



Family Action Plan
Family of Parishes (FoP) #
Family Name:



Please note:

This outline is meant to be an opening draft to initiate our journey and is flexible for the addition of other aspects as deemed helpful as we move forward. Also, modifications should be expected to be made as new ideas/information presents itself.

I. PLAN INTRODUCTION

Family of Parishes (FoP) Overall Mission can be stated by a very brief explanation of where we are currently and how it prompts the absolute renewal that is needed in everything we do in “being Church,” how we need to methodically challenge the assumptions of the past that brought us here and change them using Jesus’ example and the Holy Spirit as our guide.

“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him - Col. 3:17”

To assure complete alignment with the Bishop’s vision for the Diocese of Buffalo, all Vicariates and FoP’s are expected to adapt the Principles and Core Behaviors of the diocesan Pastoral Plan, A Light Unto My Path. However, you may choose to further customize these to fit your FoP’s needs by making your own additions.

Diocesan Guiding Principles

- Prioritize our Eucharistic Mission
- Demonstrate True Lay/Clergy Collaboration
- Be Transparent
- Ongoing Synodality
- Create safer environments
- Reach Outside Our Tent: Engage Diverse Populations
- Optimize Resources
- Inspire others

Additional Principles that the FoP would like to also focus on:

- True community integration and unity
- A primary focus on growing in our Faith
- A total Stewardship way of life
- A focus on making this process enjoyable, fun, unifying

• **Diocesan Core Behaviors:**

- Authenticity: Living what we teach and preach
- Respect: Embracing the dignity of everyone
- Trust: Being trusting and trustworthy
- Transformation: Open to change and innovation
- Compassion: Empathetic and responsive
- Stewardship: Wisely using resources
- Repentance: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive others

Additional Core Behaviors that the FoP would like to also focus on:

- Community life: Being “Family” minded
- Discipleship: Keeping Jesus as our first focus
- Fostering a sense of belonging
- Prayerfulness: the source of our identity

II. FAMILY ACTION PLAN

A. PLAN ELEMENTS

A Family Action Plan is a 3-year plan containing each year’s Pillar goals, strategies/tactics and measurements.

1. Choose Pillar goals for each year

2. Assign strategy to achieve goals – This refers to choosing the ways in which the goals can be accomplished and measured to ensure we achieve the expected results.

• **Example:**

- *Goal: Making our Family of Parishes’ Faith Formation Program more vibrant*
- *Strategy: Offering a wide variety of educational opportunities for all ages*

3. Measure Progress

- Always begin by measuring your baseline (current reality)
- Track and document results while applying current strategy and activities
- Create reports and graphs

B. 6 PILLARS

This section outlines, defines and documents goals/objectives for each of the 6 Pillars of Church life and their sub-functions. These pillar sections and sub-sections should always be constructed and decided upon using not only what is temporally strategic and logical but also, how our activities and innovations and decisions positively impact and enhance people's experience of God.

B.1 Liturgy Pillar Plan

Year 1 Goals	Year 2 Goals	Year 3 Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create and implement a Mass schedule that supports the spiritual needs of our FoP ● Unify liturgical ministries (Lectors, EOM's, Altar Servers, Sacristans) ● Develop general guidelines for our Parish Liturgical Committees ● Provide ample opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation ● Begin a weekly Spanish Mass to serve our Hispanic community ● Conduct major liturgical celebrations of the year in a fashion that fosters the greatest amount of attendance and participation across our FoP ● Add evening weekday Mass opportunities in central locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focused effort to invite, incorporate, and train more people to help with liturgical ministries. ● Develop a schedule of special yearly liturgies e.g. Feast Days, Mass of Remembrance, Mass for the Unborn, Pentecost Celebration, Annual celebration of the newly baptized across our FoP, etc. ● Inventory all liturgical items ● Re-evaluate weekend Mass schedule ● Evaluate and strengthen liturgical music ministries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review and promote continued growth and participation in lay liturgical ministries. ● Discard old or unusable liturgical items appropriately. ● Assess and make adjustments where needed in areas previously mentioned.

Strategies to Accomplish Year 1 Goals:

- Manuals for liturgical ministries are being compiled and training for current ministers are being held.
- Adding Confessions 15 minutes before each/most daily Masses.
- Pillar group should meet with all of the priests to ensure that they are on the same page regarding involvement and actions of lay liturgical ministries.

Are there preliminary steps that are required to achieve these year 1 goals?

- Make decisions regarding liturgical and sacramental scheduling
- Create manuals/guidebooks for liturgical ministries

Universal report required: Track Mass attendance. Tracking tool will be provided.

