

Dear Parishioners,

“Beginning September 15, 2026, and running through October 11, 2026, Catholic Leadership Institute is asking our parishioners to take the Disciple Maker Index (DMI) survey. We took the survey in 2024 and using that data, embarked on a three-year process called Next Generation Parish to develop six goals across three priority areas to help our parish grow in faith, worship, community, and more. With the process moving towards its conclusion, parishioners are asked to take the DMI survey again so that we can compare the two sets of data. The DMI survey will be open from September 15th through October 11th. A paper copy can be obtained from the parish office or check our website at stpaulsalem.org.

Disciple Maker Index 2026



YOUR THOUGHTS MATTER!

TERMINOLOGY

Next Generation Parish

has the ability to grow, thrive, and bring people closer to Jesus. Our parish was selected as one of six in our Diocese to fast track as a Next Generation Parish. We were chosen because we have the potential for growth. In the early winter of 2024, all parishes in our Diocese were asked to take the Disciple Maker Index survey. It was available in our pews and online. We encouraged increased participation as the 2026 survey begins.

DMI - Disciple Maker Index

Survey will begin on September 13th and will end on October 11th.

The Disciple Maker Index (DMI) survey is an anonymous, comprehensive questionnaire used by Catholic parishes and dioceses to assess the spiritual health and effectiveness of their local communities. Developed by the Catholic Leadership Institute (CLI) in 2013, the tool helps church leaders make data-driven decisions for pastoral planning and future goal-setting. Members of our Parish have volunteered for the past two years with a CLI (Catholic Leadership Institute) consultant to create here at St. Paul Parish three priorities to move our parishes into being a Next Generation Parish. See Envisioning & Implementation: Our three priorities and six goals were previously published and shared.

CLI - Catholic Leadership Institute

provides bishops, priests, religious, deacons, and lay persons in the Church with world-class, pastoral leadership formation and consulting services that strengthen their confidence and competence in ministry, enabling them to articulate a vision for their local church, to call forth the gifts of those they lead, and

to create more vibrant faith communities rooted in Jesus Christ. This program is free to our Diocese and is funded through a grant from the Lilly Foundation.

The Four Pillars of Growth for a Next Generation Parish are:

- 1. Spiritual Maturity** - Creating a clear plan for ongoing discipleship. Deepening our personal relationship with God. Cultivating a culture of intentional, lifelong growth in faith.
- 2. Sunday Experience** - Providing engaging and inspiring homilies. Incorporating excellent and uplifting hymns that the congregation knows. Extending warm, intentional hospitality to all attendees.
- 3. Missionary Impulse** - Moving beyond the church walls to lead others to Christ. Encouraging parishioners to share their personal faith witness. Engaging the local community through active apostolic outreach.
- 4. Leadership** - Committing to a healthy, vibrant & collaborative organization. Encouraging laity to step forward and serve. Support pastors through co-responsible parish leadership teams.

Now is the time to do your part!

The Disciple Makers Index Survey will be available online, in the pews, in the bulletin, on the website, and in the office! It runs September 13th through to October 11th, 2026. Take the survey yourself. Encourage everyone in your household and ALL of your Church friends to take this survey!

How else can you help?

Get involved! Try something new! Is there something our parish is missing? Let us know!

*Have we made progress in becoming a Next Generation Parish?
Take the 2026 survey...*

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK.



St. Paul Parish

Established 1881

935 East State St.
SALEM, OH 44460
330-332-0336
parish308@youngstowndiocese.org
stpaulsalem.org



St. Paul Parish continues its journey to become a Next Generation Parish in partnership with the Catholic Leadership Institute.

An Envisioning and Implementation Team from our parish will help lead us into sharing our parish's purpose, vision, and priorities. St. Paul invites our active participation and prayers. For further information, log on to the St. Paul web page (stpaulsalem.org) and click on Catholic Leadership Institute.

Check out our website for future announcements and opportunities to get involved.

Our Purpose

We want to share our knowledge, experience, gifts, and talents to revive and continue to build a Christ-centered community to serve and teach for the glory of God.

