Here on earth, 
God’s work must 
truly be our own.

—John F. Kennedy 
Inaugural, 1960

(From Inaugural Address of President John 
Fitzgerald Kennedy (JFK), January, 1960, who was 
born and baptized in Brookline. The baptismal 
font, from the former St. Aidan’s Parish where he 
was baptized is located at the entrance to St Mary 
of the Assumption church.)

Photos: J. McGonegal

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all... 
Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you. And 
know that I am with you always, until the end of the world!”

Mt 28: 19-20
Dear Friends in Christ-

It is with great joy and happiness that I present to you the Brookline Catholic Collaborative’s Three year pastoral plan, which is the fruit of prayer, conversation, training and deliberation by and among the clergy, parishioners, staff and consultants within our parish and archdiocese. We were chosen by Cardinal Sean in the Winter of 2013 to be in the first phase of Disciples in Mission which will revitalize the lives of all followers of Jesus Christ to be fully engaged members of parish life. It is an honor and a challenge to be trusted in this endeavor. This project is eventually going to be within the fabric of all Catholics in the Archdiocese of Boston. Our brothers and sisters are looking to us in Brookline to be bold and daring as we lead this endeavor, look to the future, and envision what role our Catholic faith will play in our lives.

Our Catholic family in Brookline dates back to the Great Migration of the 1840s, when immigrants from Ireland settled throughout the town. Over the years four distinct parishes arose: Saint Mary of the Assumption, in 1852, Saint Lawrence, in 1898, Saint Aidan, in 1911 and Infant Jesus, in 1938. Changing demographics in the late twenty-first century led to the mergers of Saint Lawrence with Infant Jesus and of Saint Mary with Saint Aidan. Saint Lawrence Parish was slated to close in 2004 but parishioners held vigil and appealed successfully to the Archdiocese to keep it open as another campus in our Catholic Collaborative. Today we celebrate the ten-year anniversary of this merger. Saint Lawrence is not only our second sacramental, spiritual and social home, but also a home for Opus Dei, Anglican Use and the Neocatacumanate Way.

We give you this plan not merely for study and contemplation. It is our goal that in reading it you will find many opportunities to help our collaborative grow and encourage, by your personal witness and service, participation by people of all ages, backgrounds and ways of life to follow Christ. Many of your neighbors are new to town and may be with us for only a few years, while others are with us from birth to death. All need to be told by you how God who loves you has transformed your life. This is how the Church spread from simple men and women over two thousand years ago. We have received the same call from Christ that they did. However, clarity is key in a plan of this significance. As Proverbs 29:19 says, “Where there is no vision a people perish.” In concrete ways of worship, education, vocations to priesthood and finances we have provided such a vision which will allow all people to experience our parish as a “Culture of Encounter” with Christ as Pope Francis has said.

My daily prayer at this important moment in our community’s life is that we not surrender our confidence in the faith we have in the Lord who has saved us and set us free.

May the Lord Jesus Christ, born as an Infant through the “Fiat” of Saint Mary of the Assumption and the intercession of Saints Lawrence and Aidan guide our lives together.

Peace,
Father Brian Clary
June 2015

Our Collaborative Purpose

To encourage a collaborative spirit within our parish inspired by our love of God and each other, embracing our diverse community with patience and enthusiasm, and leading to a prayerful and joy-filled parish community. We embrace the Disciples in Mission initiative of the Archdiocese to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and work together to meet the needs of the people of God.
Our Collaborative Values

Evangelization
We recognize and cherish our faith as a gift from God and seek opportunities to share it with others through the continuing active faith development of those who worship with us on a regular basis, and we seek to attract home the beloved brothers and sisters who are disconnected from the church.

Spirituality and Worship
We value and encourage parishioners' preparation for and participation in meaningful, inspirational and relevant liturgies. Liturgies are prayerful encounters with the risen Christ who is truly and substantially present in the Eucharist. We grow in faith and charity, nourished and strengthened to do good works, individually and together, encountering Him who first loved us.

Respect and Justice
We promote fairness, tolerance, and compassion for the greater good of the world and those around us, recognizing our responsibility as Catholics to uphold the dignity and integrity of every person by feeding the hungry on a regular basis in our outreach to the homeless at the St. Francis House and other communities. We hear Pope Francis' call to minister to those on the peripheries of society.

Our Collaborative Vision

The Collaborative of St Mary of the Assumption Parish seeks through our intentional prayers and actions to be effective agents of the New Evangelization by embracing the grace of the Holy Spirit given to us by God in order to achieve growth and more courageous participation by our parishioners in Christ's community.

We will accomplish this vision by:

- Encouraging vocations through prayer, vocation awareness workshops that provide exposure to religious life, and leading by example as a parish community that actively supports the priesthood.
- Mentoring and supporting the men in formation assigned to our parish.
- Using our unique location as a way to promote and support important ministries of the Archdiocese (such as hospital chaplaincies).
- Fostering and promoting both unity and diversity between our worship sites.
- Reassessing our operations and assumptions as a parish, challenging them when necessary in a respectful way.

Spirit of Community
We joyfully reach out to build relationships within the parish and the broader Brookline community. We challenge and engage every parishioner to find a role he or she can play in promoting our collaborative values and thereby becoming an engaged member of our community.

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Our Collaborative Priorities, 2015-2017

Over the next three years, the priests, deacons and lay staff and parishioners of the Collaborative of St Mary of the Assumption Parish will focus our efforts on the following pastoral priorities and associated goals to fulfill the vision of Disciples in Mission.

**Priority: Enhance Parish Programming**

We must evaluate everything we do so as to ensure that our resources are being used in ways that are relevant and meaningful to our parishioners. We must explore new ways to engage more people in the life of the parish. Our vision includes enhancements, improvements and new areas of focus.

