



SYNODAL DECLARATION

+ In the name of Our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

After the prayerful consideration, hearing the People of God gathered at the Fourth Diocesan Synod, and consultation with the Diocesan Presbyterate, I, Frank J. Caggiano, the Fifth Bishop of Bridgeport hereby declare the following to be established in the Diocese of Bridgeport in order to affect or help with implementation of the synodal resolutions.

The Diocesan Strategic Planning Commission. The competency of the Commission will include: the ongoing reform of the Diocesan Curia, and overseeing the pastoral planning process. It will come to existence in October 2015.

A Comprehensive Pastoral Planning Process (November 2015) to engage every parish to create a roadmap for its future. Pastoral Planning will provide the priests, deacons, religious, professional staff and lay leaders of each parish the opportunity to engage in ongoing, systematic and comprehensive planning towards the establishment of each parish's plan for long-term viability and pastoral vitality. The spirit that should animate all such planning is one of servant leadership. The long-term goal for pastoral planning is to create a mechanism by which every aspect of parish life is intentional, missionary driven, and open to periodic evaluation and improvement.

A Presbyteral Assembly to take place on February 25, 2016. The preparation process for the Assembly will begin in September 2015. Its goal is to draft concrete measures to realize the call of the Synod for priests to live "holy and healthy living." The Assembly will facilitate clergy's discussion on topics of living arrangements, ongoing formation, opportunities for spiritual growth, retirement age, mentoring program for newly ordained and newly incardinated priests, establishment of support groups for the priests, and others.

A Task Force for revision of the **Diocesan Sacramental Guidelines** and the **Diocesan Pastoral Book**. These revised documents shall be presented to the bishop for his approval by June 1, 2016.

A diocesan pastoral initiative to support and **strengthen couples in their marriage**, as well as to **reach out to divorced and separated Catholics** within the Diocese.

The **Family Life Centers** (both virtual and physical). These shall be called into existence in collaboration with Catholic Charities, parishes and other entities. The goal is to provide resources and support to families to help strengthen the bonds of unity among its members, and also to support families that are confronting particular stressors.

A **strategic plan for priestly vocations** to be established by February 25, 2016. In addition, concrete measures shall be enacted towards the fostering of vocations to the diaconate and religious life.

A diocesan Task Force, to be established by October 1, 2015, whose competency will be to identify concrete ways to **reform our catechetical methods and programs**. The Task Force will report back to the Diocesan Bishop in eight months and would concentrate on: possible expansion of the catechetical formation to begin at Baptism, models of youth ministry, high school catechetical formation and education, models of faith formation in the parishes, restructuring the Office of Faith Formation, and others.

I bestow my heartfelt blessing on all these works and those who support them.

Given at Bridgeport at the solemn celebration of Mass, on nineteenth day of September, in the Year of Our Lord 2015.

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport

Reverend Robert Kinnally
Chancellor