B.2 Spiritual Life Pillar Plan

Year 1 Goals	Year 2 Goals	Year 3 Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct LITE Retreats: 2 during Advent and 2 during Lent. ● Give out free "This Is My Body" books to all parishioners and facilitate small group discussions. ● Inviting our FoP members to participate in an intercessory prayer plan for the return of family and friends to the practice of faith. ● Option for more LITE retreats for specified groups, e.g., Youth, young adults, children, families ● Eucharistic Adoration: full day a week at four of our churches; special monthly opportunities as well. ● Build on recent Bible Study/faith enrichment success at one of our Parishes by creating and supporting similar opportunities ● Create and disseminate a descriptive pamphlet promoting Retreats; e.g., Cursillo, Retrovaille, Steubenville, Marriage Encounter, Alpha, LITE, etc. ● Special focus on promoting Cursillo options in both Buffalo and Rochester. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continuation of LITE opportunities ● Develop a Parish retreat on increasing and enhancing personal prayer life - "Lord, teach us how to Pray" ● Solidify Eucharistic Adoration plan and involvement ● Fostering an awareness of available devotions in the Church. ● Ensure Bible study and Adult faith enrichment options are available in all locations. ● Create an annual yearly plan for Spiritual life and faith enrichment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Renew our vision for what our possibilities are. ● By this point, we want to see our FoP existing as a community with a strong spiritual life, with many opportunities for spiritual growth, development, and involvement. ● Ensure that the groups and activities available are on a good track, positive and up-building.

Strategies to Accomplish Year 1 Goals:

- Offer retreats during our most prayerful seasons of the year at different locations, times, and in varying formats.
- Communicating to our parishioners through a variety of channels like Mass announcements, social media, our website and our unified bulletin.

Are there preliminary steps that are required to achieve these year 1 goals?

- Create and build a large group of trained disciples from all the parishes to help conduct LITE retreats.
- Having two-mini retreats to create interest and encourage parishioners to volunteer for LITE retreats.
- Creating a simple guide to help facilitate small group discussions/book groups for "This is My Body."
- Promote, promote, promote

B.3 Forming Disciples Pillar Plan

Year 1 Goals	Year 2 Goals	Year 3 Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build on existing faith formation and sacramental prep foundations ● Continue developing our plan for faith formation and sacramental prep in 2023-2024, realizing that this year is a bridge year building towards our long-term programming. ● Learn from families as the year transpires. ● Create a long-term faith formation vision and begin implementation for 2024-25 ● Implement programming that will excite middle and high school youth, making them feel a part of something they genuinely enjoy ● Comprehensive and excellent Sacramental Preparation ● Implement Baptismal, Marriage Prep, and RCIA/OCIA (nothing previously was done) ● Ensure Safe Environment compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluation of year one faith formation and sacramental prep ● Recruitment to grow programs ● Establish simple, consistent process for fulfillment of safe environment trainings ● Grow youth ministry ● Review Faith Formation staffing set-up ● Consider/implement CGS ● Provide excellent Catechist Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to build on faith formation and other youth programming ● Stabilization of Sacramental preparation across the board ● Arrive at a place of strong youth and young adult ministry across our FoP. ● Evaluate feedback and further develop safe environment training process

Strategies to Accomplish Year 1 Goals:

- Work with and support our Faith Formation Coordinator to get 2023-24 faith formation underway
- Clear communication throughout the family on programming and opportunities
- Provide a way to receive constructive feedback on faith formation
- Hire Faith Formation assistant
- Set up teams of Catechists at each Faith Formation Center
- Document Sacramental preparation process internally and externally for parents and participants in a lucid manner
- Utilizing PDS and other tracking systems (Excel spreadsheets, Google Docs, etc) to keep all participants on the radar and to communicate more readily with families.

Are there preliminary steps that are required to achieve these year 1 goals?

- Many have already been completed
- The strategies above are the steps

B.4 Stewardship Pillar Plan

Year 1 Goals	Year 2 Goals	Year 3 Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foster an authentic understanding of what Stewardship is, and with that begin to build a total Stewardship way of life in our FoP. ● With that, create a sense of belonging, unity and commitment among the faithful of our FoP. ● Support and urge associated Pillars to create worship and ministry opportunities that foster Stewardship. ● Establish fundraising standards that will ensure compliance with State and Diocesan auditing standards. ● Collaborate with Administration Pillar, and Family and Parish Finance Councils to develop a perpetual care fund for each of our cemeteries. ● Focus on greeters/welcome ministries to provide intentional and radical hospitality to new and established parishioners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce Annual Commitment ● Evaluate and further Year 1 goals ● Assess Parish stewardship of our assets and create realistic and long-term sustainability plans. ● Assist Pastor with Annual State of the Parish and State of Family Meetings. ● Transfer from a “Volunteer” mindset to a “Steward” mindset. ● Evaluate our spatial environments with a focus on ensuring that they are welcoming. ● Build on success, recommit ourselves to a focus on the educational part of building Stewardship in our FoP. ● Create a long-term fundraising plan for each parish in our FoP: goals and benchmarks ● Initiate occasional lay witness talks at Sunday Masses (e.g., 4 per year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue individual ministry support with calls for Stewards and disciples as needed. ● Begin annual Leaders retreat ● Build on years one and two and create new goals as successes and deficiencies become apparent.