LET'S GROW TOGETHER ♥

ENVISIONING ↓ IMPLEMENTATION

Our Vision

We will be welcoming and inviting to grow and serve as a source of good in our community. We will demonstrate compassion and promote excitement for the life, teaching, and love of Jesus Christ.

Our Priorities SIX GOALS

Priority One:

FOSTER SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Building on our current strengths, we will empower a vibrant parish community that deepens faith at every stage of life. We will expand opportunities for spiritual education and formation, encourage fuller participation in the sacraments, and inspire parishioners to grow through worship, prayer, and retreat experiences.

1 Increase confidence in the teachings of the Church's sacraments and traditions through workshops and adult catechism.

2 Increase the percentage of parishioners sharing their faith through evangelism by participating in a church sponsored group education session.

Priority Two:

BUILD PARISH UNITY AND OUTREACH

Foster a welcoming and informed parish where everyone feels seen, valued, and invited to belong. Strengthen parish connection through communication, shared purpose, and active participation. Support outreach efforts that reflect the compassion and justice of the Gospel. Extend our mission into the broader community.

3 Increase parishioner awareness and engagement

4 Strengthen the connection between the parish and the wider community by organizing at least one fellowship event each quarter, involving both parishioners and community members

Priority Three:

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Encourage parishioners to work with the pastor in enhancing the parish's mission and resources. Invite participation in parish ministry and to care for staff and facilities.

5 Increase participation in our ministry by developing a skills and interests database of all registered households, using the database to match individuals with ministry needs.

6 Increase the year over year total weekly offertory.



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THE NEXT GENERATION PARISH



Catholic Leadership
INSTITUTE

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Why do we need A Next Generation Parish?
What's wrong with the parish we have now?

Why change
our parents'
or grandparents'
generation?
parish now?

We like our parish just the way it is! It's comfortable and fits into my cycle of life. Let's all just stay in the box we currently are in and maintain what we have now.
Society has seen a massive leap in communication technology that we have never witnessed in the past, some good and some not so good.

God has given us the grace and responsibility to strengthen our faith so that we can bring Christ into the world around us. Simply put, The Next Generation Parish is a call to us, the laity, to increase our spiritual maturity, increase our experience at Mass, become missionary minded and share in the leadership of the parish.

Do we have to do all of that?

The good news is we're probably doing things already.
The challenge is, it's not enough.

Studies done about the Catholic Church have pointed out that the world around us is changing. However, our mission had not. We are uniquely called to bring Christ into our workplace, our home, our friendships and our community. Our parish pastors can only do so much with the responsibilities they currently have. We, the parishioners, are positioned to bring God's light into places our religious cannot reach.

Why is it not
enough?

**WE HAVE
A PLAN!**



WHAT'S THE NEXT ? GENERATION PARISH'S PLAN

The Next Generation Parish process that offers us opportunities through programs and educational offerings to help both the Church and us, the laity, to strengthen and sustain our faith. The laity are called to be active missionaries where they:

Live, Work, Play, & Gather with family.

HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?

We are not changing the Church. We are becoming the Church God is calling us to be.

We encourage all to both understand and embrace the Next Generation Parish process and let it help transform our faith to what God wants for us.

During the next few weeks, we will bring more specific information regarding how we can work together and accomplish this goal.

The Four Pillars for Growth

- 1. Spiritual Maturity** – *Grow in faith.*
- 2. Sunday Experience** – *Encounter Christ.*
- 3. Missionary Impulse** – *Share the good news.*
- 4. Leadership** – *Build the Church.*

Move beyond the status quo and help transform our faith into what God truly wants for us.
Stay tuned for more updates next week!

**STAY
TUNED!**

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Last week we introduced you to the upcoming **NEXT GENERATION PARISH** process. Today we'll discuss the planning process using the **Four Pillars of Growth**:

1. **Spiritual Maturity** - Grow in faith
2. **Sunday Experience** - Encounter Christ
3. **Missionary Impulse** - Share the Good News
4. **Leadership** - Build the Church

Let's start with **Spiritual Maturity**... (This information can be found on St. Paul's Parish Website, stpaulsalem.org)

Spiritual Maturity



Discipleship

What does **Discipleship** mean for Catholics ?

Discipleship is being a **lifelong** student of the teachings of Jesus Christ and his church.



A key element here is

"lifelong."

