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CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
of ST. THOMAS MORE

Pastoral Strategic Plan 2022-2024

1. Become a parish of Intentional Disciples

Expand opportunities for lifelong faith formation, spiritual growth and evangelization in the STM Community; increase individual and family involvement in the life of the parish

1.1 Witness to the Gospel: Increase awareness in the Chapel Hill area of the presence of St. Thomas More as a church and school community welcoming those searching for a place to worship and as a place for the education of their children. Increase participation in community events specifically sponsored by STM such as the Christmas parade. Train parishioners willing to evangelize outside the walls of STM church.

1.2 Continue Discipleship Catechesis including:

- ✚ Come and See Retreat and reunions
 - Renewed participation in the Catherine of Sienna Institute Programs such as:
 - Forming Intentional Disciples Workshops
 - Called and Gifted Workshop. The next workshop will be held on November 5, 2022.
- ✚ Lenten Mission
- ✚ Christmas book give away

1.3 Religious Vocations: Continue regular promotion of vocations to the priesthood and religious life through:

- ✚ Seminarian features in the bulletin
- ✚ Annual Adopt A Seminarian Program
- ✚ Holy Hours for vocations
- ✚ Education in the school and faith development programs around vocations
- ✚ Diocesan vocations programs
- ✚ Work with The Foundation of the Diocese of Raleigh on the Seminarian Sponsorship Program
- ✚ Maintain the Vocations Corner in the narthex

- ✚ Focus on personal invitations to consider a vocation in the Church

1.4 Awakening Faith: Continue to offer the Returning Catholics Program three times a year.

1.5 Adult Faith Development:

- ✚ Ongoing implementation of the Adult Faith Development Plan including speaker series
- ✚ With the hiring of a new director, evaluate current Adult FD offerings and begin to develop a plan for 2024-2026

1.6: Accompany Catholic young adults in our community on their journey of faith by providing space, resources, and opportunities for authentic connection with Christ and each other.

1.7 Marriage Enrichment: Identify couples to lead marriage enrichment. Initial conversations have taken place.

1.8 Small Faith Communities: Strengthen and promote existing small faith communities including:

- ✚ Catholic Mothers' Network Bible Study and Playgroup
- ✚ Catholic Sunday School for Adults
- ✚ Aging with Faith, Wisdom and Grace
- ✚ Enlightening Faith Group
- ✚ Iron Sharpens Iron Men's Fellowship
- ✚ St. Joseph Men's Spirituality Group
- ✚ Lenten Small Groups (various in-home groups)
- ✚ Life in Christ Group for Evangelization

1.9 Hospitality:

- ✚ Restart the quarterly new parishioner welcome socials in the fall of 2022, hospitality weekends after mass.
- ✚ On the date of the annual parish festival, promote the 5:15 Mass a "Welcome Mass" for new families.

1.10 Child Care Ministry: Individuals have been identified and a plan develop to launch a trial run of a Sunday nurse. Launch in the fall of 2022.

1.11 Following the Synod Listening Sessions, examine areas that have been identified as significant to pastoral life of the parish community. Plan for any responses or initiatives that are necessary based on these identified concerns/significant issues.

(Diocesan Priority #2: Focus on Faith Formation and Sacramental Practice; Priority #4: Promote Vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated Life; Diocesan Priority #5; Implement the Pastoral Initiative on Marriage and Support Family Life; Priority # 7: Plan for the Effective Management of Growth)

2. Respect Life and Social Concern

Promote Human Dignity and promote outreach to the poor and vulnerable as integral to Catholic life and teaching.

2.1 Life and Dignity of the Human Person: The respect life initiatives proclaim and affirm the life and dignity of every human person through prayer, education, outreach, and public policy to defend and inspire a culture of life from the moment of conception until the end of natural life.

- ✚ To increase awareness of the wide range of prolife issues as defined by the USCCB and annually plan one or more programs to emphasize particular issues ([Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities | USCCB](#))

- ✚ To increase STM Parishioner participation in Respect Life activities for example, The 40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil and Teen Mom’s Program.

2.2 Catholic Social Teaching: Increase parishioner understanding of the 7 pillars of C.S.T. so that this becomes part of our lived spirituality.

- Offer Just Faith Course every few years. Last course was in 2020.
- Utilize bulletin inserts to increase awareness of Catholic social teaching.
- During the 2021-2022 academic year, St. Thomas More Catholic School is focusing on the 7 pillars of Catholic Social Teaching.

