

envisioning
Our Future:

St. James Catholic Parish - Sewickley

Pastoral Plan

2015 -2018



engaging with Jesus
to Love and Serve

St. James Catholic Parish - Sewickley

MISSION STATEMENT

St. James is a community filled with hope striving to keep alive the apostolic spirit of our namesake. By virtue of our common baptism and in union with the Diocese of Pittsburgh, we believe in the love of God, the Father, the Presence of God, the Son and the Guidance of God, the Holy Spirit.

Founded in 1863, our legacy of persistence and resilience gives us the confidence to journey forward into the future. The Eucharist is the center of our lives forming us into a people that mirror the boundless embrace of Christ's Love where all can find a home at St. James Parish.

St. James Catholic Parish Pastoral Plan

Published February 2015

Developed by: 2014 Pastoral Council Members

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Envisioning Our Future



*Greetings Friends and Family of
St. James Catholic Church:*

It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you the new Pastoral Plan for St. James Catholic Parish. The plan is a result of the input of parishioners, staff and the efforts of the members of our Pastoral Council working collaboratively with me over the past several months of prayerful deliberation and planning.

Our parish and school have a long tradition here in Sewickley. Founded in 1863, our parish has grown, starting out with just 38 families, to now more than 1,800 families. Our school was founded in 1913 and for the past 102 years has educated thousands of youth to learn and grow in the faith.



I come behind previous pastors who worked with and led their parishioners, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to look forward, be responsive to the times, and worship and serve in ways that significantly increased the number of families in the parish over the decades. I am grateful for their accomplishments and we celebrate the achievement of their vision.

I am honored to continue that legacy with you through the achievement of our three-year Parish Pastoral Plan, which envisions our future. The Plan invites you to enhance your engagement with Jesus to love and serve more, so that together, St. James Parish will be the Love of Christ in the heart of Sewickley! It will foster a warm, inviting, vibrant and caring parish environment. It will also support our journeying together in small groups to grow our faith and our relationship with Christ and others through learning and service.

The achievement of our Plan needs the understanding, support, energy and commitment of all parishioners. I am inviting each of you to read and understand the Plan. And as you reflect on it, I ask you to pray to discern an activity or a ministry that enables you to use your unique talents, special expertise, time and treasures to help advance the works of our parish. As you give, you grow; and, you are stewarding the future of our parish.

You have a unique purpose in God's plan that only you can fill... and a priceless perspective that only you can bring to it. I pray that you will step in, get connected and help us realize a new dimension of our Parish's legacy.

Together we can walk this journey and spread the great news of Jesus Christ.

With God, All Things Are Possible!

Rev. Thomas J. Burke
Pastor



Introduction

What is the Parish Pastoral Council and what does it do?

Parish Pastoral Councils are central to Bishop David A. Zubik's vision of *The Church Alive!* The Diocese of Pittsburgh has established guidelines for Parish Pastoral Councils. St. James Catholic Parish is committed to implementing the guidelines to advance the mission of Christ and His Church.

The term "pastoral" refers to the ministry of shepherding the flock of Christ. Pastoral planning, to provide vision and direction for the parish community, is the core responsibility of Parish Pastoral Councils. That vision finds expression in the goals, objectives and actions in the Parish Pastoral Plan proposed by the Pastoral Council. The activities move the parish forward into God's design for its future, as it becomes *The Church Alive!*

Collaborating with the Parish Finance Council, parish staff, parish organizations, parish ministries and parishioners, the Pastor and Parish Pastoral Council lead the parish to envision a fuller manifestation of the Kingdom and invite parishioners into both the vision and its accomplishment.

During 2014, the Parish Pastoral Council worked with Fr. Tom Burke to identify the best ways to meet the New Evangelization mission laid out for all in Bishop Zubik's vision in *The Church Alive!* During this time, the Pastoral Council informally spoke with parishioners, resurrected and reviewed past surveys on parish needs, and reached out to other parishes to share.

The result of this effort is the completion, Pastor's approval and Pastoral Council's adoption of the St. James Parish Pastoral Plan on September 22, 2014. Our Pastoral Plan has five ambitious goals. **In general, the five goals**

- **Focus** on evangelization as a friendly outreach and warm engagement to enhance our worship, strengthen our faith, support us to discern our gifts for implementation of our Pastoral Plan and parish ministries, and equip us to become active disciples.
- **Initiate** a Parish census to update our data and better meet the needs of our parishioners.
- **Provide** accountable stewardship for the Parish Campus.
- **Invite** our outreach and engagement through responsive social justice, community needs and ecumenical opportunities.
- **Communicate** our services to mark our distinction.

