

**PASTORAL PLAN OF THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF GENEVA*,
SAINT MARY, WATERLOO
AND SAINT PATRICK, SENECA FALLS**

January 24, 2007

Introduction

We, the parish communities of Geneva, Waterloo and Seneca Falls, are very much aware of the rapidly changing circumstances and the subsequent constraints with which we must live our mission as Church in the future. We propose to Bishop Clark a Pastoral Plan that takes into account these challenges within our own parishes, within our Diocese and within our experience of the Church in the United States. This Plan represents a new lens through which we can view our Catholic identity in a collaborative, resourceful and evangelizing spirit for the next several years.

Mission Statement

We are disciples of Jesus Christ actively living our faith in the Roman Catholic communities of Geneva, Waterloo and Seneca Falls. We are formed and nourished by the Eucharist to be messengers of the Good News in word and action. We are committed to:

- building up communities of faith and hope through personal growth in our faith and ongoing conversion to Jesus Christ
- sharing the good news with all people and
- strengthening our parishes through good works.

History

The parish communities of Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Stephen have worked diligently at forging closer bonds of community and communion. They clustered in 1999 and more recently moved to the point of having single Pastoral and Finance Councils. They are in the process of forming a single parish.

The parish communities of Saint Mary and Saint Patrick have merged their schools into Saint John Bosco. They have shared Social Ministry projects and RCIA. In their sacramental programs they have a shared Confirmation preparation and celebration.

All parishes in the group have had small and large group opportunities for discussion and working sessions around the planning process.

Our Planning Process

Our planning group -- one of 36 including all parishes and faith communities in the Diocese of Rochester -- was created in 2004 by combining two previous planning groups: Geneva and Seneca Falls/Waterloo. We began this round of pastoral planning in October 2004 with a workshop for parish pastoral council and staff members. Shortly after that our planning team was formed.

**As of January 10, 2007, the parishes of St. Francis DeSales and St. Stephen were amalgamated into the new parish of Our Lady of Peace. The civil merging of the two parishes is in process.*

After much information sharing and discussion, in February 2006 the planning team proposed four possible models for parish structure to pastoral councils and staffs:

- A. 3 parishes (with 4 churches) led by a team of 3 priests
- B. clustering all of the parishes together and maintaining 4 churches
- C. clustering St. Mary and St. Patrick and merging St. Francis de Sales and St. Stephen into a single parish (maintaining 4 churches)
- D. merging St. Francis de Sales and St. Stephen into a single parish; having St. Mary and St. Patrick led by pastoral administrators and then clustering them sometime between 2009 and 2010 (maintaining 4 churches).

After further discussion and financial analysis of each of these models, the planning team eliminated two from consideration. Model A was deemed unworkable because of unclear accountability among a 3-priest team. Model D seemed to make changes too slowly and was the most costly model.

In May 2006 parishioners gave their reactions to the two remaining models in town meetings held in Geneva, Seneca Falls and Waterloo. From their input it became clear that the majority of parishioners present from Geneva preferred moving quickly to clustering all four parishes, while those from St. Mary and St. Patrick preferred a slower pace of change so that their two parishes could cluster first, giving them the time to adjust to change in much the same way as St. Francis de Sales and St. Stephen parishioners could when their two parishes clustered in 1999.

The planning team chose model C above to be presented first to pastoral council, finance council, and parish staff members in September and then to parishioners through listening sessions in November.

During the period covered by this pastoral plan, 2007-2015, we do not anticipate that all four parishes will cluster together. However, after the work envisioned in this Plan concludes in 2015, it could become necessary to consider the transition of the entire planning group into a single parish. We expect that in 2007 St. Francis DeSales and St. Stephen will be consolidated into a single parish with two worship sites and that by 2015 the parishes of St. Mary and St. Patrick will have worked together to become a single parish with two worship sites. One of the goals of this pastoral plan is that there will be an increasing number of ministries shared among all communities.

Mass Schedules

In June 2006 the Roman Catholic Community of Geneva adopted a schedule that reduced the number and better coordinated its weekend Masses. Saint Mary and Saint Patrick are conscious of the need to revitalize their liturgies by having fewer celebrations but utilizing their facilities to a higher percentage of capacity. Saint Mary and Saint Patrick followed the example of the Roman Catholic Community of Geneva through a survey in September 2006 and plan the inauguration of a reduced, non duplicating weekend Mass schedule a month after the Plan is accepted, hopefully around the middle of May 2007.