2.3 Care for Creation:

- ✚ Implement the Laudato Sí 7 Year Action Plan.
- ✚ Work with other local faith communities and organizations to expand our common ground of beliefs, practices and actions. Continue collaboration with Orange-Chatham Interfaith Care for Creation.
- ✚ Solar Panels for church/middle school will take place in 2022 after the new roof is installed.

(Diocesan Priority #1: Promote the Life and Dignity of the Human Person; Priority #2: Focus on Faith Formation and Sacramental Practice)

3. Parish Unity

Foster unity and fellowship among our diverse members

3.1 Church and School: Continue to strengthen the bond between the church and school through Knights of Columbus events and support, collaboration between Faith Development Department and the school, Rice Bowls.

3.2 International Fair: Sponsor the next International Fair in 2022.

3.3 Continue the promotion of parish events that foster unity:

- ✚ CROP Walk

- ✚ Parish Pride Day
- ✚ Family Movie Night

3.4: Solidarity Across Differences: Support the work of the Image and Likeness Committee whose mission is to: To offer parish programming that will deepen Catholic understanding that all people are made in God's image and likeness. The goals are CONNECTION (we will truly see each other as brothers and sisters in Christ), raised awareness of BARRIERS TO CONNECTION (personal/ structural sin), and PRAYER AND ACTION (changing personal/societal behaviors.) The specific emphases are racism and cultural diversity.

(Diocesan Priority #3: Promote Cultural Diversity)

4. Parish Communications

Redesign the parish website during the summer/fall of 2022

(Diocesan priority # 7: Plan for Effective Management and Growth)

5. Parish Resources

Prioritize and obtain the resources needed to support strategic initiatives.

Ongoing Stewardship Awareness Initiative: Develop and implement an annual Stewardship Awareness Initiative.

5.1 Automated Giving. Encouraged parishioners to utilize the Automated Giving approach as a way to ensure they meet their commitment for financial stewardship.

5.2 Parishioner and Staff, Time & Talent. Develop and implement initiatives to encourage parishioners to utilize their time and talents to further the mission of the parish. Utilize various resource management tools to support balancing the workload of the parish between various staff members, parishioners and suppliers. Focus on Stewardship in the fall each year. Hold a volunteer recognition event in the spring of 2023 and honor outstanding volunteers in each portfolio.

5.3 Offertory, Mortgage and Special Financial Needs. Effectively manage parish offertory to support strategic initiatives as well as to support the day-to-day operation of the parish and the parish Mortgage. Funding for special projects and strategic initiatives will be managed on a by project basis. Conduct an annual appeal to increase the parish offertory.

5.4 Master Capital Planning.

- ✚ Implement and update a Master Capital Expenditure Plan for facilities, endowments, major expenditure items, including annual reserves for the church and school.
- ✚ Replace roofs on Middle School, church narthex, preschool, and Gossman Center in the summer of 2022.
- ✚ Install solar on the Middle School and Church Narthex roofs in 2022
- ✚ Expand driveway and parking for South Campus.

(Diocesan Priority #5 –Effective Stewardship of Resources)

6. Integrity & Responsibility: Ensure the integrity & operational readiness of all safety and security responsibilities for our parish community, school & outreach operations.

- ✚ Continued compliance with Safe Environment Standards
- ✚ Continued improvement & readiness in emergency medical response capabilities
- ✚ Continued training and practice in safety & security drills

- ✚ Continued strengthening of our working relationships & support with our local and regional Emergency First Responder partners;
- ✚ Continued direct support for the development of a diocesan level safety & security initiative.

7. Pastoral support: Offer increased pastoral care and support for parishioners who are going through crisis, isolation, life changes, and health/mental health challenges.

7.1 Further the well-being and support of those with mental illness, their families and/or caregivers through prayer/scripture-based support groups, focused worship times, and resources on the mental health ministry website. We seek to end the stigma associated with these illnesses through mental health literacy, including Mental Health First Aid training, mental health professional "lunch time webinars" and parish-wide programs to educate the parish about mental illness from a Catholic perspective (Sanctuary for Catholics). Advocate for mental health resources for Latinos in the local community (through Justice United).

7.2 Offer increased pastoral outreach in the form of support groups, phone calls, visits, or prayer. Special consideration may be given to divorce care, LGBTQ+, and crisis support.

Updated: May, 2022