The Pastoral Council's next step is to invite parishioners to learn, understand and enthusiastically **engage with Jesus to love and serve** *more* with their talents, time and gifts through the implementation of our Parish Pastoral Plan. The Pastoral Council prays for the Holy Spirit to guide parishioners with this endeavor.



Organization of the Parish Pastoral Plan

This three-year Parish Pastoral Plan has 26 objectives to achieve the Plan's five goals to enhance St. James' parish life and to grow the Parish. The Pastoral Council prioritized five of the 26 objectives to implement in Year One. The five objectives (page 6) were prioritized relative to the five needs that the Pastoral Council felt should be addressed in the parish first:

1. To update our census to help us better communicate with parish members.
2. To continue to work on weekend liturgies to enhance parishioners' worship experience.
3. To develop practices to shape an inviting, vibrant and caring spiritual culture.
4. To develop practices to encourage young adults to engage in parish ministries.
5. To provide spiritual growth options that can advance our personal faith journeys.

GOALS (page 6)

The Goals are broad statements of outcomes that we aim to achieve by the end of three-year implementation of the Pastoral Plan. There are five goals. On the left of the Implementation tables on pages 7-10, you will see, for example, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Each number identifies a specific goal.

YEAR ONE Implementation (page 7)

The five Objectives that will be implemented in 2015 are listed under Year One Implementation in the left column. The Objectives describe the results of our desired outcomes. The Actions are the concrete steps, activities and programs that will be implemented to achieve the specific Objective on the left.

YEAR TWO & THREE (page 8)

By September 1, 2015, the Parish Pastoral Council will prioritize the Goals for Year Two (2016) Implementation.

By September 1, 2016, the Parish Pastoral Council will prioritize the Goals for Year Three (2017) Implementation.

Your Role as a Parishioner

Fr. Tom Burke and the Pastoral Council pray for the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to direct us as we advance the new evangelization journey in St. James Parish. We pray for, and seek, the engagement of parishioners to lead and implement the Plan's actions to successfully accomplish its objectives and achieve its goals

Among the many of ways that some of you may already assist with the many ministries in our Parish, the Pastoral Council is casting a wide invitation to all parishioners to engage with Jesus to love and serve **more** by helping to implement our Pastoral Plan.

Paying particular attention to pages 6 and 7 with the yellow highlights, we ask your reflection on ways that you and your family can enhance the service of our parish with your talents, special expertise and volunteer time by committing to help with this undertaking. Some needed tasks and suggested ideas are listed next to assist your discernment on how you can do just a little more to serve.

GOALS

The Pastoral Council shaped the following five goals to engage parishioners in a welcoming, engaged parish that lovingly serves and continually supports each other's faith-formation.

GOAL 1

We will advance the five essential qualities of Parish life through outreach and engagement.

- a. Eucharist
- b. Evangelization
- c. Catechesis
- d. Formation
- e. Stewardship

Essential Elements of Parish Life:

The Eucharist is the central and fundamental prayer of the Church. The Eucharist is where Jesus is fully present in His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. It is through the Eucharist that Jesus gradually transforms those who receive Him, leading them to witness their faith to the world.

Evangelization encompasses any way in which the parish continues to spread the Good News of Jesus and bring others to God, especially, although not exclusively, through personal and communal sharing of faith.

Catechesis teaches, explains and informs parishioners of all ages in the scriptures and traditions of the church through which individuals and communities deepen their Christian faith.

Formation promotes a lived faith that is formed and integrated in each parishioner.

Stewardship encompasses prayer of thanksgiving for the gifts of God and the sharing of those gifts through acts of service.

GOAL 2

We will work toward a vision for the Parish using current, analyzed data to define its needs.

St. James Church will meet the changing needs of its parishioners as learned through enhanced communications.

GOAL 3

We will provide accountable stewardship for the Parish Church campus.

- a. Convent
- b. School
- c. Rectory
- d. Parish Grounds and Parking Lot

St. James Parish's leadership Councils, under the leadership of our Pastor, Fr. Thomas J. Burke, will plan for the care, maintenance and development of the Parish facilities.

GOAL 4

We will develop participatory accountability for responsive social justice, and community and ecumenical engagement.

St. James Parish will be more inclusive and broaden humanitarian concerns, guided by the Message of Pope Francis' 2014 Lenten message inspired by Saint Paul: *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9).*

GOAL 5

We will discern, build and market St. James Catholic Parish's brand

St. James Parish life of love and service will reflect the values, qualities and works of Jesus Christ.

