

Saint Brendan the Navigator Roman Catholic Church

Parish Pastoral Plan

2015 - 2017

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SAINT BRENDAN THE NAVIGATOR ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

PARISH PASTORAL PLAN FOR 2015-17

Introduction

In 2014 Father Ryszard endorsed a suggestion from one of our small faith sharing community groups that we renew the Pastoral Plan and build upon our strengths. A Parish Planning Work Group was approved by Father Ryszard and the Parish Council for the purpose of updating the Pastoral Plan. A timeline was established to guide the planning process and regular reports were provided at each Parish Council meeting in 2014-15.

In the early phase of planning, two mornings of reflection were held with interested parishioners. As the process evolved, parishioners were invited to participate in planning through several resource groups.

Key Components	Benefits
<p>Review and update the parish vision and mission statement.</p> <p>Conduct an inventory / survey of all facets of parish life.</p> <p>Work in a consistent way with the Diocesan Pastoral Plan and the vision, mission and needs identified in the survey of parish life.</p> <p>Set program priorities, annual goals and objectives for the next 3 to 4 years.</p> <p>Outline expectations for parishioners, clergy, and program / ministry leaders.</p> <p>Review and determine organization, staffing, training and resource requirements necessary to accomplish goals.</p> <p>Establish a process to implement the plan and monitor our progress in achieved goals and objectives.</p> <p>Develop a periodic review to update the Pastoral Plan on a regular basis.</p>	<p>To provide a comprehensive overview of the parish resources and programs that are available to assist all parishioners in meeting their Baptismal call</p> <p>To promote involvement, accountability and stewardship in our Parish Community</p> <p>To establish a renewable framework for setting goals consistent with parish, diocesan and papal priorities</p> <p>To measure and track 'indicators of spiritual health' such as spiritual commitment and congregational engagement / active discipleship.</p> <p>To provide a comprehensive reference / resource of programs and ministries to parishioners, clergy, leadership and staff</p>

THE BISHOP'S VISION STATEMENT FOR THE FOR THE DIOCESE OF RALEIGH AND THE DIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN

The bishop's vision statement in the diocesan pastoral plan, emphasizes the universal mission of the Church to evangelize. More specifically:

- a) To foster enthusiasm in all Catholics for their faith
- b) To invite all people to hear the message of salvation in Jesus Christ
- c) To foster Gospel values in our society.

The Diocesan plan urges us to: Promote the Life and Dignity of the Human Person

- a) To live the Gospel
- b) To cultivate sacramental life
- c) To promote priestly and Religious vocations
- d) To promote human dignity, through pro life activities, limiting all types of violence, in supporting marriage, cultural diversity and immigration reform.

THE PASTOR'S VISION STATEMENT FOR ST. BRENDAN PARISH

The overall goal is to enrich the parish community and to provide for the overall spiritual, physical, psychological and social health and well-being of parishioners and others living in southwestern Brunswick County. This dream will build upon previous work accomplished in this parish.

During the past several years we have been financially prudent in paying down our building debt and this will continue into the future. As this occurs, we will also begin to envision expansion of our campus to accommodate our dream for a healthy parish community. This dream will continue to engage all of our ministries, and will focus on several components: the overall health and well-being of parishioners, the education of our adults and children, and partnering with members of the local health care community to achieve this dream.

It is anticipated that this longer term vision will be addressed in planning initiatives for the next few years, and I have established a 'vision group' to pursue this vision for our community.

OVERVIEW OF THE PARISH PLAN DEVELOPMENT

In February 2014, the Parish Council approved the charter of the Parish Plan Work Group to begin updating the parish plan. Its planning initiatives used the Diocesan guidelines, in concert with specific components unique to our parish community. These components have been identified through the work of the Communications Resource Group, the Welcome Committee, the Organization and Ministries Resource Group, Data Group and the Parish Life Survey, completed in April 2015.

