

December 8, 2019  
*Second Sunday of Advent*

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I am pleased to present our Collaborative Pastoral Plan, which charts the course for the growth of the St. John-St. Paul Collaborative over the next three years. In the early years of our Collaborative, we held two forums, one focusing on Adult Faith Enrichment and the other on Christian Service. These gatherings each brought together over 100 parishioners from our two parishes who gathered to discuss areas of parish life vital to our living out the Gospel. These gatherings were wonderful opportunities for us to get to know each other better as we reflected on our common faith and our desire to live that faith more fully. A number of major Collaborative initiatives are the fruit of these discussions, including our St. Vincent de Paul Society, Immigrant and Refugee Services Committee and our Sunday 5pm Youth Mass. These thriving new ministries have brought a renewed sense of vitality and life to our parishes and demonstrate the great things that God can do through us as we work together as disciples of Christ.

The Plan outlines four areas of focus and growth for the next three years: Adult Faith Enrichment, Christian Service, Vocations, and Hospitality. The Collaborative Pastoral Council has been working for the last two years in assessing the data you provided us in the earlier forums, to develop a plan that does not merely celebrate the great things already happening in our parishes, but rather identifies potential areas of growth in each of these four key categories. The Plan does include initiatives that have already begun, since the life our Collaborative continued as the Plan developed. Most of it articulates new initiatives that will help us all to grow in our living as intentional disciples of Christ.

I am awed as your pastor by how you are already living out your call as disciples by the myriad ways you serve the needy and grow in your faith, all in the context of a loving relationship with Jesus Christ. This Plan is not meant to be a catalogue of the important ministries already thriving within our Collaborative. For example, the Plan makes no mention of Youth Ministry. However, our ministry to and by our young people remains an ongoing priority. Rather, the Plan articulates opportunities to expand upon and deepen the impact of existing ministries and to provide new opportunities to live out Jesus command: *"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."* (Mt 22:37-40)

Our thriving community of faith would not be possible without your participation and leadership and we are looking to widen the circle of involvement in the life our community. We need *you!* We need *your* gifts as you respond to God's loving call in your life. Together, as we grow in our love of God and our neighbor, may we more and more fulfill Jesus' call to be *"the light of the world."* (Mt 5:14)

Yours in Christ,



Reverend James J. Laughlin  
Pastor

# St. John-St. Paul Collaborative Pastoral Plan: 2020-2022

## Vision Statement for Our Pastoral Plan

Joined together in faith and Christ's love, the St. John-St. Paul Collaborative seeks to be a place where faith and life come together. The essence of the Collaborative is our relationship with Jesus Christ, as individuals and as a community. In encountering Christ and living our faith through service, we find the source and inspiration of all our efforts to share the Good News with and beyond our Collaborative, as we examine more deeply the mystery of God's love, respond to His call to holiness, and discern His plan for us.

## Introduction to the Plan

After prayerful reflection and active discussion, the Collaborative Pastoral Council offers this Pastoral Plan which seeks to foster a spiritual environment with a culture of thoughtful and purposeful planning. At a time when our Church faces unprecedented challenges, our Collaborative sees opportunities for members to engage more fully in the work of the Collaborative and to spread the Good News of God's love.

## Areas of Immediate Focus

Our Pastoral Plan identifies four areas of immediate focus:

- **Adult Faith Enrichment** - Provide faith enrichment opportunities for adults to explore multiple aspects of their faith, including their relationship with God, prayer, and the teaching of both Scripture and Tradition.
- **Service** - Provide enhanced opportunities for parishioners to serve our Collaborative, our communities, and others in need in unique, varied, and direct ways, according to their God-given talents and interests.
- **Vocations** - Expand the awareness and understanding of vocations within our Collaborative by enriching our understanding of both religious and secular vocation as worship, service, and a fulfillment of our Catholic journey.
- **Ministry of Hospitality** - Cultivate a culture where everyone feels responsible for participating in the life of their Parish, and empowered to welcome and host. Develop a faith community where every person feels seen, heard, and welcomed. Foster opportunities for Parish and Collaborative-wide celebrations.