Implementation: YEAR ONE (2015)

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
1	Eucharist: To plan weekend liturgies that offer quality preaching, music and environment to enhance parishioners' and visitors' worship and prayer experience and engagement.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use the new technologies for worship aids and to convey information. 2. Invite the Music Minister to provide an annual needs assessment for the ministry to the Pastoral Council. 3. Work with the Music Director to maintain and enhance the musical elements of the liturgical life of the Parish. 4. Before the first reading, the children's leader receives a Bible from the priest and leads children to a room for the readings, Gospel and children's lesson.
	Evangelization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create an environment (experiences, structures and spiritual culture) that fosters the journey to, and growth of, personal faith and discipleship. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a Pastoral Council Evangelization Sub-Committee and a Parish Evangelization Committee. 2. Establish small faith groups of 10 persons that meet twice a month to grow and nurture disciples. 3. Especially for the small faith groups, offer monthly "Praise and Worship" Thursdays to sing, share testimonies and pray for the parish.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop practices to shape an inviting, vibrant and caring spiritual culture in the Parish. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategize effective communication practices that foster a warm, friendly and caring atmosphere. 2. Strengthen ways to welcome and engage new parishioners in Parish Life. 3. Provide teams of greeters at each church entrance to warmly welcome everyone to church for weekend Masses and special events. 4. Set up a Welcome Center Desk in the church vestibule that is regularly manned to provide and share information before and after weekend Masses.
	Stewardship: To develop young adults to engage in Parish ministries.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase participation of teens and young adults through ways that meet their needs. 2. Start a young leaders mentorship program. 3. Include young adults in all appropriate ministries. (Ushers, Greeters and Lectors)
2	To review and update all records and their storage.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a new census. 2. Establish a Parish Census Data Team to update and analyze census assessment data. 3. Develop a parishioner-led process to keep census data current. 4. Identify and codify parishioners' talents, special expertise and volunteer time.

How Can
?
You
HELP

Refer to page 11 to assist your reflection on what you and your family can do to enhance the service of our parish with your talents, special expertise and volunteer time. Some needed tasks and suggested ideas are listed to assist your prayerful discernment to implement the goals and objectives of the Parish Pastoral Plan.

YEARS TWO and THREE

By September 1, 2015, the Parish Pastoral Council will prioritize the Objectives for Year Two (2016) Implementation. The remaining Objectives will be completed in 2017.

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
1	Eucharist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To Increase attendance at Mass, especially on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies to encourage parishioners to attend Mass on Sundays. Annual “Instructional Mass” to promote a conscious understanding of the meaning of each part of the Eucharist.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To offer and advertise a variety of “Worship” opportunities for parishioners and visitors. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explore installing a digital message sign outside the church. Encourage participation Eucharistic Adoration. Provide opportunities to enhance personal Prayer.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that each parishioner has access to the Holy Eucharist. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Eucharistic Ministers to provide identification for them to take Communion to the homes of desiring senior and shut-in parishioners. When possible provide transportation for those in need. Keep a current database of sick, senior and shut-in parishioners needing Communion. Provide video stream access to Sunday Mass on the parish website.
	Evangelization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To grow the Parish through Direct, personal contact. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Send the elderly and shut-ins occasional handwritten caring notes. Engage new families in the life of the parish in ways that meet the needs of the entire family. Invite inactive parishioners to a welcome back Mass. Provide nametags for visitors attending Mass and special events. Acknowledge and thank visitors for attending Mass. Create a Visitor Tracking and Contact procedure and a team of Parishioner Ambassadors to personally follow up on each visitor.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase family memberships from 1800 to 2050 over the next five years, at approximately 50 families per year. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> With a focus on young adults, invite a family/friend(s) to worship activities, especially liturgical holiday Masses.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To focus on the next generation of parishioners. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a periodic “Come and See” Mass with music, homily and handouts prepared specifically for non-Catholics and the “unchurched.” Offer target-specific Masses at other times, as a LifeTeen or Come and See Mass.
	Catechesis: To establish updated, ongoing, scheduled training and refresher courses for current catechists.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, encourage and train additional RCIA leaders and catechists, with a special focus on using alumni. Review and update catechists and RCIA training. Develop a strategy to regularly reinforce parishioners’ awareness and understanding of the history of Catholic traditions. Involve community sponsors from neighboring parishes and form small community groups. Continue and expand Bible study groups. Invite the Religious Education and RCIA Ministers to provide an annual needs assessment for their ministries to the Pastoral Council.