PARISH GOALS FOR 2015-2017

Drawing on the information conveyed through the Parish Life Survey and the work of the resource groups, the parishioners of St Brendan Church emphasize that their Catholicism focuses on the mass, and that their spiritual needs are met. Similarly, while they view the parish as a welcoming community, and are comfortable in a dual linguistic/cultural parish, the survey reveals matters of stress and ambiguity in other areas of parish life. High numbers of responses of “no opinion” may indicate a lack of familiarity with the topic in question. These and other observations drawn from the survey, in conjunction with the diocesan plan, have shaped our parish plan’s goals.

The following sections outline the goals and specific charges associated with achieving those goals. Also listed after each charge are the names of the individuals and/or groups responsible for carrying out the charge.

1. COMMUNITY

Pope Francis has used the analogy of the field hospital as to what the Church should be; a place of refuge, of healing, of hope, and of joy that we share in the presence of our living, saving God. Our parish in turn seeks to be a welcoming home where there are no outcasts, no inferiors, no “they”.

Goal: To continue to develop our parish enriched by diversity, as our common spiritual home.

Charge:

- 1) To increase our efforts to register new parishioners, to provide them through welcome teams and new parishioner receptions with easy access to the many facets of our parish community. (Welcome Ministry Committee)
- 2) To develop a greeter program to assist at all masses and parish events. (Welcome Ministry)
- 3) To foster a parish community that recognized and values its diversity, cultural and other, so that there can be unity without uniformity. (Parish and Finance Councils working with the pastor)
- 4) Specifically, to partner with the diocese to provide formation training, and the resources for pastoral responses to the needs of our diverse population. (Parish and Finance Councils working with the pastor)
- 5) To continue our weekly Sunday Mass in Spanish, to support our Hispanic ministry staff, and to work for more effective communication with our Hispanic parishioners. (Pastor)
- 6) To identify and develop the team structure, and information and communication requirements for outreach to our parishioners and others by residential neighborhoods. (Adult Faith Formation staff working with leader of Small Church Communities)
- 7) To continue to work for justice for immigrants according to the principles stated by the diocese and the USCCB. (Pastor and immigration specialists working with Catholic Charities)

- 8) To continue to reach out to those who are poor, homeless, ill, alone, bereaved, and imprisoned, through our ministries and in collaboration with local agencies. (Vision Team working with Loaves and Fishes, Bereavement and Prison Ministries)

Goal B: We will engage all of our ministries to focus on improving: the overall health and well-being of parishioners, educate our adults and children, and partnering with members of the local health care community, to strive for better health and well-being of parishioners and others living in Southwestern Brunswick County.

Charge:

- 1) To establish a “Vision Team” to develop a publicity strategy to engage parishioners and others in Brunswick County in identifying and prioritizing the key aspects of this goal. (Parish and Finance Council working with the Pastor and Vision Team)
- 2) To assess the resources of the parish’s physical plant so it may contribute to this goal. (Parish and Finance councils working with the Pastor)
- 3) To collaborate with other parishes in our deanery that already have established well-being centers or similar goals. (Parish and Finance councils working with Pastor)

2. SACRAMENTAL PRACTICE AND FAITH FORMATION

St. Brendan parish will continue to emphasize the Eucharist as the center of parish life. The mass is overwhelmingly viewed by parishioners as the core of their Catholic identity. Two thirds of the survey respondents agreed that parish programs encouraged their spiritual growth. The number who had no opinion, or disagreed, may indicate a lack of information and the need for more effective communication regarding the available programs.

Goal: To foster parish life centered on the Liturgy.

