

Nashoba Valley Cluster Planning Process
November 2004

In response to Archbishop O'Malley's 25 May 2004 mandate to the Nashoba Cluster we have been actively engaged in monthly conversations with the facilitation of Father Robert McMillan, SJ, from the Archdiocesan Planning Office. Our goal is to prepare a proposal for the Archbishop by December 2005 which defines how Catholic life and ministry can flourish and grow in the future when the Valley is served by three priests. The five Nashoba parishes are represented in this on-going discussion by their ordained pastors and by the lay members of each staff and parish community. The members of each parish are as follows. **St. Mary Parish in Ayer:** Father Gosselin, Paul Bresnahan, Peter Johnston, Paul Boisseau, Murray Head, Tim O'Keefe, Pauline Hamel. **Sacred Heart/St. James in Groton:** Father Alfano, Debbie Lackey, Tom Pistorino, Linda Johnson, Greg Sheldon, Joe Eshleman, Joanie Barclay. **St. Joseph in Pepperell:** Father Butler, Sr. Roberta Rzeznik, David Wilson, Robert Conlon, Kim Dee, Mike Markham. **St. Anthony of Padua in Shirley:** Father Derosier, Deacon Ray Gagnon, Sally Nappila, Brian Anerson, Ken Gionet, Gary Pollice, Barbara Nole. **St. John the Evangelist in Townsend:** Father Chetwynde, Amy Yergeau, Steve Best, Dick Meyers, Marion Parker.

The Cluster Planning Group has together worked out the following **Mission Statement** which defines the vision of the Nashoba Valley Planning Group as we go forward.

The Nashoba Valley Catholic Community is blessed with a deep spiritual heritage fostered within the five-parish cluster.

We recognize that each parish has a unique identity and is a source of strength within its own community.

We embrace a desire to move forward in one faith, sharing common goals that members view as more important than their individual goals.

Filled with God's love, we strive to seek out and attend to the spiritual, pastoral, educational and social needs of our parishioners and neighbors.

We proclaim and live the Gospel by celebrating the Word, the Sacraments, and the Holy Eucharist.

We strive to carry out our mission by:

- + **sharing our talents and gifts by promoting stewardship**
- + **nurturing our relationships within our ecumenical community**
- + **creating an atmosphere that encourages active listening**
- + **growing in trust and love for one another**
- + **ongoing evangelization to the wider community**
- + **continuing education of our faith to our children and adults alike**

Our Nashoba Valley cluster will act as five parishes, while simultaneously functioning in many cases as a community with multiple church locations, supported by three priests.

The Catholic Community of the Nashoba Valley is committed to the teachings of Jesus Christ and shares a hopeful vision for the future of His Church.

The Planning Group has sub-divided itself into three Task Forces with which to more fully study and address varied dimensions of our Nashoba cluster's shared pastoral and administrative needs in the future:

- ◆ **Pastoral** (issues of the spiritual, liturgical, sacramental, educational and communications)
- ◆ **Administration** (issues of facilities upkeep, business management and operations)
- ◆ **Planning** (issues of growth and development in the Nashoba Valley cluster's future)

The ongoing conversation continues with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and prayer support of each parish.