

NORTH SUMMIT 4 CLUSTER PLAN

Mother of Sorrows – Peninsula
Our Lady of Guadalupe – Macedonia
St. Barnabas – Northfield
St. Mary - Hudson

INTRODUCTION

In May of 2007, the Diocese of Cleveland initiated the “Cluster Planning Process,” a planning process to ensure a strong, lasting Catholic presence within the Diocese, strengthening the presence and pastoral care of the Church in an equitable manner throughout the Diocese. The work was to be an extension of the Vibrant Parish Life initiative. Each parish within the Diocese was assigned to a Cluster. Our Cluster includes Mother of Sorrows in Peninsula, Our Lady of Guadalupe in Macedonia, St. Barnabas in Northfield, and St. Mary in Hudson.

Our four parishes selected a **Cluster Planning and Coordination Team** (CPC Team) to oversee the planning process. Most of the following appointed members attended the training session hosted by the Diocese:

Mother of Sorrows: Rev. John Terzano, Leslie Fiala, Michael Guerriero, Evelyn Kaczmariski, James Perusek

Our Lady of Guadalupe: Rev. David Trask, Nancy Freibott, Adam Gockowski, (Herman Henn, deceased), Joseph Kost, Gae Ann Male

St. Barnabas: Fr. Ralph Wiatrowski, Steve Bittel, Lorraine Heck, John Marion, Toni Zobel

St. Mary: Fr. Edward Kordas, Janice Bowen, Beth Davis, Rose Gordyan, Sherri Moyer, (Jack Palumbo, retired from Parish Council President)

At its first meeting, held on August 20, 2007, our Cluster reviewed the five priority issues outlined in Bishop Richard Lennon’s letter of May 2007. The group agreed that these issues, listed below, were applicable to our Cluster, and they formed the basis of our work to identify collaborative opportunities:

- • Strengthen pastoral care in an equitable manner;
- • Strengthen efforts to provide a welcoming and evangelizing presence in the area;
- • Engage all of our faithful in regularly attending and participating in the Sunday Eucharistic Liturgy;
- • Continue to support Church in the City partnerships through Cluster to Cluster cooperation;

- • Continue to monitor enrollment trends and collaborate to insure the long term presence of strong, stable Catholic Schools serving this area and adjacent Clusters.

The balance of this document outlines our Cluster's strengths, key realities and trends, and the goals that support the five priority areas. Throughout our planning process, we have been guided by the following Statement of Intent which reflects our desire to work collaboratively to better serve our parishioners and the wider community.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

“Cluster planning is intended to enhance the vibrancy of parishes and to strengthen the mission, ministry, and pastoral care of the Church in an equitable manner” among these four parishes connected by geography and shared purpose:

- Having, maintaining and growing a strong Catholic presence in this area of Summit County, we gain strength from realizing that it is more important to be part of an overall vibrant Catholic community rather than a particular parish.
- Parishioners feel welcome and comfortable attending Liturgy and programs at any parish in the Cluster. We encourage and support evangelization as it is critical that we grow our parishes.
- Being good stewards of all that God has given us by:
 1. Collaborating and communicating information, resources and initiatives;
 2. Welcoming inactive Catholics and creating an atmosphere that makes them want to return. Evangelization begins with these family members who have fallen away;
 3. Encouraging priests toward interdependence (vs. parish independence), facilitating assistance from each other, by working and living together, which is both beneficial and necessary;
 4. Strengthening the pastoral care of our people and the vibrancy of parish life in our area so that we grow as informed and inviting Catholic Christians thereby leading to an increase in vocations.
 5. Enhancing and enriching member involvement through Cluster activities, yet maintaining the uniqueness within each parish.

In essence, we believe that to plan for the future with a broader sense of the Catholic community will result in increased opportunities for the people to learn and grow in faith and reap the fullness of a sacramental life, celebrating with passion and joy, serving Christ by serving others.