Charge A: In conjunction with the pastor, the liturgical ministries will:

- 1) Strive to provide a reverential, festive and meaningful celebration of the liturgy (Pastor and Liturgy Ministries)
- 2) Promote reverence for, and understanding of the Scriptures as they are proclaimed during mass (Pastor and Liturgy Ministries)
- 3) Provide for the ongoing training of Eucharistic ministers, lectors and altar servers (Pastor and Liturgy Ministries)
- 4) Provide appropriate faith development and worship programs for the various liturgical seasons. (Pastor and Liturgy Ministries)

Charge B: Drawing on the experience of our faith development ministries, we will, through semiannual joint meetings, review, evaluate and initiate programs that will foster lifelong catechesis, with attention to programs in Spanish. (Pastor and Faith Formation ministries)

3. EVANGELIZATION

In the bishop's vision for the diocese, the call to evangelize is the keynote theme. While in the parish survey, parishioners were enthusiastic, confident and affirmative in their replies to such areas of faith as worship and social justice, their responses to the section on evangelization were markedly less so, with among the lowest 'agree' and highest 'no opinion' tallies in the survey. Parishioner uncertainty about their role in evangelization and their unfamiliarity with the forms that it can take is not a surprising consequence of the history of American Catholicism. Catholics were often an unwelcome immigrant minority, operating within ethnic parishes, and seeking acceptance and assimilation. The mindset of this cultural inheritance can linger over the generations.

Goal: To develop a parish wide sense of, and commitment to, our Baptismal call to evangelize. "Pastoral ministry in a missionary key seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says 'we have always done it this way'. I invite you to be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, styles and methods of evangelization ". Pope Francis, "The Joy of the Gospel" #33

Charge:

- 1) To establish a special ministry to develop programs and activities to foster greater understanding within the parish of the call to evangelize. (Pastor and Director of Adult Faith Formation)
- 2) To coordinate, through this new ministry, with the other parish programs and ministries to more effectively bring an evangelical character to their respective works. (Pastor and Ministry Coordination Team)
- 3) To explore how RCIA Program can be more effective in assisting those who are thinking of joining our faith community. (Pastor working with Director of Adult Faith Formation)
- 4) To explore how, as a parish, we can ecumenically engage with other individuals and communities of faith. (Pastor working with Faith Formation Ministries)

4. SOCIAL JUSTICE

These ministries include all work directed at promoting human dignity, not only within the parish, but also in the wider regional, national, and global communities. These ministries are advocates of justice and the building of God's kingdom, addressing such issues as health care, homelessness, economic and cultural exploitation, persecution and violence in all forms, immigrants and refugees, and environmental degradation. Within the parish, the survey showed strong support for parishioner involvement through parish ministries and local civic organizations. The responses, however, also indicated a need for ongoing educational programs on Catholic social teaching.

Goal A: To maintain, develop and create new Social Justice Ministries shaped in the light of the gospel, through church teaching in response to present local and global needs.

Charge:

- 1) To establish by homilies and educational programs, information about and understanding of Catholic social teaching. (Pastor and Faith Formation Ministries)
- 2) To review, evaluate and plan within semi-annual joint meetings of ministry leaders for new, as well as ongoing needs. (Pastor working with Social Ministry Leaders and Ministry Coordination Team)

5. LEADERSHIP

The leadership of the pastor, and all the parish councils and ministries that assist him, is to be modeled on the leadership of Jesus, who came not to be served, but to serve. The tasks of such leadership, in union with the parishioners, include forming a parish vision of itself within the church, defining its mission in the world, and in turn, creating the organizational structures necessary to implement that mission. But primarily this leadership seeks to convey through that vision and sense of mission, a pervasive spirit of joy in sharing the gospel.

Goal: That all levels of leadership convey a sense of the joy and the privilege to serve the people of God, and thereby encourage others to discover and use their gifts in this service. (Parish and Finance Councils working with the Pastor)

Charge:

- 1) To review and evaluate the charters, goals and staffing procedures of councils and ministries so that they convey the spirit of the gospel and the vision and mission of the parish. (All councils and ministry leadership working with the Pastor)
- 2) To emphasize the role of the Parish Council, under the pastor in providing direction, liaison and coordination among the various programs and ministries. (Pastor working in conjunction with Parish Council)
- 3) For the Parish Council to communicate about these activities with parishioners through the Parish Council minutes made available on the parish website. (Parish Council recording secretary working with Web Master)
- 4) To emphasize the role of effective communication in fostering trust, harmony and cooperation within the parish. (Pastor working with all councils and ministry leaders)
- 5) To especially emphasize the need for transparency in decision making concerning policies, finances and staffing so that rumor and misinformation do not sow discord. (Pastor working with all councils and ministry leaders)
- 6) To encourage and expand the use of the parish website, and to explore other aspects of communication technology and strategies. (Pastor working with communication resource group)

