

St. Mary/St. Frances Cabrini Parish

Pastoral Plan

2011 – 2016

Mission and Vision Statement

Mission Statement:

We, St. Mary/St. Frances Cabrini Parish, celebrate the Risen Christ in our lives, the lives of our families, and in our community by living the Gospel message.

Vision Statement:

St. Mary/St. Frances Cabrini Parish will form Catholic Christians into the Body of Christ

- ... to be a people open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit
- ... to be an element of Hope for the local community
- ... to be aware of and active in Social Justice Issues for our community, our nation, our world.

Presentation Draft – October, 2011

Overview of the Listening and Planning Process

In February of 2010, a Leadership Team for parish listening and planning was formed from members of the Pastoral Planning Council, Finance Council and members of the parish who expressed an interest in joining the Team. The Team met with Rick Krivanka, Director of the Pastoral Planning Office for the Diocese of Cleveland, who served as a consultant.

In February, March and April the Team participated in a preliminary process to surface relevant topics for our parish and designed a process for listening. The intent was to reflect on the strengths of our parish and look to our future, knowing that Christ wants us to have life in abundance and a future of hope. This work led to initiating *Parish Conversations* beginning in May of 2010 that involved 1:1 interviews about what gives life and hope to our people.

The following topics were identified for the *Parish Conversations*:

- Being a Welcoming Family of Faith
- Deepening Our Relationship to God – Centered in the Eucharist
- Strengthening Family Life – Passing on Our Faith from Generation to Generation
- Finding Support and Stability in Living Our Everyday Lives
- Being Called to Minister through the Word
- Seeing Our Unity and Possibilities as One Community of Faith, including the use of our facilities
- Three Wishes and Hopes for the Future

Detailed verbatim comments from each interview were entered into a master document.

Teams of parish leaders were then formed to carefully review what was said and to prepare summaries for each topic. These summaries were shared with the parish community in the fall/winter of 2010.

On Sunday, March 27, 2011 a Dream Retreat was held to invite parishioners to share their further hopes and dreams for the parish, building upon what was said in the *Parish Conversations* interviews. A summary of these reflections was then shared with the parish community in April.

In the summer of 2011, a team of parish leaders met to draft a pastoral plan based upon the listening and visioning process that had been done.

In the fall of 2011, this plan was further reviewed and an Implementation Schedule and related action steps were developed by the Leadership Team.

The Implementation Schedule is found on the last page of this document.

The Pastoral Planning Council and Finance Council will oversee the ongoing implementation of this plan.

A Welcoming Family of Faith – Engaging People in Parish Life

St. Mary / St. Frances Cabrini Parish has a welcoming spirit that is the foundation of our hope for the future. Our acceptance of others is reflected in the words: “the doors are open.” The positive atmosphere of our community is reflected in a family feeling and comfortable environment. Church is family and our parish is our “faith family.” We come to know others through our faith, and are committed to open ourselves to ways to attract more people.

Voices and Vision of Our Parishioners

In listening to our people, we hear that our people appreciate and find life in the following:

- The people spoke of the “family” atmosphere they experienced in the parish: *“The smiles of the greeters,” “The parishioners were welcoming and Father was reassuring and comforting. I felt like I was home.” “When I joined the Parish Life Committee and enjoyed the activities it did.” “I felt so welcome. Instantly I felt a part.” “The church felt like a loving family.” “The parish is family.” “Parishioners are personable and friendly.”*
- People value being at parish gatherings and in groups where individuals go out of their way to extend warmth and welcome. Without this kind of effort, some persons may feel a lack of friendliness or a sense of being excluded.
- Social activities of parish picnics and festivals. *“Young families, middle-aged families and seniors would all come together to enjoy each other’s company and life.”*
- Concern for the homebound was expressed: *“Have a telephone chain line to check on the elderly and homebound parishioners.” “Go to the hospital weekly to give communion.”*

We are committed to sustain and build upon these gifts and experiences by committing to be and do the following:

A-1) Create a broader spirit of welcome in our parish.