Not just something we learned during catechism in our youth or converting as an adult.

Discipleship is a **lifelong** process of learning and commitment to Christ that we put into action each and every day of our lives, not just on Sundays, to grow in our faith.



1 Corinthians 9:22 - "To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some."

How do I
grow in my faith?

Prioritization is key here.

If you don't prioritize your faith in Jesus Christ to be the most important part of your day,

then

the world, family, business, friends, and pleasure will be more than happy to prioritize your life.

The **Next Generation Parish** wants all parishioners to actively seek out opportunities to learn and strengthen your faith daily.

Do What? Prioritize what?

You first must want to prioritize God.

Through his church, we can help you with this **lifelong** quest.



How can you
be "disciplined"?

Some can do it themselves. Others seek to be part of a group to help guide them. Perhaps the best models are a bit of both.

Opportunities are plentiful. There are many excellent reliable catholic online studies, small group studies, daily bible studies, reading our catechism and of course church sponsored programs from our diocese and local parish.



Finding material that will help us grow stronger in our faith as a Catholic, is all around us.

Pray that God will lead us into a lifelong process of meaningful discipleship and help us to **prioritize** our day so that he is always at the top of our to-do list.

STAY TUNED FOR NEXT WEEK'S DISCUSSION ON THE "SUNDAY EXPERIENCE."

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In the last two weeks St. Paul's Implementation Team introduced to you the upcoming **NEXT GENERATION PARISH** process.

In an effort to answer questions that arise, we will discuss the planning process using the four pillars of growth.

The Four Pillars for Growth are:

1. **Spiritual Maturity** - *Grow in faith*
2. **Sunday Experience** - *Encounter Christ*
3. **Missionary Impulse** - *Share the Good News*
4. **Leadership** - *Build the Church*

Can Mass really change my week?

This week we'll discuss our
Sunday Experience...

Sunday Experience



*Almighty God created the Mass,
and He created us so that we
can find Him in the Mass.*

God offers us
his body and blood
through the Holy Eucharist.

During Mass, God also speaks
to us through hymns, scripture,
and the homily.
It is the most important hour we
will have during our entire
168-hour week.

IF WE LET IT...



All "Next Generation" information can be found on St. Paul's Parish Website, stpaulsalem.org

1 Corinthians 9:22 - "To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some."

Have you ever walked into Mass feeling rushed, ill-prepared or just stressed out about other things in your life?

Most of us would admit that these feelings have occurred from time to time. Saturday/Sunday Mass offers us an opportunity to give both thanks and praise to our Lord as well as sacrifice.

It is not God's will that we miss out on his blessings during Mass.

How can we make our mass experience both meaningful and lasting throughout the week?



We must start by preparing our heart, mind, and soul at home. We should be proactive and intentional with our time so we are prepared and arrive reverently, not rushed and ill-prepared.

We should arrive knowing ahead of time what we will pray for as we kneel and ask God for our needs before the Mass starts.

We should take part in every aspect of the Mass as God speaks to us through the hymns, the cantors' psalms, the scripture readings, the homily, the prayers and the Eucharist.

God is there, are you?

The mass is not something we should rush through, but should instead be a time when we give the Lord our full mind, body, heart, and soul in sacrifice and praise during the entire mass.

The Mass isn't over when we leave. Take it home and out into the world all week!

SEE YOU AT MASS!

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For the past few weeks we have been sharing the
The Four Pillars for Growth.

**This week let's discuss
"Missionary Impulse."**

Missionary Impulse

Am I really called
to be a Missionary?

"I'M NOT A MISSIONARY!" *Actually...you are!*
A missionary isn't necessarily someone who travels
across the world. A missionary is a Catholic who
brings Christ into the world around them.

At work: *Listen to someone who is struggling.*

At home: *Pray with your family.*

With a friend: *Invite someone to Mass.*

In the community:

*Serve someone who
needs help.*

Online: *Share
something that
reflects your faith.*



When Jesus instructed the
apostles to go out and spread
the good news. He didn't mean
that they should walk through
towns and simply greet and
compliment all the people
they met along the way.

He expected them to
educate and preach the
Good News and salvation
through Jesus Christ.