6. THE MISSION STATEMENT

A Parish's Mission Statement, based on the foundation elements of our Catholic faith, proclaims the parish's reason to exist, and how it aspires to fulfill the work of the gospel. Our present mission statement is:

*No matter what your present or past status in the Catholic Church.
No matter what your current family or marital situation.
No matter what your past or present religious affiliation.
No matter what your personal history, age, background, race or color,
you are invited, welcomed, accepted and loved at St. Brendan Catholic
Church.*

Responses to the survey indicate a favorable view of our current mission statement as welcoming, compassionate and non-judgmental. A large minority of our respondents valued it as a strong welcoming statement, but not one that expressed our specific Catholic beliefs and goals, such as the Eucharist and the call to evangelize.

Goal: To examine the mission statement in light of the diocesan plan, the pastor's vision statement, the work of the various ministries and the parishioners' survey responses, to determine how it reflects the sense of our parish, with which our parishioners can strongly identify, and which gives St. Brendan Parish its distinctive character.

Charge: To establish under the leadership of the Parish Council a representative group to work towards this goal. (Parish Council working with the Pastor)

7. STEWARDSHIP

We recognize that we are all stewards of God's gifts to us, and that we are called to share these gifts of time, talent and treasure with our brothers and sisters in Christ. This is achieved through our various ministries and programs.

Goal: Emphasizing our Baptismal call to be faithful stewards, to fully utilize the talents of our parishioners in service of the Gospel.

Charge:

- 1) To elicit a response of service from every member of the parish community. This will be accomplished by prayer for the work of, and active participation in parish and community service organizations. (Pastor working with Ministry Coordination Team on recruitment initiatives)
- 2) To continue the work begun as part of the parish planning process by communicating the new ministry structure with its links to the Parish Council and to the parish at large. (Pastor working with Ministry Coordination Team)
- 3) To identify measurable tasks and timelines. (Ministry Coordination Team working with all ministry leaders)
- 4) To establish a staffing model which invites and assists parishioners to participate in these ministries. (Pastor working with Ministry Coordination Team)

- 5) To establish procedures that welcomes and facilitates new leadership (All councils working with the Pastor and ministry leaders)
- 6) To update the parish ministry listing twice each year and make this available to our parish community. (Pastor working with Ministry Coordination Team)
- 7) To consider highlighting various parish ministries in the bulletin and occasionally provide updates from the pulpit. (Ministry Coordination Team working with Communication Resource Team)

7(a). Ministry Structure

As described in 7 above (stewardship), we recognize that we are all stewards of God’s gifts to us, and that we are called to share these gifts of time, talent and treasure with our brothers and sisters in Christ. This is achieved through our various ministries and programs. We are blessed to have so many of our members involved in parish leadership, all connected in Christ and moved by the Spirit to create an engaging, spiritually-committed church. We should always celebrate and live in awe at the level of service provided by our parish family.

In March of 2014 we held a retreat with many of our ministry leaders and parishioners. We learned there is a desire for unity and to journey together as a family around one table of thanksgiving. Everyone desired a focus on improving the welcoming culture of our church. There was a desire for more discussion and orientation so as to get to know our own ministry and other members as well as build collegiality across ministries. A desire was expressed to understand ministry recruitments methods and how we communicate within and across ministries. Those in attendance wished to continue in active ministry and to evangelize others and serve as models for the young in our parish. To help achieve these goals, this plan suggests the creation of an ad hoc group appointed by Parish Council to assist Council members and ministry leaders in the implementation of the Pastoral Plan goals .