Weekend Mass schedules will be as follows:

Our Lady of Peace (no change from schedule adopted 6/06)

St. Francis church: Saturday 4:30 pm, Sunday 9:00 am, 1:00 pm (Spanish)

St. Stephen church: Sunday: 7:30 and 10:30 am

Hobart/Wm. Smith: Sunday: 4:00 pm (when school is in session)

St. Mary and St. Patrick (suggested to begin in 5/07)

St. Mary: Saturday 5:00 pm
Sunday 9:30 am
St. Patrick: Sunday 8:00 and 11:00 am

These schedules will be reviewed in 2008.

Parish Structure and Personnel:

The three priests available for service in the planning group will receive specific assignments to parishes -- two to Geneva and one to St. Mary and St. Patrick -- but they will work with each other to develop pastoral sensitivity to the needs of all parishes. Among the priests of the planning group it is important that at least one be bilingual in Spanish and English or willing to learn. Placing two priests in Geneva was driven by the high level of sacramental need in that community, including over 100 annual funerals and service to Geneva General Hospital and Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Those two priests will assist also with the revised Mass schedule and sacramental ministry for Saint Mary and Saint Patrick.

Saint Mary and Saint Patrick will cluster in June 2007 and, from that time onward, share one pastoral leader. They will continue to work at more effective sharing of programs, personnel and resources including greater collaboration in religious education and sacramental programs. The parishes will work to provide an atmosphere of inclusive welcome for all. This increasing unity will also be expressed by developing shared Pastoral and Finance Councils between the two parishes no later than the close of 2008.

Having one pastoral leader for the two parishes will require the addition of a second pastoral associate. The designation of a second pastoral associate in the Waterloo-Seneca Falls cluster will smooth over some of the sense of loss of a full-time pastoral leader. Previous experience with multiple parishes indicates that these pastoral associates are critical to the success of the clustering.

With fewer "priestly" hours available, demands beyond celebrating daily Mass, sacraments and sacramentals need to be shared by the larger community. Much of the care for the sick and homebound will be shared by lay volunteers coordinated by the pastoral associates. As Geneva, Waterloo and Seneca Falls experience increasingly aging populations, the weight of meeting their sacramental needs cannot fall upon only three priests. For instance, there will have to be heavier reliance on laity to bring Communion to care centers and homes.

The anticipated cluster of Saint Mary and Saint Patrick believes that the best chances for success would be in the assignment of a priest pastor as their leader, although they realize a priest pastor is dependent upon availability and the assignment of the bishop. This point has as much to do with the morale of the parishioners as it does with other practical considerations. We also request that the pastor have a strong commitment to Catholic education. We believe that the presence of a priest pastor serving in the two villages of Seneca Falls and Waterloo is significant for the continuing credibility of the Church's mission there.

All of our parishes will continue working on more effective stewardship of resources, facilities and personnel for the mission of the Church in that community.

Deacons:

We find continuing value in the sacramental and service ministries of the deacons assigned among our parishes, currently one deacon in Geneva and one in Seneca Falls. We will continue to encourage future candidates for this service in the church.

Collaborative Ministries:

Faith Formation

Collaborative endeavors have been most substantial in the area of the Faith Formation Initiative. St. Mary and St. Patrick share Confirmation preparation. St. Mary, St. Patrick and the Roman Catholic Community of Geneva plan to celebrate this sacrament together in 2007 and thereafter. A committee, **SPIRIT ALIVE**, has been established among all the parishes in our planning group. This committee includes parents and Religious Education Directors united under the leadership of diocesan representative, Maribeth Mancini. Its focus is on adult, young adult and family education on all levels. Catechetical leaders are working toward standardizing programs, resources and schedules, including sacramental preparation. A three-year comprehensive plan is in place to this end. A Vacation Bible School for the children of our parishes, including the Spanish and migrant community, has been planned.

Liturgy

A joint liturgy committee will be formed between St. Mary and St. Patrick. All parishes will continue to celebrate joint penance services for Advent and Lent, and will seek other liturgical opportunities for joint celebrations. Each of the parishes will rotate the hosting of a spiritual renewal/retreat each year.

Youth Ministry

Because the faith of our young people is critical to our communities, our goal is to form a dynamic youth ministry that will benefit all parishes. In addition to Geneva's current staffing in youth ministry, St. Mary and St. Patrick will employ a Youth Minister in order to maintain a quality and viable ministry to adolescents with the intent that collaboration will grow among all parishes.