All "Next Generation" information can be found on St. Paul's Parish Website, stpaulsalem.org
1 Corinthians 9:22 - "To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some."

You may be saying, I'm ill-prepared, I'm afraid. I can't defend my faith, I haven't memorized scripture, I'm not going door-to-door and talking with strangers! Why is this suddenly put on my shoulders?

First, it isn't sudden. It has always been around. Vatican II, Pope Paul VI, Pope Francis, and Pope Leo XIV have all called us to be missionaries of our faith. Our Holy Scripture called for us to spread our faith some 2000 years ago and still does.

The word **evangelism** puts up red flags and trepidation in most Catholics. Most of these fears are unfounded and can be overcome by acquiring some new skills.

**We don't need to memorize scripture
or approach
stranger's door-to-door.**

The church urges us to reach out to people that we most likely already know.

We meet these people wherever they are in their current faith and we should start at that point.



The diocese and our parish have recently started a formation program to effectively teach us how to **evangelize**, (i.e., bring the good news to others) in a safe, non-threatening way. We are all called to spread the good news of Jesus. We are called to evangelize, bringing the Good News to others is a cornerstone of our faith.

How do we
as Catholics
fulfill this command?

What is Evangelization?

"Remember it's bringing
the Good News of Jesus
into every human
situation."

LET'S ANSWER GOD'S CALL!
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This week's discussion is **Leadership**, the last of
The Four Pillars for Growth:

1. Spiritual Maturity
2. Sunday Experience
3. Missionary Impulse
4. Leadership

Leadership



I'M NOT A LEADER" !

Maybe you are...you just don't have the title.

Parents lead families.
Grandparents lead by example.
Coaches lead young people.
Ministry volunteers lead through service.
Experienced parishioners mentor newer parishioners.
Young adults can lead younger generations.
Teen can lead through their witness.

Every organization, even a parish, needs to be healthy and vibrant. To get the message across and withstand the pressures and stress of what sometimes can be a dark world, leaders from within the parish need to become engaged. In the past, primarily those with Holy Orders were principally charged with being the "leader." Times have changed!

The parish priest can no longer do this alone. With fewer men going into the priesthood, the need for parishioners to step up and assume leadership roles in the church has become critical. This was recognized when Vatican II redefined the role of the laity in the church.

Under the leadership and guidance of our parish priest, **we, the laity, are called to assist with the needs of our physical church and its many ministries.**

Without the assistance of the parishioners, the effectiveness and mission of the church becomes compromised.

Lay Leadership of the parish can be busy and strained when too few people are doing all of the work. The need for additional leaders is constant. Leadership can be rewarding.

The best leaders are the ones who help mentor future leaders to carry on the work of the church and God's covenants and commandments.



All this information can be found on St. Paul's Parish Website, stpaulsalem.org

1 Corinthians 9:22 - "To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some."

Do I have what it takes to be a leader?

To be a leader requires a willingness to lead, to work with others, and to be available without compromising your health, your family, or your prayer time with the Lord.

The best leaders inspire workers & volunteers to perform their best, giving them credit for a job well-done. True leaders are often blessed



LET'S GROW TOGETHER ♥

with humility, emphasizing the success of the project, not their own role in the task.

In the past the laity have had a limited role in the work of the parish church. Now, there is an opportunity for all who answer the call to help the priest lead our parish toward the Next Generation Parish.

Won't you help? ?

Clergy & Laity

Different Roles, Working Together to Build Up the Church as One Body of Christ

CLERGY



Ordained Bishops, Priests, and Deacons

- Celebrate the Sacraments, especially the Mass
- Hear Confessions,
- Guide and Teach the Faithful

LAITY



All Baptized Members Who Are Not Ordained

- Live the Faith at Home, School, Work, and Society
- Bring Christ to the World Through Their Lives



Different Ministries, Together Building Up the Body of Christ

Both Are Called, Both Are Needed
Equal in Dignity, Working as One for God's Kingdom

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For the past several months, St. Paul's Implementation Team have discussed the Next Generation Parish process.

The Four Pillars of Growth:

1. **Spiritual Maturity** - Grow in faith
2. **Sunday Experience** - Encounter Christ
3. **Missionary Impulse** - Share the Good News
4. **Leadership** - Build the Church

How do we move from understanding to participation?