In section 7A there is an organization chart; the Ministry Coordination Team is recommended as an ad hoc group that will assist the parish go beyond simply accomplishing tasks and objectives, to caring for and building up the ministry team and in addition to general shepherding responsibilities, this ministry team must diligently work at cultivating certain qualities within all the ministries at St. Brendan Church by accomplishing these tasks listed below:

- Achieving ownership of the church's vision (integration) and how the team fits within it (identity)
- Ensuring connectedness and commitment to one another as well as a passion for the cause
- Developing a culture of mutual respect and cooperation out of a Christ-like humility
- Setting an expectation of openness and honesty in communication in a climate of trust

The proposed structure is linked to the Parish Council and it is suggested that one or more Parish Council members serve as liaison to the areas of parish of life shown on the organization chart. There should be periodic reports to the council and a spirit of teamwork within and across all areas of parish life. This also allows the ministry members and leaders to engage in accomplishing the goals and charges of the parish plan.

PARISH COUNCIL

MINISTRY COORDINATION TEAM

FINANCE COUNCIL

AREAS OF PARISH LIFE WITH PARISH COUNCIL LIAISONS

LITURGY	SPIRITUAL FORMATION	SOCIAL MINISTRY/ SOCIAL JUSTICE	PARISH COMMUNITY
Liturgical Ministries:	PRAYER	SERVICE:	Welcoming Ministry:
Adoration	Adult Faith Formation	Bereavement	New Parishioners
Altar Candles	Bible Institute	Christmas Giving Tree	Returning Parishioners
Altar Linen Care	Bible/Spiritual development	Friendly Visitors	Greeters
Altar Servers	(e.g. <i>History of the Church,</i>	Gift Shop	Social Gatherings:
Collection Counters	<i>Faith's Journey,</i>	Immigration Services	Fiesta Mexicana
Eucharistic Prayer	<i>Searchers of Scripture)</i>	Linking Lives	Brendan Brown Baggers
Service	Book Discussions	Loaves and Fishes	Feast of Our Lady of
Liturgy of Hours (Divine Office)	Cursillo (Hispanic)	Prison Ministry	Guadalupe
	Days of Reflection	Receptionists	Funeral Fellowship
Music	Library	Recognition of	Kings Day
(<i>Accompanists, Sanctuary Choir, Cantors, Hispanic Choir</i>)	Rite of Christian Initiation	servicemen/women	Second Sunday Coffee
	Small Church Communities	Respect Life	Singles Group
	Children's Faith Formation	St Joseph's Society	Thanksgiving Dinner
	Sacramental Preparation		New Parishioner Welcome Receptions
Eucharistic Ministers	Prayer:	Fraternal Groups:	Communication/Publicity:
Lectors	Centering Prayer	Alcoholics Anonymous (Hispanic)	Access project (pastoral software)
Sacristans	Creative Spirit	Columbiettes	Archivist
Greeters	Healing Prayer	Knights of Columbus	Bulletin
Ushers	Morning Rosary	<i>Squires</i>	Distribution
Sanctuary Enhancement	Prayers for Peace	Franciscan Associates	Maintenance of Website
Audiovisual (lights/sounds)		Order of Holy Sepulchre	Residential Community
Funeral Ministry (Lazarus)			Liaisons
Wedding Coordinator			Web site and technology

8. EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF GROWTH

Our parish community will develop plans to use our resources in the most efficient and effective manner to provide for the needs of our parishioners in a continually challenging environment. Our finances remain steady and stable with little change from previous years. Since 2012 St. Brendan Church has reduced its

current mortgage debt from 9 to 5 years with our outstanding balance now less than \$1,000,000. We continue to be served by an excellent finance committee that oversees our financial resources.

Goal: In planning for the ongoing development of the parish plant and resources to prudently examine opportunities for greater service.

