



THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF ST. THOMAS MORE
CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA
PASTORAL STRATEGIC PLAN
2015 – 2018

Mission:

As disciples of Jesus Christ we are a diverse and hospitable Catholic Community. We pray, serve and spread the Gospel with joy.

1. Faith and Spiritual Formation

Expand opportunities for lifelong faith formation, evangelization and spiritual growth in the STM Community

- 1.1 Witness to the Gospel:** Increase awareness in the Chapel Hill area of the presence of St. Thomas More as a church community welcoming those searching for a place to worship. Increase participation in community events specifically sponsored by STM. Train parishioners willing to evangelize outside the walls of STM church.
- 1.2 Spiritual Retreats:** Conduct different kinds on a regular basis (i.e. Ignatian, 9/25-27, 2015; adult overnight 1/16; Benedictine – April 9, 2016; Evangelization – Fall of 2016)
- 1.3 Christian Vocations:** Conduct a “Called to Your Life” speaker series on vocations in 2015-2016
- 1.4 Awakening Faith Returning Catholics Program:** Begin a program for returning Catholics in the Fall of 2015
- 1.5 STM Prayer Book:** Develop a prayer book with appropriate catechesis by Spring 2016
- 1.6 Fatherhood series:** In collaboration with appropriate STM ministry groups, develop for 2016
- 1.7 Marriage series:** As a follow up to the World Meeting of Families (9/15), develop to include catechesis, prayer and a weekend Marriage Encounter

(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.)

2. Full and Active Discipleship

Promote an increase in individual and family involvement in the life of the parish

- 2.1 Spiritual Retreats:** See 1.1 above
- 2.2 Discipleship Catechesis:** Initiate a series of classes (e.g. prayer, Bible Study, Eucharistic adoration, reconciliation)
- 2.3 Leadership training in discipleship:** Offer “Making Disciples” workshop by the Catherine of Siena Institute in Colorado Springs
- 2.4 Small Faith Communities:** Pilot small faith communities / capitalize on current Lenten small faith communities
- 2.5 Enhance hospitality:** For potential new members, visitors and current parishioners (e.g. St. Benedict ministry, social gatherings)

(Diocesan Priority #2: Focus on Faith Formation and Sacramental Practice; Priority # 7: Plan for the Effective Management of Growth)

3. Outreach and Service

Encourage outreach to the poor and vulnerable as integral to Christian discipleship

- 3.1 Connect ministries to liturgy:** Link homily and scripture readings to a specific ministry as appropriate; a blessing of those engaged in various forms of outreach ministries (could be several combined ministries) would be offered 2-3 times a year when appropriate at the discretion of the clergy. This could be coordinated with such national efforts as the Catholic Campaign for Human Development and National Migration Week. Redesign the current charity envelope to better explain how funds are used. Feature ways the charity funds are used in the Pastor’s bulletin note each month.
- 3.2 Catholic Social Teaching:** Initiate small group study of Catholic social teaching (e.g. Faith in Action, Doorways to Formation from Diocese), bulletin inserts. The Pastoral Council will undertake a study of Catholic Social Teaching for 2015-2016.
- 3.3 Increase ministry visibility and engagement:** Increased and more effective use of the bulletin board, narthex TV, website, weekly

bulletin, parishioner talent survey, & stewardship fairs. Increase personal invitations to parishioners to become involved in outreach ministries. Explore greater opportunities for engagement of various entities in the parish such as deepening the partnership with St. Thomas More Catholic School.

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

4. Parish Unity

Foster unity and fellowship among our diverse members

4.1 English as a Second Language: Offer (ESL) course

4.2 Spanish as a Second Language: Offer SSL course

4.3 Church and School: Explore opportunities to strengthen the bond between the church and school

4.4 International Fair: Create opportunity to share and celebrate different cultural heritages

(Diocesan Priority #3: Promote Cultural Diversity)

5. Communication

Utilize appropriate communication media to ensure that all the members of the Parish are aware, informed and engaged. A number of items listed here have a cross over with other initiatives but involve communication resources.

5.1 More effectively advertise church events by utilizing community media and news outlets.

5.2 Expand communication to more parishioners: Institute “FlockNotes” first as a pilot and expand as appropriate; use social media

5.3 Support new members: Buddy system,; like-to-like with families and children; spiritual gift discernment (See 2.5)

5.4 Re-engage former and occasional Mass attendees: Extend personal invitations, create pew cards with pertinent parish information for visitors and newcomers, have a "join us" table in narthex, priests extend a personal invitation to potential parishioners and returning Catholics (See 1.4)

5.5 Continue to bridge church and school: Cross promote initiatives relevant to both groups (see 3.3, 4.3)

5.6 Bridge diverse cultures: Increase/enhance multilingual worship; reduce redundant ministries; promotion of ESL and SSL courses (see 4.1 and 4.2)

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

6. Resources

Prioritize and obtain the resources needed to support strategic initiatives.

6.1 Why Participate? The goal of the “Why Participate” campaign is to bring about a renewed awareness of Stewardship within the parish community. God has graced us with so much and we choose to respond to that graciousness through the careful and thoughtful use of our Time, Talent and Treasure in order to fulfill the mission of our parish.

6.2 Spiritual Gifts Inventory: The parish will implement a Spiritual Gifts Inventory in order to help parishioners discern where to focus their time and talent.

6.3 Automated Giving. The parish has recently implemented an upgraded Automated Giving platform that is more convenient and has more functionality and capability. Parishioners will be encouraged to utilize the Automated Giving approach as a way to ensure they meet their commitment for financial stewardship.

6.4 Parish Staff: To understand and manage the amount of staff time and resources devoted to various activities in our task forces and in our mission, various members of the parish staff will utilize a Responsibility Charting spreadsheet tool to understand the time and resources needed to implement, and to best manage these new activities.

6.5 Offertory, Mortgage and Special Financial Needs. Parish offertory is used to support strategic initiatives as well as to support the day-to-day operation of the parish. The parish Mortgage is to be paid over the next 11 years. Funding for special projects and strategic initiatives will be managed on a by-project basis.

(Diocesan Priority #5 –Effective Stewardship of Resources)