A-2) Form a Parish Life Committee that will:

- a. organize at least two multi-generational activities per year with parish funding that will build and enhance our parish community.
- b. cooperate with the Family Life Committee in organizing family-oriented activities quarterly during the year (See Goal 4 on page 5 – *Strengthening Family Life*)

A-3) Train teams of volunteers to provide:

- a. grief support for our parishioners
- b. a social outlet for our senior parishioners
- c. a sense of connection between the parish and our homebound members

Deepening Our Relationship to God – Centered in the Eucharist

St. Mary / St. Frances Cabrini Parish helps each of us to feel close to God. While we can have faith, we realize that our faith grows and deepens in the Celebration of the Eucharist. We cherish our traditions and rituals. We are awed by the “sights & sounds” of the Mass. We hold in our hearts much pride and special feelings of accomplishment during our celebrations of First Communion and Confirmation. The whole parish involvement in the RCIA process has been a source of life for all.

Voices and Vision of Our Parishioners

In listening to our people, we hear that our people appreciate and find life in the following:

- Participating in the Mass and other liturgical events. Being involved as a liturgical minister “*gives a feeling of being a part of something*” and “*gives importance to my religion.*” Being asked directly to become involved is important, especially “*when you see that you have a gift to share with the parish.*”
- Learning about the Eucharist and Scripture, and relating it to everyday life. Sermons that “*apply our faith to everyday living*” with more “*real life examples*” are important to hear each Sunday. In addition, “*having an understanding of my religion is inspiring*” and suggested “*talk more about the Eucharist and devotions.*”
- A welcoming environment through the people and music. A comfortable environment helps us to “*feel closer to God*” and creates an “*enthusiasm of the faith community, the pastor and staff.*” “*Greeters at the door*” and “*great music each Sunday*” help develop that welcome feeling.

We are committed to sustain and build upon these gifts and experiences by committing to be and do the following:

- B-1) Develop a Liturgical Ministry Team to: (“*active*”):
 - a. Recruit and train new parish members to serve as liturgical ministers
 - b. Provide ongoing catechesis for all liturgical ministers
 - c. Recruit and educate members for the Worship and Environment Committees
 - d. Schedule a quarterly orientation session (lasting an hour) for all new ministers (lectors, Eucharistic ministers, altar servers) with a focus on including families.
 - Invite everyone to one session and focus on participating as a family.
 - Have break out sessions for each ministry.
 - Finish with all participants coming together for a social.
 - Focus on enthusiastic participation with reverence, not perfection.
- B-2) Formalize a Parish Education Committee to: (“*conscious*”):
 - a. Organize parish catechesis opportunities (e.g. Dinner and Doctrine)
 - b. Develop and disseminate information regarding Catholic doctrine
 - c. Write weekly “Scripture in everyday life” thoughts for the parish bulletin
- B-3) Encourage having the churches filled at each weekend Mass in ways that foster our fullest participation (“*full*”)

Strengthening Family Life – Passing on Our Faith from Generation to Generation

Our Catholic faith strengthens our family life. We are excited to bring children to Church and are grateful for the presence of great young families. We continue a tradition that has lasted for centuries: faith is passed on from parents to children and from families to friends. It is important for families to be involved in attending Mass together and in other areas of parish life.

Voices and Vision of Our Parishioners

In listening to our people, we hear that our people appreciate and find life in the following:

- Having families participate in Mass together: taking the gifts at the offertory, being readers, Eucharist ministers... *“I was a reader and Eucharistic minister. My daughter was a reader. My two other children were altar servers.”*
- Celebration of the sacraments; *“Making First Communion and being Confirmed made me feel closer to God and richer in my faith.” “I was an altar boy then, and it was absolutely a big deal.”*
- Participation in parish activities; *“When we helped at the church festival, it was a family event. I was always excited to work as a religious family and be able to work with and see all of our religious friends.” “Having activities for children [of all ages]...so they will have peers that share their experiences and faith.” “Having activities directed toward families of young and old.”*

We are committed to sustain and build upon these gifts and experiences by committing to be and do the following:

- C-1) Invite a family before each Mass to bring up the gifts at the Offertory.
 - a. Be sensitive to different forms of families: a couple, parents and children, single parent family, single persons, aunt/uncle, grandparents, etc.
- C-2) Provide meaningful family preparation for the sacraments: education for the parents, preparation for the children, activities for parents and children together;
 - a. Draw from the expertise and experiences of the parishioners.
 - b. Keep parishioners engaged in the sacramental process by using the parish bulletin, church bulletin boards, and the parish website for announcements and updates
- C-3) Form a Family Life Subcommittee of the Parish Life Committee with a core group of parents and parishioners.
 - a. Plan and implement a family activity each quarter (approximately 4 times per year)
 - b. Consider forming subgroups as needed, e.g. parents of toddlers, parents of youngsters, parents of middle-school children, etc.
 - c. Explore ways to follow up the celebrations of Marriage and Baptism by better supporting and engaging newly married couples, young families, and new parents with pre-school age children

Encouraging and Inviting our Youth

We cherish the willingness of our youth to participate in the life of the parish and realize how important it is to create space and opportunities for them. We seek to expand our efforts to involve more youth, especially those in high school.