**Goal 1:** Appoint a young-adult special coordinator to identify opportunities that engage young adults and families in parish life and promote collaborative values such as The Walk for Hunger (July 2016)

**Goal 2:** Ensure each Parish Committee has a clear structure for accountability in achieving its goals. (April 2017)

**Goal 3:** Engage the Parish Council in re-defining its role in support of the Parish Pastoral Plan. (January 2017)
- Each member of the Parish Council will take a defined responsibility in implementing the Pastoral Plan.
- Each year the Parish Council will participate in a day/evening of reflection.
- Each year the Parish Council will study a pastoral text related to parish life.

**Goal 4:** Integrate St. Mary of Assumption School into Parish Life through Parish programs. (July 2017)
- Increase student enrollment 7% by July 2017.
- A school alumni and/or current student will speak at each Mass concurrent with the annual 2nd collection for schools.
- An ongoing RCIC Program for students will be established by October 2017.

**Goal 5:** Opportunities for students of the school to participate in the liturgy will be a regular part of Religious Education Curricula beginning with the 2015-2016 school year.

**Priority: Promote Vocations**

We must support the Archdiocese in promoting vocations to the Diocesan priesthood. We recognize the need to promote other vocations as well. Our vision will include the following:

**Goal 1:** Create a Parish Vocation Team (October 2015)

**Goal 2:** Develop a plan to promote vocations within the Parish in two focus areas:
- a) Diocesan priesthood (January 2016)
- b) Other Vocations (Consecrated Life, Diaconate, and Lay Ministry) (July 2017)

**Goal 3:** Create opportunities for exposure to all vocations with a special priority on the Priesthood. (October 2016.)

**Priority: Use deliberate strategies for Evangelization and Ministries**

We must ensure that parishioners understand what Evangelization truly means, and how they can actively participate in it. We must create opportunities for people to use their unique talents to turn their faith into action on behalf of the parish.

**Goal 1:** Establish a communication initiative to clarify the definition of Evangelization within the context of our Parish Pastoral Plan as “the continuing active faith development of those who worship with us on a regular basis and attracting home the beloved brothers and sisters who are currently disconnected from the Church.” (July 2015)

**Goal 2:** Create a Parish Evangelization Ministry to develop initiatives that open opportunities for faith formation among parishioners and disconnected Catholics. Activities of this ministry to include: Praying together on a regular basis; building their own discipleship; and cultivating discipleship in others. (January 2016)

**Goal 3:** Expand relationships with the Hospital Chaplains, Capuchin Friars and Jesuits and clarify relationship with Neo Catechumens at St Lawrence. (October 2017)

**Priority: Secure long term financial stability**

We have an obligation to
future generations to ensure the viability and sustainability of the Catholic community in Brookline. We will leverage all aspects of our unique location, population and intellectual and spiritual gifts to discern the appropriate future for our parish.

**Goal 1:** Ensure the Finance Council has a clear structure for accountability in achieving its goals. (April 2016)

**Goal 2:** Engage the Finance Council in supporting the parish priorities and the parish’s future financial stability by working with the Collaborative Priority and Foundational Ministry leadership to establish annual budgets for each and include them in establishing the annual parish budget. (January 2017)

**Goal 3:** Determine highest and best utilization of Parish real estate, working in conjunction with the Diocesan Real Estate Office. (October 2017)

**Collaborative Foundational Ministries**

While focusing on our priorities, we will continue to attend to the areas of ministry that are ongoing in our parish. Below is a list of some of the initiatives that we will seek to complete over the next three years.
Sacraments and Worship

Over the next three years, we will seek to complete the following initiatives and activities in this area:

• Create a Liturgical Commission with a clear accountability structure. (July 2015)
• Establish the commission’s membership and co-chairmanship. (October 2015)
• Establish strategies for enhanced participation in music and liturgy. (January 2016)
• Explore further training and ongoing development for volunteers to the commission. (April 2017)

Evangelization, Education and Engagement

Over the next three years, we will seek to complete the following initiatives and activities in this area:

• Create a Faith Formation ministry with a clear accountability structure. (January 2016)
• Expand scope for current Director of Faith Formation role to incorporate new responsibilities in engagement / outreach. (April 2016)
• Develop a Marriage and Family Life Ministry which includes the following:
  • Training four married couples in the Transformed in Love Program. (May 2017)
  • Bless couples at Mass who are celebrating 25th and 50th Anniversaries. (October 2015)
• Establish a marriage mentoring program to guide recently married couples. (October 2016)
• Re-engage the current Parish Council around the new Parish Pastoral Plan and determine whether to merge these ministries within the combined mission of Evangelization, Education and Engagement. (April 2017)
• Develop inviting measures that will identify candidates for the priesthood to the Archdiocesan Vocations Office. (January 2016).
• Select a vocation director to address the collaborative Masses, religious education classes, parents, school and RCIA. (May 2016).
• Ask the confirming Bishop to speak with possible candidates for the priesthood. (May 2016)
• Prayer for vocations: incorporated in every Weekday and Weekend Prayers of the Faithful. (July 2015)
• Establish the team’s mission, membership and co-chairmanship. (October 2015)
• Develop inviting measures that will include Vocational Awareness Day and Shadowing of vocations. (October 2016)

Governance and Finance

Over the next three years, we will seek to complete the following initiatives and activities in this area:

• Reorganize Finance Council as accountable entity for this ministry. (April 2016)
• Determine the appropriate model for collaboration between parish and school. (July 2015)
• Develop strategic financial plan including the evaluation of real estate opportunities (January 2017)
• Reorganize Finance Council as accountable entity for this ministry. (April 2016)
• Establish the council’s mission, membership and co-chairmanship. (July 2015)