

## 2018: The Year of the Family

The Eve of the First Sunday in Advent  
December 2, 2017

Dear Bishops, Very Rev. and Rev. Fathers, Deacons and Faithful of our Holy Church,

We are excited to announce that the theme selected for 2018 across our Holy Polish National Catholic Church is: "The Year of the Family". This was decided at the recent National Clergy Conference where after prayer, reflection and discussion the clergy selected this theme for 2018.



The hope and prayer of our clergy and the Future Direction committee is that this Year of the Family will help strengthen all our families in living out our Christian faith, virtues and values and will become an important and consistent part of their lives.

We will be sending various blessings and prayers to be done before or after Holy Mass as well as some materials for our families to take home.

### **PNCC Future Direction Action Plan for PNCC Parishes in 2018: The Year of the Family**

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|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>I. Growth and Membership</b> | <b>II. Increase Spirituality</b> |
| <b>III. Lifelong Learning</b>   | <b>IV. Sacred Vocations</b>      |
| <b>V. Community Involvement</b> |                                  |

**1. Greater Understanding of Church Solemnities:** In 2018 we will focus on the Solemnity of the Humble Shepherds. Re-distribute the Humble Shepherds pamphlet. Perhaps a video presentation from our Prime Bishop on this Solemnity.

**2. Two Days of Retreat: Lent and Advent** Pick a day during the seasons of Lent and Advent in 2018 to spend in retreat and prayer. Maybe do this as a family activity. This can be done on either a parish or seniorate level. Ideas for the Retreat include: Mass of the Day, special Lenten/Advent service of Penance, Scripture Readings/Reflections and Meditations, Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament; For Lent: Stations of the Cross, Sorrowful Lamentations, etc. This can be open and advertised to the local community.

**3. Complete at least five community service projects:** One service project could be in conjunction with the Solemnity of Humble Shepherds and the other, selected by the local parish. It is important that the five projects be done in the local community of the parish so that these efforts will create a greater presence of the parish in the community.

Various options include but are not limited to: A project to aid an assisted living facility, or other care facility i.e. nursing home, group home; volunteering for a special needs event; having a Mass or event for your local widow's group; aiding a family crisis center, Food Drives, serving a free meal for the community, providing a community breakfast/meal for First Responders – for Veterans; prayer blanket ministry, clothing drive for the community, sponsoring a local family in need, and/or responding to a particular need in the local community, etc.

**4. Implementing the Year of the Family Component:** Develop and emphasize this theme through 2018. *Our purpose is to strengthen all families in living out our Christian faith, virtues and values during this special year.* Please see the monthly Future Direction emails regarding this effort with concrete actions.

## 2018: The Year of the Family

**January** – The example of the Holy Family

A blessing of families after Holy Mass on Sunday January 7th and a prayer card for all to take home

**February** – The importance of unconditional Love in the family

**March** – Celebration of Lent as a Family

Encourage various ways that the family can pray and meditate together during this Sacred season. Have the family prepare an Easter basket together or Easter table together for the blessing of the Church on Holy Saturday.



**April** – Living out our Easter Joy in the family and the parish – the importance of regular attendance at Holy Mass

**May** – The love of our Blessed Mother – her submission to the will of God as an example for all

**June** – *Sacred Vocations Month* – The Guardianship of St. Joseph – his submission to the will of God as an example to all - Family Vocations event and prayer

**July** – The importance of Family Time/Vacation to the family. Also remembering to continue the practice of daily prayer and worship during this time.

**August** – Importance of youth in the family – raising children as an important ministry in the church – an event for the parish youth and prayers for parents and guardians

**September** – Sharing our gifts and talents in the home and in the parish.

Create a fun exercise/game that lists one's gifts and talents and then challenge them to share them at home as well as in the parish

**October** – *Clergy Appreciation Month* – *On the Solemnity of the Christian Family*

Have a sharing family event at the parish where troubles and joys are Shared; strengthening the bonds of our parish families.

**November** – Family Gratitude – stress the importance of giving thanks and doing it as an individual and parish family. Thanksgiving Day prayer placemats. Helping those in need or alone on Thanksgiving.

**December** – Resources for the family to spiritually prepare for Christmas together, a shared prayer when putting up their Christmas tree – small advent wreath for the home lit during the family meals. Recognizing and living the true meaning of Christmas as a family.

**5. Implement Lay Ministry Program in PNCC:** Our national and diocesan Lay Ministry chaplains begin this implement this program across our PNCC that will enhance, encourage and strengthen the role of the laity within our PNCC.

**6. Move forward with PNCC Office of News & Media Relations:** implement proposal accepted by the 2017 PNCC Supreme Council

**7. Create a PNCC Future Direction Facebook Page** – by posting the monthly messages to this page and asking our members to share them, we hope more will be reached and encouraged to participate in these efforts.

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**8. Constant Prayer in prepare for out October 2018 General Synod** – special intercessions for the month leading up to the synod – encourage a novena for this Holy Gathering.

### An Advent Reflection

Advent is a blended season, a mixture of hope, repentance, anticipation and joy. We know that Christ has already come, establishing his Kingdom through his life, death and resurrection. But Christ will come again in glory to establish His Kingdom in its fullness. Meanwhile, Christ comes to all who are willing to make a place for Him in their hearts.

Our Advent models are Isaiah who yearned for the coming of the Lord, John the Baptist who announced the presence of Christ, and Mary who was transformed by grace. Like Isaiah, we look forward to Christ's glorious return. Like John, we recognize Christ's presence among us and our need for repentance. And like Mary, we seek to accept the will of God in order to make a place for Christ in our hearts. And allow His will to be done in us.

As we approach the coming Christmas Season – our Lord through His Holy Church reminds us that **we need to be ready** as we heard in the Gospel on the First Sunday of Advent. Ready to first, celebrate properly His birth and second, ready to meet our Lord at any moment by living as he taught following His saving Gospel. This is a time when we are reminded by John the Baptist to “**prepare the way for the Lord**”. It is important that we do this and prepare ourselves spiritually for the coming celebration of Christmas and for the return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



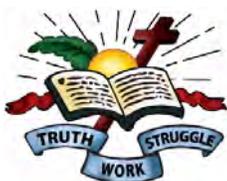
### An Advent Prayer

Let us pray. Almighty and Eternal God, You became one of us that we might have the life of Christ forever. Through this season of Advent, rekindle in us a desire for the coming of Your Kingdom. Knowing how much our world needs Your grace and truth, we ask You to guide us in the way of compassion that we might help your suffering ones. Fill us with every grace and blessing as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior. Amen.

If you know of parishioners or friends who are not a part of our monthly email updates – please have them email us at [FutureDirection@pncc.org](mailto:FutureDirection@pncc.org) to become a part of this important effort for our Holy Church.

Please keep this church-wide undertaking in your daily prayers – asking God to bless this work and allow it to bear fruit for the building of His Kingdom through our Holy Church.

As we begin this Holy season of Advent may we use this time to spiritual prepare ourselves to again celebrate the Incarnation and be ready for His return in glory. May we show our thankfulness to God not just in our words, but more importantly buy our actions. May God bless you and your family during this Advent season.



Sincerely yours in Christ,  
**PNCC Supreme Council Future Direction Committee**  
Most Rev. Anthony A. Mikovsky, *Prime Bishop*  
Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich Jr., *Chairman*