Voices and Vision of Our Parishioners

In listening to our people, we hear that our people appreciate and find life in the following:

- The most common statement was seeing our youth work the fish dinners. "Seeing our youth helping out at the fish dinners and other dinners and breakfasts, I was so impressed with their willingness to get involved and give up their Friday nights."
- Other persons noted *"the Youth Conference."* *"World Youth Day - when chaperoning and watching our youth mingle with the others."* *"Being in church with young people at First Communion."* *"Confirmation, preparations and banners were obviously inspiring, but the hope and grace that filled their hearts and souls were so evident."*

We are committed to sustain and build upon these gifts and experiences by committing to be and do the following:

- D-1) Pre-Teens: Help children to experience and be actively involved in the timeless rituals of our Church
 - a. Processions for seasonal events, devotions in honor of Mary, Stations of the Cross
 - b. Quiet time for Eucharistic Adoration
 - c. Liturgy of the Word with children
- D-2) Teens / High School students: Form a Youth Ministry Team from a core group of parents and parishioners and youth to assist teens and high school aged students in planning and carrying out liturgical, social, recreational and service activities.
 - a. Do a study to identify the potential number of teens and pre-teens that are present in our parish for possible youth activities
 - b. Consult with teens and parents using a survey or meetings
 - c. Identify and invite teens to become actively involved in parish activities to include:
 - Liturgical ministries such as altar servers, lectors, cantors, musicians, greeters – with helpful preparation that supports them in doing their best
 - Different forms of prayer such as Taize and Lectio Divina
 - Social activities that might include: games, theater, movie nights, recreational activities utilizing Township Park, pizza parties, picnics, outings to regional professional sports events
 - Community service and mission projects
 - Care of the parish buildings and grounds
 - d. Develop cooperative efforts with other denominations (e.g. Good Shepherd Lutheran) and possibly with the Ashtabula parishes
 - e. Meet with strong youth groups in other churches to learn from their experiences
 - f. Explore the possibility of having a special gathering space for youth

Called to Minister through the Word in Service to Our Parish and Wider Community

Through our Baptism and life in the sacraments, we are called to serve and minister to others. Every member of our parish is talented and gifted in a special way. We seek to encourage more people to share their talents in helping one another and serving others in the parish and wider community. Our parish members offer a diversity of role models in ministry and service to others. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we promote service to our community through care for the poor, the aged and the un-churched and we promote peace and justice.

Voices and Vision of Our Parishioners

In listening to our people, we hear that our people appreciate and find life in the following:

- Volunteering personal time and energy in *“helping to count the collection,” “teaching CCD classes,” “being a member of the choir,” “serving as a Eucharistic Minister,” “participating in RCIA Rite of dismissal,” “working with others in the parish on committees, fish dinners.”*
- Participating in Parish Outreach as a *“member of Vincent de Paul,” “making shawls for Prayer Shawl Ministry,” “visiting the sick,” “baking”* for various activities and events.
- Spreading the Good News by *“volunteering in LEAF,” “coaching at CLYO and Jobs for Grads program,”* and *“being in our non-denominational discussions.” “As a hospital employee when I was consoling someone I knew whose husband just died.”*

We are committed to sustain and build upon these gifts and experiences by committing to be and do the following:

- E-1) Develop and complete the STM/SFC Ministry Book (listing and describing all parish ministries and activities).
 - a. Include the Ministry Book with the Parish Census/Survey.
- E-2) Form a Parish Census/Survey Committee to research the available models of Parish Census/Surveys and then create our own Census/Survey to help determine the gifts and talents parishioners are willing to share with the parish.
 - a. The parishioners would then be surveyed during the Easter season.
 - b. Committee members would determine how and when to share the information with the parish.
- E-3) Create a Ministry Recruitment Team to learn effective ways to engage people and to help parishioners to become involved and take ownership for parish activities as outlined in the Pastoral Plan.
- E-4) Invite representatives from various community service groups to speak to the parish about ways to better serve the wider community.