PARISH STRENGTHS AND EXISTING COLLABORATIONS

All four parishes are vibrant and financially stable. They have good attendance at weekend Liturgies, and all are known for their liturgical celebrations, community spirit, social justice advocacy, youth education and sacramental preparation programs. The St. Barnabas School and Seton Catholic School in our Cluster have been recognized for their educational excellence. What is most important is that all four parishes have identified common areas of challenge and similar areas of interest in collaborating, and all have been collaborating at some level within as well as outside the Cluster prior to this endeavor.

KEY REALITIES

GEOGRAPHIC AND PARISH TRENDS

The population that we serve:

- is projected to grow by 2.8% over the next five years. The number of households is projected to increase by 3.5% over the next five years.
- is not a diverse group, primarily Caucasian (93%), 3 % are African American and 4% belong to other ethnic groups including Indian, Filipino and Asian.
- has an average household income between \$106,538 and 115,309.
- is slowly growing older in terms of median and average age.
- is approximately 12 miles apart.
Our Parish Communities (statistics shown are for 2006) include:
 - 26,287 registered parishioners (12.8% higher than in 2000)
 - 8,559 Catholic households (14.7% higher than in 2000)
 - Approximately 6930 attendees at weekend Liturgies (2% less than in 2000, 26.4% of total registered parishioners)
- A slightly declining Cluster-wide PSR enrollment
- School enrollment in the Cluster:

St. Barnabas	2007-08: 754	2008-09: 702
Seton Catholic School	2007-08: 347	2008-09: 393

[SS Cosmas and Damian, Twinsburg, closed its school June 2007 which resulted in some increase at St. Barnabas and at Seton for the 2007-08 school year].

Despite a stable geographic and parish population, attendance at weekend Liturgies, Cluster-wide school and PSR enrollment are all trending down. Two of the five priority issues within our Cluster address these concerns.

Despite a stable geographic and parish population, attendance at weekend Liturgies, Cluster-wide school and PSR enrollment are all trending down. Two of the five priority issues within our Cluster address these concerns.

Catholic Households registered in each parish in 06/30/2008 were as follows:

Mother of Sorrows	553 households, 1836 registered persons
Our Lady of Guadalupe	1556 households; 3601 registered persons
St. Barnabas	3596 households; 10,524 registered persons
St. Mary Parish	2,856 households; 10226 registered persons

STAFFING OF EACH PARISH

STAFF	Mother of Sorrows	Our Lady of Guadalupe	St. Mary	St. Barnabas
Priests	1	1	2	3
Deacons				1
Pastoral Associates		1 (part time)	2	
Music Director	1	1 (full time)	1 (full time) 2 (part time)	1
Business Manager	0	1 (part time)	1	1
Administrative Support	2 (part time)	1 (full time) 2 (part time)	1 full time 6 (part-time)	3 (part time)
Maintenance	1 (part time)	1 (full time) 1 (part time)	2	5
Housekeeper	1 (part time)		1 (part time)	1 (part time)
Other	Rel. Ed. Coord. (part time) Bookkeeper (part time) Lit. Coord. (part time)	1 CRE (part time)	1 Dev Director 1 Youth Minister 1 Jr. High Youth Ministry 1 PSR director Parish Nurse (p.t.) Pre-school Dir (f.t.); 8 pre-school tchrs., all p.t.	1 Dev Dir/Dir of Volunteerism; 1 Youth Minister 1 Catechetical Ldr. 1 PSR Coord.

