

Strategic Plan

The Strategic Planning Committee is a joint effort between members of both sister parishes of St. Maria Goretti and Mary, Our Lady of Peace. The committee was tasked with assessing the current climate of our respective parishes. Therefore, a survey was developed in January 2015 and given to all members of both parishes in February. Based on these results, seven major goals were developed. Each goal contains corresponding objectives and suggested tasks. Each of the councils and committees in the parishes are being asked to develop one of these goals. The following document is an account of these ideas.

Goal #1: Enhance the financial well-being of the Parish.

DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY: FINANCE COMMITTEE OF EACH PARISH WORKING INDEPENDENTLY

The overall goal of the parish is to grow and prosper. This can only be done through increasing current financial contributions and by growing the population of the parish to enhance the overall financial well-being of the parish.

Objective #1: Increased stewardship, particularly giving levels.

Tasks:

- Analyze peer data to establish realistic goals
- Study other denominational churches to determine how they successfully accomplish tithing
- Analyze competing expense requests to determine ideal times to ask for contributions for income tax, property tax, SMA requests, Gala ticket sales, etc.
- Implement marketing programs to attract givers and increase stewardship
- Monitor patterns of giving for parishioners and follow-up with givers as warranted
- Publish quarterly financial statements compared to the budget
- Encourage the use of automatic debits
- Pray that we can create a parish environment where all WANT to give

Objective #2: To ensure the financial stability of the parish and that we are good stewards of its resources.

Tasks:

- Maintain cash reserves adequate for 3 months expenses
- Maintain a balanced budget in the operating fund

- Monitor expense levels to avoid unfavorable variances to the budget
- Conduct an annual wills seminar at both parishes
- Prepare and publish an annual budget

Objective #3: Expand and activate finance sub-committees to improve the functionality of the parish.

Tasks:

- Activate the following committees:
 - Endowment Committee, to solicit donations and monitor the existing fund
 - Memorial Fund Committee, to approve purchase over a given threshold, e.g. \$1000
 - ADA Committee, to organize and implement the giving plan
 - Gala Committee, to plan and organize the annual gala

Objective #4: Develop a long-range capital investment plan

Tasks:

- Activate a Campus Committee, to develop and implement a long-term capital plan
- Initiate a capital fundraising campaign

Goal #2: Improve communication within the Parish family and community.

DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY: WEBSITE MAINTENANCE COMMITTEES OF EACH PARISH WORKING TOGETHER

According to survey results, communication was lacking by the parish. Therefore, several areas of opportunity have developed.

Objective #1: Improve communication with parishioners through use of old and new technology.

Tasks:

- Implement Website Maintenance Committees at each respective parish to complete the following duties:
 - Update current events and graphics semi-monthly on the SMG and MOLOP sites
 - Solicit content for current events from parish secretaries and church committee members
 - Act as a liaison to facilitate interactions with the Augustana web guild

- Utilize social media websites to further enhance communication
- Review and refresh the format and authoring style of the bulletin on a bi-annual basis

Objective #2: Educate both Catholics and non-Catholics about available sacraments, programs and activities.

Tasks:

- Maintain updated explanations of sacraments and programs on the website
- Maintain duties and instructions of the liturgy ministry positions on the website
- Review the applicability of our programs for possible inclusion on websites meant for the broader community
- Renew focus and add structure to RCIA and Catholics Coming Home programs

Objective #3: Advertise the Church and its activities in the community.

Tasks:

- Encourage participation from the broader community through local advertisement

Goal #3: Ensure that the liturgical expectations of our congregation are fulfilled.

DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY: LITURGICAL COMMITTEES OF EACH PARISH WORKING TOGETHER

We should not attend mass just because it is something we are supposed to do, but rather we should be spiritually uplifted and intellectually challenged. Therefore, this goal aims to identify and fulfill areas of opportunity.

Objective #1: Early involvement and education of Joint Liturgical Committees.