Evangelization

We are committed as baptized Christians to ongoing evangelization in the following areas:

1. personal enhancement of individual prayer life and ongoing conversion to Jesus Christ
2. reinvigoration of the faith of those in our pews through our witness
3. seeking the unchurched through the example of word and action.

As a means to these ends, a joint evangelization committee will be formed among all parishes.

Social Ministry

The social ministry committees will explore ways of reinforcing each other's schedules, resources, and programs.

Other

We envision that staff members in all of the parishes will work with their peers in the other parishes whenever feasible to meet parishioners' needs and increase the feeling of unity.

Schools:

There is a long history of a strong presence of Catholic Education within all four parishes of our planning group. Each parish originally had its own grammar school. DeSales Catholic High School, located in Geneva, presents the opportunity for students to have a complete Catholic education within our planning group area. In the late 1980's the schools of St. Stephen and St. Francis DeSales parishes were consolidated into one school. More recently, in 2005, the schools of St. Patrick and St. Mary were consolidated into one, named St. John Bosco (after the patron saint of school children) and located in Seneca Falls. Continuing dialogue with the

Diocesan Schools Office will assist us in developing strategies to assure that Catholic School Education remains a viable and *essential* element of our planning group's ministry.

The role of the Catholic chaplaincy at Hobart and William Smith Colleges as well as the New York Chiropractic College is envisioned as being blended into the regular life of the parishes. The current provision of a Sunday Mass for students at Hobart and William Smith Colleges during school session is expected to continue, at least for the immediate future. Future considerations/possibilities for enhancing our ministry to these institutions include:

- communicating parish activities more effectively within the campus communities
- actively encouraging college students to become more integrated into parish life by inviting them to participate in various parish activities (ministries, religious education, etc.)
- having some parish activities on the college campuses
- appointing volunteer lay liaisons to the college communities
- developing a structured format to determine what the students perceive as their *needs from* and their *gifts to* the local parishes.

Ministry with Spanish Speaking Communities

Within our planning group there exist two Spanish-speaking communities:

1. migrant workers and their families
2. a year-round Spanish-speaking community.

We are blessed with the ministry of a Hispanic/Migrant Minister who works formally with both the migrant and year-round Spanish-speaking communities in Ontario and Yates Counties and informally with those in Seneca County. Her responsibilities fall within three different planning groups, including our own.

We believe that ministry with both of these communities is essential. Therefore, we will work together to foster multicultural inclusion of all our communities. True multicultural inclusion entails respect for cultural integrity and pastoral needs and involves becoming aware of the gifts and strengths of the various communities. This implies participation in the events and activities of the Hispanic Community as well as including the Spanish-speaking community in the events and activities of the other faith communities. Mutual participation requires the availability of bilingual, bicultural people to aid our efforts.

Migrant Workers and Their Families

- The Hispanic/Migrant Minister will serve on the pastoral planning council which oversees the implementation of this pastoral plan.
- The planning group will collaborate with diocesan migrant ministry programs through the Hispanic/Migrant Minister.
- The Hispanic Migrant/Minister will work with the communities to explore ways to connect with the ecumenical Rural Migrant Ministry in areas of social justice, advocacy and legal concerns.

Year-round Spanish Speaking Community

- In collaboration with the Hispanic/Migrant Ministry, the parishes will continue to identify the year-round Spanish speaking community and explore their needs and gifts.

Finances

All of our communities are aware of the need to economize and cope with increased operating costs. The ordinary operating expenses of each parish will be brought into balance with its ordinary income. The finance councils of St. Mary and St. Patrick will begin meeting together in spring 2007 to work out shared expenses related to their shared pastoral leader as they develop

their 2007-2008 parish budgets. All Finance Councils will meet together quarterly beginning in September 2007. Parish monies will remain separate for each parish, and each parish will continue to have separate operating budgets.

Facilities

A committee will be formed with representatives from all four churches to evaluate all buildings in terms of their expenses and their importance to ministries of the parishes.

Implementation

After Bishop Clark approves this pastoral plan, the planning team will form a planning group council which will oversee and help facilitate the implementation of the plan as it unfolds. The council will take into consideration the growth and ever changing needs of our communities.