Deepening Our Unity as One Community of Faith and Building a Sound Future

We are grateful for our unity in the joining of the two parishes. We recognize that as a sign of this unity: “It doesn’t matter where we celebrate” – “Mass is Mass.” We realize the need to explore more possibilities for deepening our unity and to look at using our facilities wisely, including possibilities such as a parish center.

Voices and Vision of Our Parishioners

In listening to our people, we hear that our people appreciate and find life in the following:

- While we are blessed with abundant facilities between both worship sites, redundancies are now being recognized by the Faith Community and must be addressed to move our Parish forward in Unity. *“Downsize, but set goals NOW to have one church, one hall, so money saved can be spent on people and programs in the faith community.”*
- Both church buildings hold a deep bond within the hearts of many in the Faith Community *“...both (churches) are distinct and important in their own way;” “St. Frances Cabrini is newer, but St. Mary is historic.”* Yet while the subject of keeping both St. Mary and St. Frances Cabrini open was strongly supported, progress toward our “new” Parish yielded responses such as *“Although I have many fond memories of St. Mary Church, I now realize that life goes on and things must change;” “Everyone needs to let go of their preference for one worship site over the other. We are the people of God, not the building.”*
- Facilities such as Church Hall buildings and the former Oblate Sisters’ convent have served their purpose; minor changes can better serve our local community. *“...use the convent for an assisted living center;” “We need to look at the resources we have... (and make) available to the public. It would make us more visible in the community;” “Use (St. Mary) hall classrooms as offices, improve kitchen facilities.”*
- *“No hasty decisions – make practical decisions.”*

We are committed to sustain and build upon these gifts and experiences by committing to be and do the following:

- F-1) Solidify our vision of being a people *“open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit,”* by having the Parish Leadership Team, in conjunction with various committees, prepare a Three-Year Implementation Plan that would result in sound decisions for our buildings. The steps would include:
- a. Move all Masses to one worship site for an extended period (6 months to 1 year);
 - b. Maintain current Mass times;
 - c. Coordinate the logistics of related parish activities;
 - d. Discuss together and discern the advantages and disadvantages of each worship site during the respective period of using each site;
 - e. Continually monitor and analyze the financial impacts of the different options;
 - f. Summarize the cumulative findings of the analysis and draw conclusions based on the available data;
 - g. Reach out to the parish community throughout the process to carefully listen to people and to understand and serve their spiritual needs during the transition phase.

Implementation Schedule for the Pastoral Plan

2012	<p>January</p> <p>Goal A-2: Form a Parish Life Committee</p> <p>Goal E-2: Form a Parish Census/Survey Committee</p>	<p>March</p> <p>Goal E-1: Develop and complete the STM/SFC Ministry Book</p>	<p>May</p> <p>Goal E-2: Complete the parish survey during the Easter season</p>	<p>September</p> <p>Goal E-3: Create a Ministry Recruitment Team</p>	<p>October</p> <p>Goal D-2: Form a Youth Ministry Team</p>
2013	<p>January</p>	<p>April</p> <p>Goal F-1: Plan for experiencing all Masses at one Church site for 6 months</p>	<p>May</p> <p>Goal C-3: Form a Family Life Subcommittee</p>	<p>September</p> <p>Goal B-1: Develop a Liturgical Ministry Team</p>	<p>October</p> <p>Goal F-1: Plan for experiencing all Masses at the other Church site - 6 months</p>
2014	<p>January</p> <p>Goal A-3: Form and train a Bereavement Team</p>	<p>April</p> <p>Continue Goal F-1 above</p>			<p>October</p> <p>Continue Goal F-1 above</p>
2015	<p>January</p> <p>Goal B-2: Formalize a Parish Education Committee</p>				
2016	<p>Goals to be developed</p>				

Ongoing Goals:

- A-1) Create a broader spirit of welcome in our parish.
- B-3) Encourage having the churches filled at each weekend Mass and foster our fullest participation.
- C-1) Invite a family before each Mass to bring up the gifts at the Offertory.
- C-2) Provide meaningful family preparation for the sacraments.
- D-1) Help children to experience and be actively involved in the timeless rituals of our Church
- E-4) Invite representatives from various community service groups to speak about ways to serve the wider community.

