



-THE-
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
of ST. THOMAS MORE

Pastoral Strategic Plan 2021-2023

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
- ✚ Called and Gifted Workshop. The next workshop will be held in 2022.
- ✚ Lenten Mission
 - Fr. Chris Koehn will present the mission March 8-9, 2021.
 - Steve Angrisano has been rescheduled March 28-29, 2022.
- ✚ Christmas book give away

Continue to send staff and parish leaders to workshops at the Catherine of Siena Institute. The next workshop will be offered in 2022.

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

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

1.5 Adult Faith Development Plan: Ongoing implementation of the Adult Faith Development Plan including speaker series.

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: Continue to implement the new marriage enrichment multi-year process in English.

- ✠ “10 Great Dates” -will be offered in spring of 2021.
- ✠ Advent Morning of Reflection.
- ✠ Support Alvernia Retreats for couples in Spanish.

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

1.9 Hospitality: Continue quarterly new parishioner welcome socials, hospitality weekends after mass. Offer a “welcome Mass” in late 2021. (During COVID-19, welcome gifts are being sent monthly to new families given that the parish cannot hold welcome receptions)

1.10 Child Care Ministry: An initial survey was done to help identify parishioner needs concerning child care at the parish. This survey did not produce enough adequate data. Further surveys are needed both after Mass (when possible) and online. The parishioner designated to coordinate this effort will engage parents who responded to the previous survey to do some initial planning for what will be necessary when and if the parish can resume child care ministry during Mass.

(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: Continue Just Faith Courses each year. Utilize bulletin inserts to increase awareness of Catholic social teaching.

2.3 Care for Creation: Encourage in the church and school spirituality of Christian environmental stewardship as presented by Pope Francis in Laudato Si. Expand practical actions that demonstrate our Catholic commitment to preserving God's gift of the Earth. 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. Installation of solar panels on Gym roof to be completed in 2021. System for church/middle school to be evaluated once the new roof is in place in 2022.

2.4 Mental Health: Further the well-being and support of those with mental illness, their families and/or caregivers. Seek to end the stigma associated with these illnesses. We will work toward these goals through education, support, and developing talents.

2.5 Connect ministries to liturgy: Link homily and scripture readings to a specific ministry as appropriate; offer a blessing of those engaged in various forms of outreach ministries (could be several combined ministries) 2-3 times a year at the discretion of the clergy. Feature ways the charity funds are used in the Pastor's bulletin note each month.

(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.

3.5: Work collaboratively with the neighboring parishes of Holy Infant and Newman on various educational and outreach initiatives.

(Diocesan Priority #3: Promote Cultural Diversity)

4. Parish Communications

Review recommendations from the Communications Assessment Team to see what further steps are necessary in our parish communication efforts.

(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 2022 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 renewal of Increased Offertory Program campaign through Our Sunday Visitor in fall of 2021.

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. Complete expansion of Columbarium (Main and South Campuses) and connector path in 2021.

(Diocesan Priority #5 –Effective Stewardship of Resources)

6. Integrity and Responsibility: Ensure the integrity, safety and responsibility of all those in our parish community through:

- ✚ Continued compliance with Safe Environment Standards
- ✚ Supporting the work and educational opportunities of the Abuse Response Team
- ✚ Continued enhancement of the St. Michael the Defender Ministry (Safety and Security)

7. COVID-19: Recognizing the effects that COVID-19 has and will continue to have on the parish:

- ✚ Work for safety and connection.
- ✚ Continue to ensure safe ways to gather for worship
- ✚ Promote pastoral care opportunities, especially around mental health
- ✚ Offer creative ways to connect in as personal a way as possible
- ✚ Plan for re-engagement in person

Updated: March, 2021



