

St. Boniface Parish Pastoral Plan

2017 Annual Report



SOWING THE SEEDS OF GOD'S SAVING LOVE

The first year of our parish pastoral plan was dedicated largely to growing together in our understanding of what ongoing pastoral planning really means. The task forces formed to lead our implementation of the plan and the parish pastoral and finance councils have worked hard over the past year to make the shift from an unstructured, reactive, pastor-focused model of parish leadership to the more structured, proactive, parish-focused model of ongoing pastoral planning, and we are already enjoying some of the fruits of that effort, as you will see in this report.

Thank you to all who have stepped up to lead our parish in this new direction, and thank you too to all of you whose patience and support have made, and continue to make, this effort possible.

PRIORITY ONE: RENEW OUR EFFORTS TO LIVE THE GOSPEL

The Gospel, or “good news,” of our faith is that Christ is risen, conquering sin and death and reconciling us to God. The joy of this news cannot be contained but compels all of us who believe it to share it with others, especially those who do not believe or have fallen away.

An early effort to put this priority into action was to complete a parish census, a task that had not been done for several years. This enables us to have a more accurate idea of who our parishioners are, who in our community are not parishioners, and who were our parishioners but for some reason no longer are. We can then better tailor our outreach efforts to bring the Gospel to people where they are.

We also hosted a speaker series on death and dying, an area of particular need as the local population ages. We invited speakers from within and outside our parish to discuss such topics as planning a funeral, end-of-life medical care, financial planning, and Christian burial. We invited people from the surrounding area and throughout the diocese to

attend, welcoming them into our home.

Future plans to serve this priority include cultivating youth ministry in our parish, modifying some of our major fundraisers in order to draw more people and attract younger persons who may not otherwise find their way to our door, a broad-based outreach to former and non-practicing parishioners, and a brew club, resurrecting the efforts of our founding pastor, braumeister Fr. Oberhofer, to utilize the culture of the people to bring them to Christ.

PRIORITY TWO: TRANSITION TO NEW FORMS OF FAITH FORMATION

Sowing the seeds of God's saving love in the hearts and minds of our neighbors by living the Gospel is a start, but if we don't nurture those seeds with prayer and faith formation, like the seeds sown on bad soil they will die. We have undertaken numerous initiatives in faith formation this year.

The closing of our school has not meant the end of our support for Catholic education. The continuation of the Allgeier scholarship has helped over two dozen St.

Boniface students continue in Catholic elementary school. The task force has also kept parents informed about what the Catholic schools in our area have to offer. Right here at St. Boniface, the first year of our new parish preschool has been a huge success, enrolling nearly 60 students. Future plans include expanding the program, renovating the playground, involving preschool families more in the parish, and inviting them to consider Catholic schools for their children beyond preschool.

Our religious education program has also made significant strides this year. The monthly family Masses, in which children minister to the parish, have been standing room only, helping families make our Sunday Eucharist a more central part of their lives, and the children's Liturgy of the Word has helped our younger children grow in their appreciation of Scripture. Future plans include transitioning from the classroom model to the more flexible and effective family-based model of religious education.

Finally, our adult faith formation team has answered the call, with the rebirth of the Rite of Christian

Initiation of Adults and comprehensive adult formation series on the Mass, mercy, and the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Future plans include further development of the RCIA, a parish-wide retreat, young adult formation opportunities, and the launching of an adult faith formation room.

**PRIORITY THREE:
EXERCISE
RESPONSIBLE
STEWARDSHIP**

Sowing and nurturing the seeds of God's love requires the gathering and responsible use of the material resources of our parish. That is what we mean by stewardship, and we have made important progress in that area over the past year as well.

Our parish's biggest challenge in this area is our significant debt, the bulk of which is the mortgage we took on for the renovation of our church and parish offices. Regardless of one's personal feelings about the renovation, the debt remains, and we have to pay it back. So one of the most important moves we have made under this priority in the past year was to restructure the debt by transferring our mortgage from being a liability we owed a bank to an asset we

own ourselves within the Allgeier support fund.

I want to be clear that we did not raid the Allgeier money to pay off the mortgage. We invested money from the Allgeier support fund in our own mortgage, enabling us to cut our interest rate to 2.5% and considerably shorten our payment schedule, all while ultimately growing the Allgeier support fund, not plundering it. I also want to be clear that this move had no effect on the Allgeier scholarship fund, which is completely distinct from the support fund. Finally, let it be known, that as long as I am pastor here, and I hope that is a long time, we will not pay off our debt by eating up the principal of these endowment funds. Endowment funds are established to be perpetual, and Norman and Agnes Allgeier generously entrusted these funds to us with that intention. Being good stewards means honoring that intention.

2017 was a great start for our pastoral plan, but it was only a start. May God guide and bless us as we take the next big steps in service of our parish mission in 2018.

Peace in Christ and blessed Easter!