St. Barnabas School

- Teachers: 29 classroom teachers, 7 co-curricular teachers: 1 Music, 2 Phys. Ed., 1.5 Art, 1 Library, 1 Computer Science
- 4 Administrators: 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal and 2 secretaries
- 1 Preschool teacher and 2 part time aides

Seton Catholic School

- Teachers: 17 classroom teachers, 8 co-curricular teachers: Music (1 full-time, 1 part-time), Phys. Ed (1 full-time), Art (1 full-time), Library (1 full-time), Computer Science (1 full-time), Reading & Religion (1 full-time, gr. 6-8), Spanish (1 full-time, gr. K-8).
- 5 Administrators: Principal, 2 Assistant Principals (1 full and 1 part time), Advancement Director and Accountant, both full time, 1 full time Secretary
- No Preschool; Before and After Care Programs, part-time personnel

FACILITIES

Mother of Sorrows – Peninsula

Mother of Sorrows began in the Village of Peninsula, Ohio in 1882. Today, the church of 553 registered families is a beautiful architectural example of history in this quaint town of approximately 685 residents. It is located in the central business and active recreation area of Peninsula and the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. The church and parish hall were renovated in 1990; air conditioned, well appointed, kitchen facilities, restrooms, handicap accessible, duplicating equipment. Parish offices in rectory, dining room and large living room used for meetings. Parish church with balcony total capacity (200). Garages can be utilized for meetings. Parish grounds well landscaped and tents are used for events. Parish house accommodates Pastor and can accommodate up to two visitors. In addition, the community makes available to the Parish upon request, local facilities: the Parish School of Religion holds classes at local grade school, in addition there is access to the town's library meeting rooms and other facilities in the community are also utilized upon request.

Our Lady of Guadalupe – Macedonia

The church of Our Lady of Guadalupe is situated on approximately 13 acres of land purchased in the 1960's from Ted Haas. The parish was established by Bp. Clarence Issenman on October 7, 1967 and the first parish mass was celebrated the following day. In August 1968 ground was broken for the church and the worship space was dedicated on October 7, 1969. By 1979, the parish had grown to 850 families and the social hall was soon outgrown; additional facilities were needed to accommodate the growing number of concurrent activities. In May 1979, ground was broken for an addition that would include a chapel, one large meeting room and a resource center. As the parish of Our Lady of

Guadalupe continued to flourish, the later 1990's brought the realization that additional meeting and social space was needed. In the spring of 2001, ground was broken for a 9000 sq. ft. expansion that would include three large classrooms and a meeting hall that could accommodate 300+ people. The addition was dedicated on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, 2001.

St. Barnabas – Northfield

St. Barnabas Church began in 1956 under the spiritual guidance of Fr. Bernard DeCrane, with 70 families on approximately 18 acres of undeveloped Diocesan property in Northfield, Ohio. When the church was completed in May 1957, it had grown to 295 families and an eight classroom school was added by September 1957. The parish grew steadily with massive development in the area in the early 90's. Fr. Charles Diedrick was appointed as the fourth pastor in 1993 and soon a vigorous building campaign was begun. Larger facilities were required for the rapid growth of the congregation resulting in an expansion of school facilities, a multipurpose parish center, a gathering space and the Bedell Commons. Today, St. Barnabas is a thriving Catholic community; its campus includes the church, school, parish center, gathering space, Bedell Commons, rectory, garage, and St. Barnabas Villa, all in a beautiful park like setting including a rosary path for outdoor worship.

St. Mary Parish - Hudson

Acreage was purchased in the 1950's at the SW corner of Prospect and Main Streets in Hudson. In 1968, the parish built a T-shaped worship space. The basement was furnished with multiple moveable walls, installed to allow for CCD/PSR classroom and meeting spaces as well as a kitchen. In 1988, a Preschool was opened which more permanently occupy portions of the lower level. In 1993, some of its land was sold in order to jumpstart a capital campaign to build a new worship space, which was opened 1995, doubling the seating capacity (950). Further renovations were completed in 1997: the initial worship space became a daily Chapel, large meeting space with anterior classrooms and a mezzanine that now affords offices, storage and meeting space. The original gathering space now houses reception and office spaces. At the back of and connected to the original building is the rectory, which accommodates the pastor, associate pastor, and a visiting priest on occasion. Beneath the rectory is a garage. Adjacent to it is an outdoor playground and bocce courts.

