

PARISH PASTORAL PLAN 2023/2024

Our Scripture verse as theme: “I am with you always, til the end of the ages”

(Overall insights applied to our four priorities of school, legacy, charity and family faith and life)

-SCHOOL MISSION -Seeing Jesus more and more is the guiding mission for our school though common vision, collective discernment and unified efforts

-LEGACY AND TRADITION- Introducing greater accessibility for our senior members to joining and being remembered in parish life, helping us to live parish unity in the one Spirit

-CHARITY OUTREACH- Informing our parish community of the efforts of our charity outreach and how the Lord makes it all worthwhile in providing and blessing our trust

-FAMILY FAITH AND LIFE- Engaging family life to see, hear and welcome Jesus’ call and presence in our family sharing planning and outreach

-Education/Formation/Recreation are included to value faith life as a source of achievement for growth and friendship

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR APPLYING INSIGHTS TO OUR FOUR AREAS OF PRIORITY OVER THE FOUR SEASONS OF PARISH YEAR

September- November ORDINARY TIME

School

-The school unveils a new scrolling sign for its messaging and is able to truly grow in its unique identity as a faith-based center of learning.

-Children in both school and religious education programs are invited to forward photos of each at the doorway of their homes explaining how they find Jesus when they arrive at home and as they go out each day.

-A ‘Jesus’ mirror is located at the school chapel helping the children to see Jesus in their reflection together with a Mother Mary message that is heard as the doorbell is pressed, also having some decorative ornamentation

-“Write and Wrong” projects help the students to remember the imprisoned and lift their spirits in messages that they prepare and helping these individuals not to be forgotten/ Fr. Sean Winters, director of prison ministry, will be a contact.

-A sports field is introduced on school grounds for outdoor enjoyment and team competition

Legacy

-Senior members are given monthly gatherings sponsored by our ministries (hospitality, choir, food pantry, liturgy ministers) in our church hall so as to lift their spirits and encourage their gifts of faith and life

-November 2 mass of remembrance includes the presentation of a wreath to the family for adorning the resting place of their departed loved one

-Grandparents’ Day, September 10, is celebrated on the Sunday closest with a blessing of families and an invitation of grandchildren to message their grandparents words of love.

-A ‘knitting’ and ‘crotcheting’ group to mentor and teach youth is introduced and will use former convent for their monthly meetings

Charity

-October 1 the volunteers for St. Vincent DePaul and Food Pantry are invited to the blessing of the roses at Carmelite monastery in Flemington and a stop at the Amish farmer’s market to enjoy the harvest

-A display is begun by the donation bin for Food Pantry having favorite Bible verse and favorite prayer to help the hungry from each Food Pantry volunteer which rotates each month

-St. Joseph Parish and Divine Mercy Parish together publish the different activities to reach out to the less fortunate during the autumn season ***with Knights of Columbus council hall serving the needs of the ‘specials’ of Carteret.***

Family Life/Evangelization

-A map is made of our family locations indicated by a cross and copies are shared with each family to spread the invitation to know the parish materials and contacts and join in our common journey.

-A Eucharistic Revival ministry is formed to plan for promoting the national assembly and the events preceding and following in 2024

-The devotion of '1000 Hail Mary's is offered on September 8 in an evening youth celebration asking her intercession on all the outreach efforts in the upcoming seasons (incorporated into service hours for youth)

-Certificate formation classes are begun for youth and family in former convent allowing for college prep credits for students and information sessions for married couples on Knights of Columbus insurance investments are scheduled in same location.

Advent- Christmas

School

-St. Joseph School has the Advent candle carried by every student throughout the special season so that everyone realizes how they are called to be a light for faith as we wait for the Lord (2-3 students daily, if possible)

-Our school Christmas concert is taped and placed on website for enjoyment and pride as our children share their talents and the message of the holy season

-The New Year celebrates 'Mary, Mother of God' and the children bring a spiritual bouquet to the manger to present to the mother of the Savior during offertory procession

-Artwork is placed in the church foyer from school students to share message of Advent/Christmas. Ornament decorating during fellowship weekend is announced for school and PREP families as an annual tradition.

Legacy

-Our senior parishioners are profiled in our quarterly newsletter remembering their special presence at this time of holiday sharing

-Each senior parishioner is called to ask if they would like their home blessed with a visit by the priest or deacon during the Christmas season

-A sign-up is circulated for attendance at special February 11 afternoon mass of anointing in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes

-Seniors sign up to have youth group carolers visit their homes on evening of singing.

Charity

-The St. Vincent DePaul ministry supports the Giving Tree tradition and adds a Secret Santa among their members to be revealed at a Christmas sharing evening

-The Food Pantry invites Santa to come and ring the bell at Sunday mass with a kettle for only loose change collection

-Special Christmas greeting from the parish to all our clients will be placed in bags prepared.