Tasks:

- Committee members should meet regularly, at least every 2 months
- Include members of SMG on the committee
- Be active participants in the development and implementation of any changes
- Implement a formal recruitment, training, feedback, and recognition program

Objective #2: Develop a feedback mechanism for Mass

Tasks:

- Periodically ask for feedback regarding mass
- Develop a feedback mechanism for homilies to periodically assess the perceived meaningfulness of the message

Objective #3: Drive incremental improvements in music at all masses

Tasks:

- Fill the position of Music Director at SMG
- Develop a feedback mechanism for music at mass
- Involve music ministry volunteers in music selection
- Determine whether a need for professional development is necessary

Objective #4: Cultivation of Stewardship roles

Tasks:

- Develop a training program for new members of each ministry group by providing them with written instructions and mentoring in the ministry
- Evaluate programs for lay witness involvement at other churches of similar size

Goal #4: Improve involvement in Parish ministries

DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY: PARISH COUNCILS OF EACH PARISH WORKING INDEPENDENTLY

An active and growing Parish requires commitment of time and the involvement of many. To many, the same parishioners are asked to help over and over again. We should all be called to help in any way that we can, big or small. The objective of this goal is to help facilitate the involvement of new members in the many ministries that are available in our parishes.

Objective #1: Use existing programs to grow available ministries

Tasks:

- Make use of currently available liturgical/spiritual programs.
- Partner and collaborate with other parishes in the area to share ideas and resources

Objective #2: Utilize various forms of communication to raise knowledge and encourage involvement

Tasks:

- Use social media and technology to effectively communicate the inner workings of the parish
- Improve communication between staff and parish members
- Use 'personal witness statements' from current ministry members to publish on the website and in the bulletin focusing on the benefits of participating

Objective #3: Encourage involvement from a personal perspective

Tasks:

- Ask members in leadership positions to proactively invite members to participate in activities

Objective #4: Use social settings to encourage new member involvement

Tasks:

- Encourage member involvement in ministries in a fun, approachable way
- Aid members in identifying ministries and groups that might be a fit for them, both personally and spiritually
- Increase social activities for church members

Objective #5: Establish a big goal and create a big event

Tasks:

- Develop an event that bonds people together in their faith
- Examples include: TEC, Cursillo, a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, mission trips, retreats, etc.

Goal #5: Grow the membership and engagement of the Parish family.

DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY: RECRUITING COMMITTEE TO BE ESTABLISHED AS A JOINT COMMITTEE OF BOTH PARISHES

As a Parish, we should welcome all, new or returning, active or lapsed as a pure act of Christian hospitality. The idea of this goal was to get the young involved early before they have the opportunity to lapse and to develop means to reach out to those that have fallen away from the Church in hopes of growing our current Parish family.

Objective #1: Engage the youth

Tasks:

- Encourage teen participation in our liturgy, ushers/greeters, musicians and readers/lectors.
- Actively support the leaders of our youth programs
- Evaluate youth recruitment and retention activities at other Catholic churches of similar size and at other denominational churches within the area for comparison

Objective #2: Develop mechanisms to foster a sense of hospitality prior to and after mass

Tasks:

- Welcome each other prior to mass
- Introduce new parish members after mass
- Develop a welcome packet for new members
- Assign a mentor or sponsor to each new person or family joining the Parish

Objective #3: Welcome the divorced, separated, single and widowed.