## Adult Faith Enrichment

Growing in faith and our relationship with Jesus Christ is a lifelong journey. The St. John-St. Paul Collaborative seeks to find ways to accompany and support people at every stage of their journey.

**GOAL:** Provide faith enrichment opportunities for adults to explore *a//*aspects of their faith, including their relationship with God, prayer, and the teaching of both Scripture and Tradition.

### **Milestone 1: Develop and Launch a *Collaborative Adult Faith Enrichment Commission (CAFEC)***

- Invite individuals from each parish with a strong desire to develop programs and opportunities to deepen the faith for themselves and others (*JANUARY 2020*)
- Identify parishioners' desires for ongoing faith enrichment opportunities within the Collaborative (*JUNE 2021*)

### **Milestone 2: Create Disciple-Building Initiatives**

- Form a sacramental subcommittee whose objective is to create meaningful programming and ongoing support for those in our faith community who are receiving the sacraments (*JUNE 2022*)
- Provide Collaborative retreat opportunities in the areas of marriage, family, and spiritual discernment and prayer (*ONGOING*)
- Develop in-home faith sharing groups, exploring varieties of ways to pray in community (*APRIL 2020*)
- Coordinate a Collaborative pilgrimage to the Holy Land (*2021*)
- Provide sacramental catechesis opportunities for adults wishing to enhance their scope of knowledge in the seven sacraments of our Church (*ONGOING*)

### **Milestone 3: Enhance and Support our Current RCIA Program and Offerings**

- Develop a personal, relevant and engaging Collaborative RCIA training manual for participants (*JANUARY 2020*)
- Communicate opportunities for those in our pews who have not yet been received into full communion with the Catholic Church to learn more about the faith (*SEPTEMBER 2022*)
- Forge partnerships with the chaplaincy programs at nearby colleges to create opportunities for students to participate in the RCIA program (*SEPTEMBER 2021*)

### **Milestone 4: Explore Topics of Relevance to the Contemporary Catholic Church**

- Create a working group to identify issues and possible speakers to address topics of interest (*SEPTEMBER 2021*)
- Hold a forum to discuss the role of Lay Leadership (*DECEMBER 2021*)
- Hold a forum to discuss separation, divorce and annulment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Church (*DECEMBER 2022*)

## Service

St. Paul tells us in his letter to the Ephesians that we are created in Christ Jesus for good works, so that those around us can see the love of God through us, and so we can see the love of God in them. St. Teresa of Calcutta tells us that “God gives us things to share; God does not give us things to hold.” The St. John-St. Paul Collaborative seeks to share the gifts that God has bestowed on us.

**GOAL:** Provide enhanced opportunities for parishioners to serve our Collaborative, our communities, and others in need in unique, varied, and direct ways according to their God-given talents and interests.

### **Milestone 1: Launch and Advance a *Collaborative Service Commission (CSC)***

- Establish CSC comprising individuals from each Parish (*JANUARY 2020*)
- Establish and support subcommittees in areas such as sick and homebound care, feeding those in need, Christmas Giving, seasonal initiatives, prison ministry, *Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos* Partnership, and Immigrant and Refugee Services (*JANUARY 2020*)

### **Milestone 2: Welcome a Refugee Family to Our Community in Collaboration with the Catholic Charities’ Parishes Organized to Welcome Immigrants and Refugees (POWIR) Program**

- Establish a Collaborative Immigrant and Refugee Services Committee (*IRSC*) (*JANUARY 2020*)
- Develop and train *IRSC* subgroups in the areas of housing, pre-arrival, post-arrival and medical needs (*JUNE 2020*)

### **Milestone 3: Develop a Summary of Service Opportunities and Initiatives**

- Host annual Service Fair (*SEPTEMBER, ON AN ANNUAL BASIS*)
- Design and develop Collaborative Service brochure (*SEPTEMBER 2020*)
- Update Parish and Collaborative websites with timely and relevant service data (*JUNE 2020 AND ONGOING*)

### **Milestone 4: Enhance Service within Our Catholic Community and to the Liturgy**

- Expand volunteer opportunities and invite additional altar servers, ushers, sacristans, Eucharistic Ministers, lectors, and collection counters to serve, with the goal of increasing participation (*JUNE 2021*)

## Vocations

*But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, Jacob, and formed you, Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine. (Isaiah 43:1)*

Every person is precious in the eyes of God and is uniquely made in God's image. We want to help every parishioner to be attentive to God's plan for them, whether their vocation is lived out as a married or single person, lay, priest or religious. As a person responds faithfully to God's call, his or her life becomes a gift to the whole Church.