Seton Catholic School - Hudson

Opened in 1997, Seton was the original home to Hudson Community Chapel. Their Sunday school classes were converted to useable, permanent spaces by parent volunteers during the months of July and August to ready the school for its 83 students and 10 teachers, grades K-6. Additional classrooms were housed in

modular units on the property. A 7th grade was added the following year, then an 8th grade the year after, and then, year by year, a second section of each grade was added. In 2004, Bishop Pilla dedicated a new academic wing to house the growth and the school's square footage doubled in size. The modular units were sold, and extensive renovations to the Chapel as well as the addition of a Eucharistic Chapel were made in 2006. The school facilities include a gymnasium (which also doubles as a cafeteria), a small kitchen (not outfitted for cooking), a library, a Science Lab (middle school), a playground, practice fields, music and art rooms, 17 main classrooms and 11 offices. The school has grown to five times its original enrollment and staffing.

FINANCIAL TRENDS

All of the parishes are financially stable and self-sustaining. In the future, each parish will share expenses related to cluster costs.

PROPOSED CLUSTER PLAN

In evaluating opportunities for collaboration, our Cluster reviewed priority issues and needs in a grid formatted by one of our members. This was most helpful in determining where our strengths and weaknesses intersected. It also highlighted a clear direction of collaborative ventures to consider. A description of each initiative, organized by priority issue, follows.

1. EVANGELIZATION: Reaching out/establishing Evangelization Commissions;
2. LITURGICAL: Bereavement; opportunities for music ministry collaboration;
3. SOCIAL JUSTICE: Focusing on ministry to the divorced and separated.
4. SPIRITUAL: Retreat/reflection days for the parishes, open to each of the parishes and held at all different times of the year;
5. EDUCATION and PARTICIPATION: Focusing on young adult and general adult education, the effective use of resources; Focusing on Youth Ministry (grades 7-12) and vocation awareness/support.

Members from each parish representing these areas met and discerned Action Plans, submitting preliminary and final reports (embedded within this report) to the CPC. Goals for each initiative follow.

- Goal #1: Provide a welcoming and evangelizing presence in the area, especially in outreach to estranged Catholics.

Background

Catholic evangelization literally means communication of the Gospel, spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. “Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the church, her deepest identity. She exists to evangelize.” -Pope Paul VI

In order for our Cluster community to evangelize others, we must first be evangelized ourselves. We, as Disciples of Christ, are called to live, evangelize the Gospel and apply it in our own lives and then to the lives of others. When we evangelize others, we are bringing the message of Christ to all people, those inactive Catholics, inviting people to join the Catholic faith, sharing our gift of faith with anyone by random acts of kindness and communication. Evangelizing then becomes a way of life.

Our mission is to proclaim, communicate, invite and offer evangelizing events to proclaim the Gospel message through our deeds to all current, inactive, new and potential parishioners and welcome them to the Catholic faith.

How do we do this? We will evangelize through the power of the Holy Spirit, through example, through witness, through sharing and ministry.

Current Assessment

The Cluster parishes have a strong start, each offering many evangelizing ministries. From our Cluster meetings and planning, the top three areas for collaboration are as follows:

1. Reaching out to inactive, alienated or potential new Catholics
2. Interfaith prayer services and activities
3. Evangelization Committee

The structure and resources of the Evangelization Committee are important. The current structure is each parish has its own evangelization committee and formal programs. The Cluster subcommittee is recommending that we stay together as a Cluster committee to drive the process and meet quarterly after the plan is approved. The purpose of having the Evangelization Committee continue is to make sure programs are advertised to all Cluster parishes and surrounding NE Ohio communities. We will accomplish this through a Cluster website and Diocesan website. Our current Cluster evangelization programs include the following:

1. Catholics Returning Home
2. Rekindling Faith
3. Life in the Eucharist
4. Welcoming and hospitality activities

How will the Cluster enlighten the youth and high school age about our faith and community? What are the resources that will enable us to get more people involved to continue the process of evangelizing to all of Christ's people?