Charge:

- 1) To use the information obtained in our Data and Demographic Survey done in 2015 to plan for and monitor the growth of our church community. (All councils working with the Pastor)
- 2) To explore how the financial aspects of the parish can be made more effectively transparent, so in turn, to foster a greater sense of shared involvement that encourages parishioner financial support. (Parish and Finance Councils)
- 3) To create procedures to regularly assess from the parish and local community to determine changing needs and resources. (Parish and Finance Council working with the Pastor and the Communication Resource Group)
- 4) To maintain a current planning document that reflects ongoing proposals and budgets. (All Councils and Ministries working with the Pastor)

9. PROMOTE VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD AND CONSECRATED LIFE

Vocations can flourish within a parish culture that encourages individuals to hear and respond to the call to the priesthood or consecrated life by its prayers and activities.

Charge: To adopt diocesan recommendations as appropriate for prayer and support of vocations. (Pastor working with Liturgy and Prayer Ministries)

10. IMPLEMENT THE PASTORAL INITIATIVE ON MARRIAGE AND SUPPORT OF FAMILY LIFE

The parish can play a role, within the context and demands of contemporary society, to assist our parishioners to witness to the sacrament of marriage and to value children and family life.

Goal: To assist in the above.

Charge:

- 1) To partner with the diocesan marriage and family life advisory board to draw on its resources. (Pastor and Pastoral staff)
- 2) To honor married couples at Sunday Mass. (Pastor and Liturgy Ministries)
- 3) To promote diocesan retreats for married couples. (Pastor from pulpit and via bulletin announcements)
- 4) To provide opportunities and create programs which recognize the needs of those separated or divorced so that they can share fully in the life of the parish community. (Pastor working with Ministry Coordination Team and Singles Group)

11. PRIORITIES

Not everything can be done at once. Drawing on the bishop's and pastor's visions, the work of the parish resource groups, and the current reality of the parish as presented through the Parish Life Survey, the following aspects of parish life have emerged as priorities on which to focus and emphasize over the next two years.

Priority 1: Parish Community. This includes welcoming, more effective communication, multicultural unity, and establishing the parish as a center of spiritual, physical, psychological and social well-being. These goals and charges are found under 1. COMMUNITY, Pages 4-5

Priority 2: Ministry Reorganization. It is through the various ministries that the talents of the parishioners, as faithful stewards of God's gifts, can be utilized to meet the many and varied needs of the parish and the community. A more effective organizational structure of these ministries, integrated under the Parish Council is necessary to insure on-going coordination of efforts and effective commitment of parish resources. This goal and its charges are found under 7. STEWARDSHIP, Pages 8-10

Priority 3: Evangelization. Unlike the first two priorities, topics with which parishioners are familiar and which have their wide support, the parish life survey indicates that parishioners did not have a clear and comprehensive understanding of the mission to evangelize. In light of the bishop's vision in the diocesan plan, and Pope Francis exhortation "The Joy of the Gospel", creating a parish wide commitment to evangelization is an urgent priority, requiring a special ministry, highly endorsed by the pastor, enthusiastically supported by the Parish Council. This goal and charges are found under 3. EVANGELIZATION, Page 6

Priority 4: Parish Council Leadership. A plan is not a plan until it is actually implemented. Permeating this entire pastoral plan, and here specifically accentuated, is the recognition that under auspices of the pastor, the Parish Council carries the primary responsibility to implement its goals and charges. This responsibility includes initiatives, communication, coordination and evaluation. In conjunction with the ministries leadership, the Parish Council is to lead in defining ministry's mission, assessing personnel and budget needs, and in developing measureable outcomes and timetables. This goal and charges are found under 5. LEADERSHIP, Page 7

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Parish Planning Work Group thanks our Pastor, Father Ryszard, for his participation and confidence in our group, and for his encouragement and leadership throughout the pastoral planning process. Thanks as well to the Parish Council and Finance Council for their support. Finally, thanks to all the parishioners and staff members who provided support, worked on various subgroups and offered their prayers each week at Mass for the success of the pastoral planning process. It is our sincere hope that the pastoral plan that is the result of those efforts will serve our parish community well over the coming years.