Tasks:

- Promote and possibly partner with the divorced support group at St. Malachy's in Geneseo for our parishioners in need
- Encourage communication with the Priest as a means of spiritual support during these difficult times

Objective #4: Direct outreach to lapsed Catholics

Tasks:

- Determine the definition of 'lapsed' or inactive
- Identify the percentage of inactive Catholics for both parishes
- Establish a Recruitment Committee at each parish that would be tasked with the following:
 - Determine if a program already exists within the Diocese or beyond to reach out to inactive members and encourage their involvement to model after
 - If a model does not exist, develop a model for outreach, possibly utilizing a survey to determine the reason for leaving
 - Make recommendations to the Priest or Deacon for individuals open to returning to the faith and action plans will be determined on a case-by-case basis
- Develop an easy to read refresher on the value of receiving the Eucharist and attending mass to aid in communication and marketing
- Enhance the use of social media to get in touch with inactive members and encourage their involvement

Objective #5: Develop a regularly scheduled method of feedback to assess satisfaction and member retention

Tasks:

- Relaunch the Parish Vibrancy Survey every 2 years to assess progress
- Annually use shorter written surveys to evaluate strengths and improvement opportunities

Goal #6: Improve effectiveness and efficiency of internal Parish operations.

DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF EACH PARISH WORKING INDEPENDENTLY

Effectiveness and efficiency breed improved productivity with less work. This goal aims to identify areas of improvement at the level of Parish staff all the way up to the Diocese.

Objective #1: Improve the quality of the Parish bookkeeping systems

Tasks:

- Produce concise, but accurate financial statement
- Create an annual budget that aligns with the strategic goals
- Consider outsourcing bookkeeping to the Diocese
- Increase the transparency of our financial condition to the parishioners
- Create 'management information systems' to monitor and control non-financial issues (Ex. Parish membership numbers)

Objective #2: Improve our working relationship with the Diocese

Tasks:

- Trustees and administrators establish and cultivate a relationship with a contact in the Diocesan office
- Meet with this contact at least annually
- Utilize development resources, such as Stewardship Conferences via webcam

Objective #3: Improve the use of technology

Tasks:

- Ensure office computer systems are adequate
- Train staff to effectively use basic computer programs
- Develop the skills to communicate with parishioners via email, web and social media

Objective #4: Participate actively in area parishes

Tasks:

- Coordinate and collaborate with other local parishes to leverage existing programs
 - Ex. RCIA
- Encourage MOLOP Altar and Rosary Society to consider development of a joint group with SMG

Objective #5: Provide appropriate staff for the Parish

Tasks:

- Conduct a meeting with all committee chairs to determine personnel needs
- Ensure that employees are well trained and appropriately compensated

Objective #6: Ensure the Executive Committee meets regularly

Tasks:

- Conduct quarterly meetings, as defined by the Bylaws

Objective #7: Review written policies of major committees

Tasks:

- Review and adopt a Parish Council Constitution and Bylaws
- Review and adopt the Diocesan guidelines for the Finance Councils

Goal #7: Improve involvement to the broader community.

DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITY: SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE TO BE ESTABLISHED AS A JOINT COMMITTEE BETWEEN BOTH PARISHES

Mother Teresa said, "Give your hands to serve and your hearts to love." Currently, the goals and functionality of our service activities and mission work is not clearly defined and lacks effective coordination.

Objective #1: Develop a program to coordinate mission work

Tasks:

- Evaluate current mission work conducted by the Altar and Rosary Society and various Outreach Committees at MOLOP and the Social Concerns Committee at SMG
- Encourage current ministry groups to work together
- Determine whether a coordinator or facilitator role is necessary

Objective #2: Expand our ministry to identify and serve individuals in need

Tasks:

- Partner with neighboring churches in Orion and Catholic churches in our 'cluster' to leverage their current programs
 - Ex. Teen mission trips
- Outreach committees should regularly evaluate the changing needs of the community
 - Ex. Food pantry needs, grief counseling, etc.
- Encourage parishioners to be catalysts and aid in developing ideas for current or future service activities

Objective #3: Inspire volunteer involvement and support its development and participation

Tasks:

- Make sure up-to-date information for all service activities is available on the website and effectively utilize Google Calendar to create a schedule of all available opportunities
- Encourage those currently active in service work to share their stories to aid in volunteer recruitment
- Determine if any funds are currently available within the Parish to aid in service activities
- Provide new members with available outreach activities in their welcome packets and follow up with face-to-face contact or a phone call