Specific Goals

1. Setup a continual/permanent Cluster Evangelization Committee.
2. Have all key evangelizing events posted on Cluster websites and Diocesan website .
3. Track progress and effectiveness of programs.
4. Focus every ministry and parish event as a potential evangelizing opportunity.
5. Have each Cluster parish offer a web link: "If I want to come back to Church."
6. Each Cluster parish setup an "Ask Father" column (perhaps in its bulletin, on its website, etc.) so questions can remain anonymous.
7. Create a once a year "Fest" type event for Cluster parishes and surrounding communities, complete with an outdoor Liturgy or at some venue that will house a very large group of worshipers.

Action Plan to Achieve Goals

When collaborative events happen, the host parish will need to budget and plan for the financial expenses. Each of the four Cluster parishes should host at least one Cluster/North Summit community event per year. This would require the Finance Council at each parish to fund/budget for such an annual event.

Making sure we achieve our first year goals will be critical to our on-going success and commitment to reach all of Northern Summit County. The subcommittee needs to stay active and setup methods to evaluate success. Advertising on our websites and bulletins will play a key role in the communication of all our evangelizing events at the Cluster parishes. A postcard/direct mailing campaign was also discussed.

The role of the Evangelization Committee will continue to focus on strengthening and enriching social and community services that serve the surrounding Cluster neighborhoods and Northern Summit County. Best practices need to be enacted in each of the four Cluster parishes to ensure protecting resources and time.

The future is bright and we must believe in ourselves. Some of the potential future collaborative evangelizing ideas follow:

1. Offer continued education on the foundation of our faith which deepens the faith of all active members.
2. Encourage parishioners to always invite a neighbor or friend to a church event.
3. Offer parish tours for all who are interested.
4. Ordinary events such as Baptism, weddings, funerals and parish socials should be viewed as evangelizing opportunities.
5. Encourage parishioners to always share their faith in God with someone.
6. Install welcome signs in front of our churches near a busy street for maximum exposure.

7. Send out flyers into the community, promoting faith with details about RCIA program. Also include benefits and advantages of following the faith. "What's in it for Them? Why attend Liturgy weekly?"
8. Welcome wagon in each Cluster city to provide names of new residents and send/visit them with Church information such as Mass times, websites and Pastor's names.
9. Invite community to Cluster choir concerts and musical events.
10. Design an evangelizing logo or musical jingle.
11. Once a year, celebrate new parishioners joining the church.
12. Evangelizing suggestion box - best suggestion is talked about at Liturgy for all of us to go live our faith for the next week.

As Catholics we are called to witness and evangelize our faith. Evangelization involves sharing the Eucharist with all Catholics. It is a continuous journey of conversion and Catholic evangelization directs the mission of all the Church's endeavors. Every ministry, project and effort can and should be evangelizing in its vision, scope and activity. Evangelizing needs to be rooted in all ministries.

Goal #2: Strengthen pastoral care in an equitable manner, especially in the area of bereavement.

Background

The Bereavement Ministry, after several Cluster meetings, was renamed The Ministry of Care and Consolation through Presence.

Specific Goals

A key goal to address this issue in the coming years is "letting no member of our faith community walk alone through a loss."

Discussion of elements of the physical structure found in each parish to see where overlap may exist. Key resources and structures to support this goal:

- Personal contact
 - a. Importance of developing an ongoing relationship through **both** short-term and long-term follow-up. A need exists in each parish for long-term follow-up.
 - b. Contact could be through letters, visits, phone calls, gatherings.
 - c. Offer list of key resources and key issues to be addressed at time of a loss.
- Link between Homebound Ministry and Bereavement Ministry (Note: New title of "Ministry of Care and Consolation through Presence" incorporates the mission of both ministries.) In the case of an individual with a terminal illness, there is a natural flow from the Homebound Ministry to the Bereavement Ministry – ongoing relationship as noted in 1a. above

- Recruitment of new members to support programs/contact required and to increase lay involvement in the parish which would naturally ease the burden on the parish priests.
- Quarterly gatherings: Opportunity for support and sharing available to faith community

