.

Some important milestones and strategies that will aid in the fulfillment of this goal are:

- Clergy, Pastoral Staff and Key Volunteers to identify 3-4 parishioners from each parish to form the Sunday Experience Team by October 1, 2017
- The team writes a Charter (internal policy document) to guide its organization and operation by Dec. 31, 2017.
- Collaborative clergy and others provide foundational training for the team, to include liturgical catechesis, insights from the PWT, etc. by April 30, 2018.

- **Goal: The Mass Itself** – The Sunday Experience Team will coordinate 3-5 significant enhancements at the Mass by June 2020.

Some important milestones and strategies that will aid in the fulfillment of this goal are:

- The team will research the needs of the parishes and best practices from other parishes (through reading, consultations, surveys, site visits, etc.), beginning at their training and periodically throughout the process.
- Potential enhancements could include areas such as atmosphere/welcome, participation, community/closeness, music, homilies and central message.
- Team proposes at least 1-2 specific changes per year to the pastor for confirmation.
- Within 3 months of a change being confirmed, the team coordinates implementation of each change through collaboration with the ministries involved, communication with parishioners, and facilitating
- Within 9-12 months, the team seeks feedback to help evaluate the impact of each change.

- **Goal: Beyond the Mass Proper** – The Sunday Experience Team will create annual plans by July of each year, to include outreach, social and communication initiatives that will increase the level of involvement and hospitality of the Sunday community.

Some important milestones and strategies that will aid in the fulfillment of this goal are:

- By August 2018, the Sunday Experience Team will plan 2 to 3 after mass social events, or coordinate efforts with existing events, designed to tie together the Mass and strengthen our Parish communities (e.g., after Mass social events).
- By October 2018, the Sunday Experience Team will begin executing quarterly outreach campaigns to engage our non-present Collaborative communities (welcoming newly registered households, outreach to college/military/homebound).
- By November 2018, the Sunday Experience Team will begin executing communication campaigns to engage our Collaborative communities via various means (e.g., publicity and electronic communications).
- Team proposes specific plans to the CPC for them to advise the pastor on their suitability.

Priority: Vocations & Discernment, Especially Diocesan Priesthood

For our Parishes to maintain a focus on the celebration of the Eucharist and become true centers of the New Evangelization, we need both faith-filled disciples and dedicated parish priests. Vocations in the Church include marriage, religious life, ordained ministry, and other personal callings to serve the Lord in the Church or in the world. Building a culture of vocations – awareness of God’s calling and discernment of each of our personal vocation – is critical to our future and to encouraging members of

our parishes to respond to the call to diocesan priesthood to serve our parishes, requiring us to be intentional about vocation ministry in our collaborative.

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." -Proverbs 3:5

"The harvest is great, but the laborers are few. Ask the master of the vineyard to send more laborers to the harvest." Luke 10:2

- **Goal: Collaborative Vocation Team** – Train a Collaborative Vocation Team (CVT) consisting of at least five and no more than ten members (including at least one priest or seminarian, and possibly other Pastoral Team members) by February 1, 2018.

Some important milestones and strategies that will aid in the fulfillment of this goal are:

- Clergy, Pastoral Staff, and Key Volunteers identify potential candidates for the CVT for the Pastor to invite to serve on this team.
 - Collaborative Clergy, with assistance from the Pastoral Staff, develops plans to train the new CVT in the three foundational areas (marriage, religious life and ordained ministry) of encouraging vocations, especially diocesan priesthood.
 - Pastor and representative(s) from the Plan Writing Team assemble the CVT in the autumn of 2017 to discuss their mission and schedule meetings for training and planning of an initial activity proposed by the Pastor, which focuses on diocesan priesthood.
- **Goal: Christian Discernment** – Collaborative Clergy, with assistance from the CVT and consultation of the Collaborative Pastoral Council (CPC) and pastoral staff, develops plans to catechize the parishioners about Christian discernment in general and discernment of life vocation by Feb 15, 2018.
 - **Goal: Vocations Initiatives** – Implement two to three activities in each of these key areas: (1) Prayer for Vocations, (2) Vocation Awareness, and (3) Vocational Invitation by June 30, 2020.

Some important milestones and strategies that will aid in the fulfillment of this goal are:

- CVT studies available resources and best practices for each key area.
- Annually (ideally each September), CVT proposes two possible activities from each key area to the Pastor, who in consultation with others will choose one in each area to be implemented that academic year.
- Plan the activities chosen for that academic year, including communications (with parish leadership groups and all parishioners), catechesis, and implementation.

Priority: Faith Formation of Adults and Families

The Collaborative of St. Martha and St. Mary has expressed a desire to provide opportunities for the faith formation of adults and families. Thankfully, 24% felt strongly their parishes helped them grow spiritually as Catholics, but this also suggests an opportunity to increase the portion who feels this support. By providing a safe and comfortable environment for the discussion of our faith, adults and families will grow spiritually and continue their journey as disciples of Jesus Christ. The movement of parishioners from a passive to an active membership is essential to growing our faith community.

"In the same way your light must shine in people's sight, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16

- **Goal: Family Retreat** – Facilitate a Family Retreat to help 8-15 families from Plainville and Wrentham to live their faith more vibrantly by November 2018.

Some important milestones and strategies that will aid in the fulfillment of this goal are:

- Identify an initial retreat purpose and establish expectations by July 2017.
 - Recruit a facilitator by September 2017.
 - Organize a retreat committee by November 2017.
 - Determine goals, review expectations and establish key retreat action items by January 2018; these should include some form of follow-up with participants post-retreat.
 - Identify the site to be used by March 2018.
 - Come up with a variety of activities which reflect the purpose of the retreat by June 2018.
 - Project the cost of the retreat (food, activities, location...) by August 2018.
 - Advertise the Family Retreat through the Parish website, Constant Contact, Bulletins, Social Media, and personal invitation by September 2018.
 - Evaluate and make a recommendation on whether to continue family retreats by December 2018.
- **Goal: Small Group Programs** – Engage 80-100 adults in small group programs that deepen their encounter with Jesus Christ in personal ways by June 30, 2020.

Some important milestones and strategies that will aid in the fulfillment of this goal are:

- Create a small team to investigate programs such as Alpha, ChristLife, Word on Fire, and Cursillo.
- By August 2017, the small team determines which programs will be most suitable for our parishioners to encounter Christ and share their faith.
- Locate facilitators for proposed programs by October 2017.
- Determine locations, meeting times, materials, and any additional volunteers needed by November 2017.
- Promote the programs through the Parish website, Constant Contact, posters, existing groups and personal invitation by December 2017.
- Launch initial groups by January 2018.