All this information can be found on St. Paul's Parish Website, stpaulsalem.org



What is the next step?
What is God asking ME to do?



PRAY

Spend 5 minutes this week asking God where He wants you to grow.

LEARN

Attend one of the parish sponsored faith-formation opportunities.

PARTICIPATE

Choose one way to become more engaged at Mass.

SERVE

Invite someone to participate in parish life.

LEAD

Consider assisting in one ministry where you can help, if even in some small way.



Is God telling me
to take the
next step?

Don't be a
Christian
that grew up
in church
but never grew
in Christ.

"NEXT GENERATION"
DOESN'T MEAN
YOUNGER GENERATION.

The Next Generation
of disciples includes:

children
teenagers
young adults
parents
middle-aged adults
seniors
grandparents

Every generation has a role!

The Next Generation Parish isn't about
changing who we are. It's about
becoming who God is calling us to
be.

We need to:

Grow in faith

Encounter Christ

Bring the Gospel to the world

Build up the Church

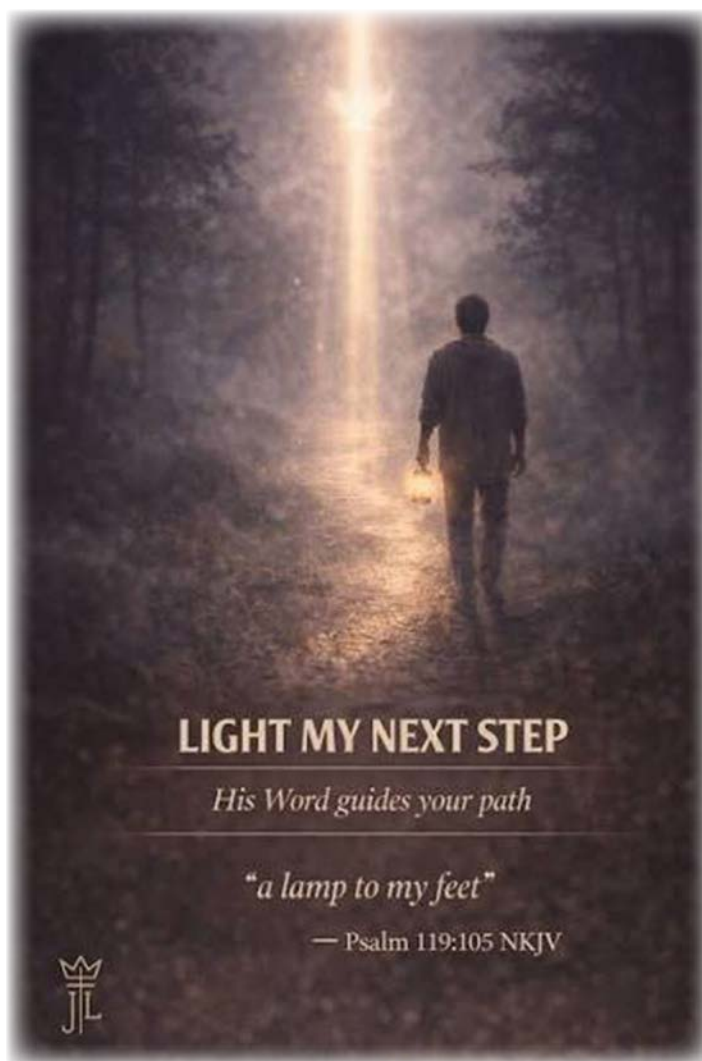
Next Generation Parish Commitment

Let's try a faith and participation commitment.

I want to help St. Paul Parish become a Next Generation Parish.

This year I will commit to:

- ☐ Growing in my personal relationship with Christ
- ☐ Making Sunday Mass a greater priority
- ☐ Sharing my faith with others
- ☐ Serving in a parish ministry
- ☐ Becoming a parish leader
- ☐ Helping develop future parish leaders
- ☐ Inviting someone else into parish life



LIGHT MY NEXT STEP

His Word guides your path

"a lamp to my feet"

— Psalm 119:105 NKJV



LET'S GROW TOGETHER ♥

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