Action Plan to Achieve Goals

Basic timeline and 1st year action steps for implementation of each goal:

1. Develop list of key resources in each parish, e.g., attorneys, counselors, Diocesan programs, support groups, hospice support.
 - a. Filter database of parishioners of each parish to develop list of individuals.
 - b. Develop list of outside resources.
 - c. Share these lists with each parish in the Cluster.
 - d. For next meeting, each parish to obtain brochures from their local funeral directors relating to legal and business issues for our review and consideration as an appropriate resource.
 - e. Determine how to best communicate this info to the family as well as to each parish staff.
2. Identify the needs of the faith community through input from members of the Bereavement Ministry/parishioners/individuals at each parish who have personally experienced a loss. Develop an approach for long-term follow-up.
3. Develop and enhance link between Homebound Ministry and Bereavement Ministry.
 - a. St. Barnabas has combined both ministries already. However at this time, each ministry has its own individual volunteers with a few “cross-overs” (Eucharistic ministers who are also in the Bereavement Ministry).
 - b. Enhance communication between Homebound and Bereavement to enhance the development of the ongoing relationship/personal contact.
- III. Would Eucharistic Ministers or Volunteer Visitors be willing to transition to Bereavement role? *(Note: Homebound Ministry typically involves a lay person or priest bringing the Eucharist to the homebound in their homes, hospitals, nursing homes as well as scheduling visits by a priest for Reconciliation or Anointing of the Sick.)*
- IV. First Friday Communion calls are done by a priest or lay EM.
4. Scheduling of quarterly gatherings
 - . Advertise in bulletins of each parish.
 - a. Have meeting with one representative from each parish in Cluster present to schedule and plan gatherings so no overlap of times or topics exists.

- b. Rotate the location of the gatherings.
5. Recruiting of new members.
 - a. Develop process to “pass the baton.”
 - b. Personal invitation to join the ministry rather than bulletin inserts.
 - c. Offer training for new members.

Goal #3: Strengthen pastoral care in an equitable manner, especially to the divorced or separated.

Background

The ministry to families contemplating or going through divorce or separation was defined to be unique and important in that:

- The needs may be urgent to minister to someone in immediate pain. It cannot always be handled by future “scheduled events”.
- The needs may be diverse in that there are many factors that lead to divorce with very different characteristics. Further, the needs at the beginning of a troubled relationships are very different from those during a formal process and yet again post-divorce. They can also be very different based on the number of children, the extended family and social network, etc. The ministry is not “one size fits all”.
- The process can be considerably long; and in many cases has no final “conclusion” or closure.
- There is a great deal of misinformation and misunderstanding, especially between legal and religious issues.
- There are times that the Catholic Church is viewed to be part of the problem.

Current Assessment

- Only St. Mary Parish offers a formal program. It is offered 2 to 3 times a year and is very popular without advertising. It was suggested that smaller groups seem more conducive, so it was not recommended to extend this program further.
- Two of the pastors have direct Tribunal experience – which is a huge advantage in navigating the canonical annulment process. We must get the word out about this resource for our Cluster.
- The extent of the other services was publishing certain available resources in the weekly bulletins.
- The sharing of both resources and knowledge within the subcommittee affirmed that there is a lot that can be done together, starting with communication. It was cited that even the respective parish staffs might not be informed enough to answer the first calls for help.

Specific Goal

To minister to all families impacted by divorce or separation in need of help through the development of consistent communication and a network of

resources, while Cluster parishes bring in or develop more of their own resources.

