

The St. Joseph Parish Pastoral Plan **2025-2027**

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Vision Statement for the Plan:

This pastoral plan describes how the parishioners of St. Joseph Parish will continue to build our parish into a faith-filled community that is vibrant, joyful, loving and compassionate. Our vision is to sustain a strong parish community that welcomes all, calls youth to a life of Catholic faith, reaches out to those who need assistance, and shares the Good News of Jesus with our neighbors, in word and in deed.

Introduction to the Plan:

St. Joseph Parish is now one Needham Catholic Community, and an exciting new chapter on our faith journey begins. Through prayerful discernment and discussion, the Parish Pastoral Council offers this pastoral plan as a path to strengthen parish community and relationships, to deepen our love for God through worship and prayer, and to assist us in encountering Jesus in all our brothers and sisters, within our parish and in the wider community.

This pastoral plan revolves around four priorities that reflect our vision for St. Joseph Parish three years from now. Milestone activities support the achievement of each priority. This document is intended to lay the foundation for the development of future pastoral plans, as we humbly acknowledge the work of building a parish is a continual process, always guided by the Holy Spirit.

Priorities and Milestones:

1. Strengthen our Parish Community

Identifying the need to fuel the vibrancy of our community, we will provide the resources for activities and events that will engage parishioners and unite them to each other and to Jesus through servitude, joy, and communion with one another.

Milestones:

- Create a list of existing parish activities and ministries and determine which need pruning, strengthening or improvement (*prior to March 31, 2025*)
- Identify a tangible way to recognize and preserve the legacy of St. Bartholomew Parish (*prior to December 31, 2025*)
- Hire a pastoral associate (*prior to December 31, 2025*)
- Survey the parish to determine what types of faith-based speaker series the parish should host (*prior to December 31, 2025*)
- Renovate and expand the Linse Room to create a bright and welcoming gathering space for parish meetings and activities (*prior to September 30, 2026*)
- Begin planning for the 2028 – 2030 pastoral plan by forming a task force to survey parishioners, gather input, examine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) and gather consensus on priorities (*prior to January 31, 2027*)
- Hold one large community service event (in addition to the pack-a-thon) that is attended by at least 100 parishioners (*prior to June 30, 2027*)

2. Engage Young People

Identifying the need to motivate and to maintain faith in the youth of our parish, we will create and fund a youth minister position. This position will focus on engaging parish youth by planning community service opportunities, social events, and educational opportunities. The youth minister will work to strengthen bonds between Catholic teens in our community to generate a robust and faith-focused life.

Milestones:

- Hire a youth minister (*prior to June 30, 2025*)
- Develop a preliminary youth/teen engagement plan for the 2025/2026 school year, which will include ways to measure the program's progress and success (*prior to August 31, 2025*)
- Grow a robust community of engaged and faith-driven youth (*prior to December 31, 2027*)

3. Outreach to Those Who Are Struggling

Identifying the need to generate more support for those struggling within our community, we will build upon existing outreach and establish either independently, or cooperating with other local programs/providers, more support systems for the elderly, the disabled, those with special needs, and others who are in need of assistance.

Milestones:

- Form a committee to identify and to enact support programs for elderly and homebound parishioners (*prior to April 30, 2025*)
- Survey parishioners to identify those who would benefit from support groups, and help such groups organize (*prior to December 31, 2025*)
- Identify and institute ways to make it easier for the elderly and handicapped to access the church and attend Mass (*prior to May 31, 2026*)

4. Evangelize our Needham Neighbors

Having built a vibrant, welcoming and faith-filled parish community, we seek to evangelize the greater Needham community. We will plan and execute visible outreach events within the town of Needham, to attract non-active Catholics to return to a more regular practice of the faith. We also will welcome and support non-Catholics who are eager to hear the Gospel message of Jesus.

Milestones:

- Form an evangelization committee to develop and to conduct continued evangelization activities such as: (*prior to March 31, 2025*)
 - Publicize the parish picnic widely in Needham to attract non-active parishioners
 - Establish a program to connect young parents who are active in the church with parents of newly baptized children
 - Host progressive dinners with active and non-active Catholics
- Increase Mass attendance by:
 - 10% from the October 2024 baseline (*prior to October 31, 2026*)
 - 15% from the October 2024 baseline (*prior to October 31, 2027*)

You Can Help!

To volunteer to serve on a committee or to help achieve one of the milestones in this plan, please contact the St. Joseph Parish Office or a member of the Parish Pastoral Council.