ADDENDUM: DEFINITIONS OF SOME TERMS

Parish Staff Positions

Pastoral Leader – a generic term for the person the Bishop appoints to lead a parish or cluster.

Priest Pastor – a priest appointed by the Bishop to lead a parish or cluster.

Pastoral Administrator – a lay person, religious or Deacon appointed by the Bishop to lead a parish or cluster in accord with Canon 517.2. Any community led by a Pastoral Administrator also has a priest assigned as Sacramental Minister to provide the sacraments.

Sacramental Minister – a priest assigned by the Bishop to provide sacramental ministry for a parish or cluster led by a Pastoral Administrator.

Parochial Vicar – a priest appointed by the Bishop to assist a Pastor in the pastoral care of a parish or cluster.

Permanent Deacon – an ordained man appointed by the Bishop to a parish or particular ministry. Deacons are ministers of Word, Sacrament and charity. They proclaim the Gospel and preach; preside at baptisms, wakes, funerals and communion services; witness marriages and assist at Mass.

Pastoral Associate – a lay person, religious or Deacon hired by a parish or cluster to coordinate particular areas of ministry – e.g. adult education, liturgy, social ministry, pastoral care of the sick and bereaved.

Hispanic/Migrant Minister – a lay person, religious or Deacon hired by a parish or cluster to coordinate ministry with Spanish-speaking and migrant communities.

Different Parish Structures

Parish – a certain community of the Christian faithful, stably constituted. Catholic parishes are usually territorial, i.e. membership in them is based upon residence within the parish boundaries, but they can also be personal, i.e. with membership based on language, nationality, affiliation with a college or university, military service, or another criterion.

Cluster – two or more parishes served by a single pastor or pastoral administrator. Each parish retains its own identity according to both church and civil law. Ministry programs and staffing can be autonomous within each parish or may involve partnerships with other members of the cluster. Clustered parishes in our diocese should be involved in working toward becoming a single parish, possibly with multiple worship sites.

Worship site – a campus including a church building and possibly other facilities such as a school, rectory, convent, or parish center.

Single parish with multiple worship and ministry sites – typically this would result from the merging/consolidation/amalgamation of two or more parishes into a single parish under both

church and civil law. While the physical facilities of the previous parishes could be used as worship and/or ministry sites, there would be only one parish and a single faith community.

Estimated Timeline for Implementation of the Pastoral Plan

Date	Action
Ongoing	Work of Spirit Alive committee; implementaton of 3-year comprehensive plan for faith formation (by all parishes)
Ongoing	All parishes share Advent and Lenten penance services and seek other liturgical opportunities for joint celebrations
Ongoing	Ministry with migrant and year-round Spanish-speaking communities
Ongoing	Increasing communication and collaboration among staff members
Spring 2007	Finance councils of St. Mary and St. Patrick begin meeting together to work out shared expenses related to their shared pastoral leader as they develop their 2007-2008 budgets
May 1, 2007	All parishes join in a single celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation at St. Patrick Church. In spring 2008 the common celebration will be at Sacred Heart Cathedral; in 2009, at one of the Geneva churches
Mid-May 2007	New weekend Mass schedule for St. Mary and St. Patrick goes into effect
By summer 2007	St. Francis and St. Stephen consolidated into single parish
June 26, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Mary and St. Patrick are clustered and led by a single pastoral leader • New parochial vicar for RCC of Geneva • 2 priests assigned to RCC of Geneva begin to assist with the revised St. Mary/St. Patrick Mass schedule and other sacramental ministry
June 27, 2007	New weekday Mass schedules may go into effect (dependent on day off for St. Mary/St. Patrick priest)
Summer 2007	Vacation bible school shared by all parishes
By September 2007	All finance councils begin meeting together quarterly
By December 2008	Shared pastoral council and finance council for St. Mary and St. Patrick
By 2015	St. Mary and St. Patrick consolidated into single parish
Items in the pastoral plan to which specific dates have not been assigned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional staffing for St. Mary/St. Patrick (pastoral associate, youth

	<p>minister)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment, training and support of lay volunteers to bring Communion to homebound and those in care centers• Formation of joint liturgy committee for St. Mary and St. Patrick• Each of the parishes rotates the hosting of a spiritual renewal/retreat each year• Formation of a joint evangelization committee• Fostering multicultural inclusion of all communities• Formation of facilities committee to evaluate all buildings in terms of expenses and importance to ministries of the parishes
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