Action Plan to Achieve Goal:

- The current subcommittee has agreed to continue meeting until resources from each parish willing to accept responsibility for collaboration is identified.
- A Cluster group will meet as needed, but no less than quarterly.
- A comprehensive list of available resources will be assembled. This will not be limited to resources within the Cluster geography. It was deemed critical that all parishes in the Cluster are communicating the same information. (A key resource will be the Diocesan Marriage and Family Office which provides resources to support groups, retreats and newsletters for the divorced and separated.)
- Communication will be developed for inquiries to the office staffs. It will be determined how we can confidentially insure that all calls are being properly directed.
- Standard communication and event announcements will be developed for both parish websites and parish bulletins.
- A written resource directory will be developed.
- Each parish will consider the appropriateness of having confidential, non-clergy persons to call, not for counseling, but for listening and directing to appropriate resources. TBD is whether these names can be shared among the Cluster.
- Each parish other than St. Mary will publish the call for lay leadership that may be interested in starting formal support programs.
- Annual assessment by all four Parish Councils of effectiveness of actions associated with this ministry will be undertaken.
- Analyze and review groups (divorced, single parents, support, etc.) that meet in parishes in close proximity to Cluster in order to determine if further collaboration is possible (i.e. Saints Cosmas & Damian, St. Basil the Great).

Financial Plan:

- At this time, additional financial resources are not being recommended.
- If the Cluster group determines that formal programs (training, program materials, etc) are needed, any associated costs will be presented to respective Finance Councils for possible funding.

Goal #4: Engage all of our faithful in regularly attending and participating in vibrant parish life by:

- A. Collaborating between music ministries to encourage vibrant weekend Eucharistic Liturgy, making our liturgies much more beautiful and effective by improving already strong ministries.

- B. Collaborating in Youth Ministry (grades 7-12) and vocation awareness/support, assuring that our parishes are welcoming and engaging our young people.

GOAL #4A. Collaboration between music ministries within the Cluster to encourage vibrant Sunday Eucharistic Liturgy, making our liturgies much more beautiful and effective by improving already strong ministries.

Background

Currently, three music directors meet bi-weekly on Thursdays to discuss various challenges and strengths in our respective ministries. Discussions about current liturgical trends, church documents and music repertoire take place at these meetings. The major focus of these meetings is to discuss how our roles as music ministers can be more effective, and how all programs, from Cantor programs to wedding liturgies, to funeral liturgies to choral repertoires, can better serve to minister to our congregations by providing full, active, conscious participation.

Current Assessment

A strong bond between St. Mary and OLG exists as well as Holy Family in Parma. Other parishes have been invited to join in various projects underway. These meetings are open to all other music directors, and several seminarian faculty members and pastors have been invited on a regular basis.

Specific Goal

The goal is to simply make the music at the liturgies in our Cluster much more vibrant and effective. Good liturgy evangelizes!

Action Plan to Achieve Goal

By planning future collaborative liturgical ventures, we will grow music ministry in our Cluster in such a way that vibrant worship is the result. The following lists such ventures, and it is our plan to continue to offer such as these.

- November 2007: Holy Family in Parma and Our Lady of Guadalupe held two joint concerts in honor of St. Cecilia.
- March 2008: St. Mary and Our Lady of Guadalupe choirs sang at a 5:30 Vigil Mass at St. Mary.
- March 2008, 5th Sunday of Lent: St. Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Barnabas choirs made a pilgrimage to St. John's Cathedral (a practice originally started by OLG in 2000, OLG has made this Lenten Pilgrimage faithfully for the past 8 years.

- Wednesday of Holy Week, 2008: Tenebrae Service was celebrated at OLG and was lead by the combined choirs of St. Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of Sorrows and St. Barnabas.
- June 2008: OLG joined St. Mary at the 40th anniversary liturgy for her pastor, providing an exceptionally inspiring music ministry for the celebration.
- December 14, 2008: Holy Family, Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Mary will present a “Lessons and Carols” Service, at St. Mary at 3 pm, at Holy Family at 7 pm.
- Spring 2009: A spring concert with these same combined choirs will be in the planning stages.
- Lent 2009: Tenebrae Service, OLG, Wednesday of Holy Week 2009, featuring the combined choirs of St. Mary and OLG (St. Barnabas will be invited as soon as the new music director becomes comfortable in and acclimated to his new position).

Goal #4B: Collaborating in Youth Ministry (grades 7-12) and vocation awareness/ support, assuring that our parishes are welcoming and engaging our young people.