Strategies to Accomplish Year 1 Goals:

- Create, produce and broadly disseminate a reference pamphlet and other information via various means to educate about and offer opportunities for living a Stewardship Way of Life. This is to include a major publication for each of the three focal points of Stewardship: Time, Talent, and Treasure.
- Educate fellow parishioners via bulletin, website, social media, references at Mass (general intercessions, homilies, etc.)
- Identify and document parish-wide fundraisers to confirm they are: (a) in compliance with State/Diocesan auditing standards; (b) compliant with Catholic faith and social teaching.

Are there preliminary steps that are required to achieve these year 1 goals?

- One bulletin for uniform sharing of education information.
- Evaluate if and how Catholic Stewardship Consultants can further the Stewardship efforts of our FoP
- Learn from the Diocese of Wichita on Stewardship as a way of life.

B.5 OutReach/InReach Pillar Plan

Year 1 Goals	Year 2 Goals	Year 3 Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Execution of the Alpha Program - Fall 2023 and perhaps again in 2024 (even multiple times) ● Seek out volunteer Alpha leader or Alpha leadership council ● Refocus Pillar on our big-picture planning (because with the goal of implementing Alpha, the focus of this Pillar shifter strongly towards this one program) ● Home Visit / Communion to the Sick setup and database creation ● Ask, encourage and challenge our Parishioners to have as a goal to bring or help one person back into the Church and the practice of the faith in 2024 ● Set up book study groups ● Begin new Hispanic Ministry with weekly Mass. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deepen understanding and love of faith through Bible Studies, Adult Faith Formation experiences beyond ALPHA & LITE, possible speaker series, etc. ● Take advantage of our beautiful Churches to make them more open and accessible. Foster visits by parishioners amongst parishes in our FoP. ● Create method and plan to assist those with material needs through our existing ministries ● Develop plan and involvement of others for Hispanic Ministry to migrant workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate and focus on radical Hospitality in all the things that have been created through the first two years of our FoP ● Evaluate the needs of our FoP and the broader communities in which our churches are located and determine in what ways we can be of assistance. ● Continued outreach to Hispanic Community needs.

Strategies to Accomplish Year 1 Goals:

- Promote among Extraordinary Ministers of Communion the special ministry of Communion to the Sick.
- Formulate a plan to help our Parishioners invite others back to faith.
- Create hospitality goals/basic expectations for each Church and foster their incorporation of those goals.

Are there preliminary steps that are required to achieve these year 1 goals?

- Solid promotion and follow up review of Alpha, followed by strategic planning for future Alphas
- Obtain Books for Book study groups
- Signage and Communications in Spanish

B.6 Administration Pillar Plan

Year 1 Goals	Year 2 Goals	Year 3 Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Full set-up of Long Term Business office ● Complete the set-up of Family staffing and Office Steward support staff. ● Develop employee handbook and job descriptions ● Development of org chart ● Unified communication set-up (website, bulletin, etc) ● Successful launch of Family and Parish Financial Councils. ● Creation of expectations and roles for Finance Councils ● Yearly Code of Conduct and Confidentiality statements for all employees, Family Pastoral and all Finance Council members, Office Stewards, etc. ● Ensure the stability of all Pillars in terms of membership and productivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standardize all recordkeeping, and procedures for cemetery records, and sacramental documents. ● Cemetery finances are in place. ● Assure our process of HR policy and procedures are functioning. ● Assessment of growth to date and growth potential moving forward regarding the number of parishioners, Sacramental activity, financial growth ● Evaluation of all Family building and property conditions and priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enact a plan for long term well being and perpetual care of cemeteries in collaboration with the Diocesan Cemeteries. ● Develop Operational Manual for all processes and activities of our FoP ● Prioritize the computerization of all areas of Parish life that would be helpful to our operations.

Strategies to Accomplish Year 1 Goals:

- Formulate sub teams to work on specific areas to be addressed.
- Assign specific tasks to each team, with time frames to have assignments completed.
- Meet regularly every other week to stay on task.
- Gathering of Information is very important.

Are there preliminary steps that are required to achieve these year 1 goals?

- Tour all parishes to have full understanding of locations and each parish needs
- Meet with the groups periodically on a social level to form friendships and collaboration

C. CONCLUSION

This sums up key elements needed for the envisioned future caste in the positive light of what these advancement and change efforts bring to the Family, parishes, parishioners, and most of all, those seeking God and considering Catholicism.

D. APPENDIX – Suggestions for Pertinent Attachments

- a. Calendar of Key Target Dates for Change Events
- b. Annual, Quarterly, Monthly meeting schedules for the various entities
 - Our Pillars have met twice monthly, and will continue to do so through the month of November. At that time they will meet once a month.
 - Our Administration Pillar has created a schedule for the meetings of the Family Finance Council (10 times per year) and each Parish Finance Council (6 times a year, plus other times as needed).
 - Our Family Pastoral Council will meet monthly.
 - Subcommittees will follow the schedules set by the above groups.
- c. Panoramic view of Projects by Quarter – comprehensive view for each
- d. Training, Templates and Toolkits

E. Commitment and Signature _____