-Front door of parish convent is decorated in Christmas theme with mail slot inviting Christmas wishes from the families who visit the food pantry.

Family Life/Evangelization

-Our small faith sharing communities in the Hispanic community plan the sharing of the 'O Antiphon' days with home visits and caroling together with opening prayers and some fellowship

-The feast of the Three Kings has the visit of the Three Kings on January 6, 5pm mass at fellowship where they will receive children

-The special poinsettia blossom as a family symbol at the end of each mass between the Baptism of the Lord and Candlemas Day on a weekly basis encourages family prayer and active participation

-A Christmas gathering for volunteer catechists together with any confirmation students with perfect attendance are invited to former convent for tree decorating and fellowship.

ORDINARY TIME/LENT

School

-Our school schedule within the new year includes STREAM efforts about understanding how a leap year is caught up in the liturgical year and the role of the Church in our calendar counting as we pray for Christian unity.

-Bring your parent to school day is offered to have our families learn the spirit of a school day and how Jesus is the reason for our school.

-Lenten good works are depicted through small paper hearts added to the central school cross in the main hallway during the holy season

-Second semester of classes begin for certification from Dayton University theology course for high school youth.

Legacy

-Our senior citizen parishioners are given little green books to compliment the little blue book and little black book. These books will contain thoughts for spiritual growth for days between Christmas and Ash Wednesday.

-A parish surprise Bingo, St. Joseph Day sharing is planned for our senior parishioners to enjoy the spirit of our parish patron feast. Youth from the parish will volunteer in kitchen and serving.

-Lent remembers together with weekly Stations of the Cross, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament which will begin, continue and conclude each Friday devotion.

-Senior study days are scheduled for Bible study and faith formation.

Charity

-Food pantry clients are given a waiting area and number system to help in the time of colder weather.

-St. Vincent DePaul society members supported in attending national conference and having a pilgrimage to Miraculous Medal Chapel, Princeton, NJ during Lent

-During Lent additional donation bins for food pantry support are placed at the parish school location and at parish office to help during weekdays.

-Volunteers are invited to participate in the 'Bowl for Hunger' held at Majestic Lanes to assist local food pantry ministries.

Family Life/Evangelization

-Families sign up during Sunday masses for 24 hour retreat experience in the convent for deepening their family love and faith.

-Parents of first communion children are encouraged to leave their written prayer intentions for their children at the tabernacle on first confession day and to receive them back with first communion prayer missal on Easter Sunday.

-Families with loved ones at a distance are invited to a special Stations of the Cross on Fourth Sunday in Lent to remember how our struggles are given a 'joyful' cross that will bring happiness.

-RCIA candidates visit Life Choices Center, Metuchen to learn about the pro-life ministry and how our faith proclaims life in family from its first moment of conception.

Easter/ Ordinary Time

School

-During their spirituality day the faculty receive thank you cards from school families and parishioners encouraging their faith lives and their journey as professionals

-Field trips for the children are encouraged to Blue Army shrine together with Round Valley Reservoir, St. Joseph shrine, Stirling together with Great Swamp and St. Lucy Parish/St. Gerard Majella Shrine, Newark together with Liberty State Park.

-An alumni is invited as keynote speaker for graduation and a 'new century' scholarship is awarded to deserving student.

Legacy

-Easter flowers from the altar are shared weekly following Easter Sunday to a senior citizen winner from our envelope drawing

-Senior citizens are invited to bring in seeds to be planted around the church grounds in memory of departed loved ones and the Resurrection.

-Our senior citizens are invited to bring in pictures of their first communion for history mural display

-Mother/daughter tea reception is planned for parish fellowship during May.

-Father/son pancake breakfast is planned for parish fellowship during June.

Charity

-Food pantry items of health and hygiene are included for summer activity needs

-Shop Rite and local grocers are approached for bags to make packaging easier and rolling carriers are asked of parishioners for needy clients to transport their donations.

-school Scrip cards are accessed through sponsoring a needy family in order to support the school and the food pantry at parish mass

-Prayer group ministry/Legion of Mary/Small faith sharing communities/Hispanic liturgical ministries agree to staff the food pantry monthly effort giving regular volunteers a rest.

Family Life/Evangelization

-families are given suggestions as to celebrate the Easter season with 'Aleluia' prayers and images of the Resurrection to display

-special replica of the Shroud of Turin is brought to the church foyer to invite parishioners/families to know more of this amazing artifact

-Corpus Christi procession is encouraged for all ministries and first communion children with families and the 'specials of Carteret'.

-Certificate award ceremony is held for those youth who complete college credit theology course.