Background

Vibrant youth ministry has been happening at St. Mary since it adopted the LIFE TEEN model in 1993. They have opened many events and opportunities for youth and for training of adults who minister to the youth. High school teens from the entire Diocese have always been welcome to attend their programs. Collaboration between the youth ministers in the southern area of the Diocese has been on-going. Many fine Diocesan youth ministry networking meetings have been held in our area. Furthermore, an emerging strength in our area is ministry to young adults, in part fostered by the number of priestly vocations within our Cluster (we have been blessed by the energies of the newly/recently ordained: Fr. John Betters, Fr. Steve Brunovsky, Fr. Damian Ference, Fr. Mike Denk, and Fr. Steve Flynn who all have connections to our cluster and have been of great influence to the youth and their young adult peers).

Current Assessment

Collaboration amongst youth ministers in our Cluster is alive and well. They meet regularly, having met three times already this year with an additional meeting planned this fall. It is their plan to continue to share resources, events, and programming for the parishes within as well as beyond the Cluster. The following have been points of collaboration:

- 2004-present - XLT Praise & Worship experience held monthly in and around the Cluster is open to all.
- Summer of 2008 - Servants for Christ week of local service and evangelization amongst Holy Family (Stow), St. Mary & IHM.

- Summer of 2009 - Servants for Christ will include teens from OLG, St. Barnabas, and Mother of Sorrows.
- 2007-08: Adult youth ministry leaders from St. Mary mentored St. Barnabas' leaders to get a seniors (high school) apostleship going there.
- Edge Camp w/ St. Helen (junior high).
- Summer Young Adult retreat at St. Basil.

Specific Goal

By meeting regularly, Youth Ministers, both paid and non-paid, will continue to meet so that the parishes within our Cluster will be beacons of welcoming, engaging our young people to live out their Catholic faith with vibrancy and awareness of God's call (vocation) in their lives.

Action Plan to Reach Goal

Continue to meet and work on plans for the following Cluster Youth Ministry Events:

1. Nov 9: St. Mary hosts Steve Algeyer
2. Poustinia Retreat
3. A Senior (grade 12) Retreat
4. Honduras Young Adult trip
5. Socials
6. Jan 2009: Right to Life March

SUMMARY OF PARISH CONSULTATION

An effort has been extended throughout the Clustering process to include the parish leaders and keep parishioners informed. This has been done primarily through continuous communication including web site links to Cluster parishes and information regarding upcoming collaborative events. Notes to the Cluster appear in bulletins monthly highlighting meeting minutes. Designated Cluster communication representatives have been named in each parish, welcoming parishioner inquiries regarding the ongoing Cluster activities and goals. Parish Councils, Finance Councils, and other committees and commissions have been involved thru the Cluster process. These steps are preparing our members for the draft soon to be presented as the final result of over one year of planning! We invite their comments to improve the plan even further.

CONCLUSION

We, the North Summit Cluster Planning and Coordination Team, recognize the need for Cluster collaboration as detailed in Bishop Lennon's letter dated May 28, 2007. We further concurred with all issues and challenges listed and how these must be accepted and embraced to assure optimum pastoral care and vibrancy, now and in the future. In the spirit of prayer and discernment, we dedicated ourselves to this cause and through open discussion and concern for the larger member community, we have created our plan. This plan focuses on increasing pastoral care, strengthening evangelization, engaging all registered members, supporting Church in the City partnerships through Cluster to Cluster cooperation, and promoting strong, stable Catholic education within our area. In addition to these priorities, we have further explored areas of strengths and weaknesses among our parishes, and have begun collaborating in the areas of bereavement, divorce/separation, evangelization programs, and music and youth ministries. Our goal is to continue team involvement through implementation of action plans for all priorities, building a stronger and larger faith community within the north Summit area. To assure ongoing success and vibrancy of our Cluster planning following Diocesan approval, a Cluster Committee will be created to monitor and guide plan development.