**GOAL:** To expand the awareness and understanding of vocations within our Collaborative. We seek to enrich one's understanding of both religious and secular vocation as worship, service and a fulfillment of our Catholic journey.

### **Milestone 1: Develop an Annual Vocations Month**

- Invite seminarians from Saint John's Seminary in Brighton for a witness event regarding their discernment process *(MAY 2021)*
- Invite a woman consecrated religious to share her witness call to vocation *(MAY 2021)*
- Host a "Vocations in Secular Living Evening" featuring professionals witnessing to their faith in secular professions *(MAY 2021)*
- Integrate a prayer for vocations into the Mass during vocations month *(MAY, ON AN ANNUAL BASIS)*

### **Milestone 2: Develop Periodic Communications Model for Religious Vocations**

- Establish a quarterly schedule of bulletin and website articles featuring our Collaborative seminarians *(JANUARY 2020)*
- Establish prayer group dedicated to vocations *(JUNE 2022)*
- Include a prayer for vocations at the end of Mass on a given week each month *(MAY 2020)*
- Participate in *World Day of Prayer for Vocations (MAY 2020)*

### **Milestone 3: Vocation of Marriage and Family Life**

- Affirm the Sacrament of Marriage through the Annual Celebration of Milestone Wedding Anniversaries *(APRIL 2020)*
- Provide periodic bulletin announcements of the recipients of the Sacrament *(JUNE 2020)*
- Provide a Marriage Retreat for Collaborative *(MAY 2022)*
- Establish programs focused on living your Catholic Faith in daily family life *(SEPTEMBER 2021)*

# Ministry of Hospitality

Throughout Holy Scripture we are taught to open our hearts and our homes to others. We are committed to making our worship spaces a places of warm reception and genuine connection. The virtue of hospitality also provides us with the opportunity to grow as followers of Jesus Christ.

**GOAL:** Cultivate a culture where everyone feels responsible for participating in the life of their Parish, and empowered to welcome and host. Develop a faith community where every person feels seen, heard, and welcomed. Foster opportunities for Parish and Collaborative-wide celebrations.

## **Milestone 1: Develop and Launch a *Collaborative Hospitality Committee (CHC)***

- Form a committee with representation from each Parish that is responsible for organizing “the welcome” at every Mass (*SEPTEMBER 2020*)
- Initiate additional fellowship opportunities following weekend Masses (*SEPTEMBER 2020*)

## **Milestone 2: Enhance and Support Parish *Social Committees (PSC)***

- Develop a Parish Social Committee at St. John Parish that is responsible for planning social opportunities outside of liturgical celebrations (*JANUARY 2021*)
- Expand the Parish Social Committee at St. Paul Parish to provide ongoing opportunities for social engagement (*JANUARY 2020*)
- The combined PSCs develop and coordinate Collaborative-wide social events (*JUNE 2021*)

## **Milestone 3: Develop a Ministry to Welcome Newcomers**

- Develop welcome package for prospective or newly registered parishioners (*JUNE 2020*)
- Create Parishioner Partnership Program to connect families preparing for the sacraments of baptism and matrimony with current parishioners (*SEPTEMBER 2022*)
- Host newcomers’ event twice-a-year (*SEPTEMBER 2022*)

## **Milestone 4: Transition to a Single Collaborative Website**

- Transition from separate parish websites to a comprehensive, up-to-date Collaborative website that highlights the strength and reach of our Collaborative, while maintaining the unique identities and rich history of each parish (*SEPTEMBER 2020*)
- Develop a website tab, including a comprehensive calendar, to provide more detailed information about our parishes and liturgies (*SEPTEMBER 2020*)
- Publish opportunities to engage more fully in Parish/Collaborative life (*ONGOING*)