GOAL	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
	<p>Formation: To optimize options for ongoing formative spiritual education in a variety of learning settings across all vocations and age groups.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct the “ChristLife Program” on a regular basis. 2. Offer a variety of weekly small group discussions across all age levels to develop and deepen a personal relationship with Jesus and others. 3. Increase the number of small groups for prayer, including Centering Prayer, general meditation, and experiences in power prayer groups for specific purposes. 4. Offer a variety of experiences to develop and enhance the efficacy of prayer individually and collectively. 5. Stimulate, sustain, retain and enhance youth’s spiritual enthusiasm and growth through ongoing follow-up activities, especially after their Notre Dame Vision experience. 6. Invite the Youth Minister to provide an annual needs assessment for the ministry to Pastoral Council.
	<p>Stewardship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To actively integrate and engage parishioners in the full Parish Life of St. James. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop strategies to help parishioners identify and use their talents and special expertise to serve in ministries and help achieve the missionary works of the parish. 2. Increase the number of teams of ushers to increase rotations. 3. Enhance existing and develop new outreach services to meet the unmet needs of parishioners and the community, including collaborating with existing services provided by other churches and surrounding communities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess each ministry to identify needs for revitalization and growth, and to enhance the works of Parish ministries. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a June Ministry Leaders Retreat and Review to share and strengthen the works of parish ministries. 2. Each ministry completes a July needs assessment for the Pastoral Council.
2	Use current data to specify assets and determine needs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct an annual survey and periodic focus groups to identify parishioners’ concerns and desired improvements, and to track the achievements of the Pastoral Plan.
3	<p>Convent: To implement the Convent priorities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider uses for the convent and its grounds relative to the needs of the Parish Church Campus.
	<p>School: To collaborate with St. James School Advisory Board to identify school needs to be included in the Pastoral Plan.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Install an air-conditioning system in the school. 2. Invite the Principal of St. James School and the Chair of St. James School Advisory Board to a spring Pastoral Council meeting to provide a status and needs update for the Pastoral Council. 3. Use the capacities of the new technologies and online learning to enhance teaching and expand students’ learning.
	<p>Rectory: To identify Rectory needs to be included in the Pastoral plan.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Renovate Parish Office administration area.



GOAL	OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
	<p>Parish Grounds and Parking Lot: To identify Parish grounds and parking lot needs to be included in the Pastoral plan.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Install a remotely operated fence and appropriate barriers to manage parking lot traffic on the Broad street side during school hours. 2. Establish a Building and Grounds Committee to regularly monitor the maintenance needs of the Parish Campus and conduct an Annual Plant Audit. 3. Consider negotiating the use of space in nearby facilities during their off hours. 4. Consider future expansion of properties to meet pressing space needs.
4	To meet the needs of those who are elderly, poor and have unexpected life-challenges in St. James Parish and the surrounding communities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a Parish Outreach Committee to identify and encourage outreach opportunities. 2. Create relevant opportunities to engage seniors. 3. Provide access for seniors to routinely participate in liturgies and other spiritual and parish activities. 4. Become more ecumenically engaged in the local and broader community. 5. Establish opportunities for youth to engage in meaningful community service.
5	To discern the values for which St. James Parish will be known.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a variety of opportunities for parishioners to engage and serve others.
	To craft an informative, celebrative, communication strategy to launch St. James Pastoral Plan annually to parishioners and evoke their engagement to successfully implement it.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put the Pastoral Plan on the Parish website so parishioners can become engaged. 2. Design and make identification pins for parishioners to wear to facilitate personal greetings.
	To develop a communication agenda that markets St. James Parish life and moves public engagement to grow the Parish and its works.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish Parish activities and Worship events that create a “buzz” in the community, stir the public’s curiosity, and move people to “come and see.”
	To develop strategies for parishioners to know, understand and support the planned evolution of the spiritual culture of the Parish.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form an intercessory prayer team to move St. James Parishioners to actively engage and use their gifts to implement the Pastoral Plan to strengthen the spiritual culture of the Parish Church community.



How Can You HELP?

As you read and learn more about our Plan and what it means for you and for the growth of our Parish, you will see many opportunities for you to get involved. Please read the following suggestions for ways to assist with the Pastoral Plan. To discern your commitments, consider helping in the areas where the Holy Spirit prompts your interest and desires.

1. I will prioritize attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
2. I can play an instrument and would like to help develop a contemporary music program.
3. I can facilitate a "Praise and Worship" service.
("Praise and Worship" is honoring our Lord together. "Praise" is joyfully thanking God for all that He does for us. "Worship" is the uninhibited, joyful surrender of ourselves in personal, verbal communication of our adoration of the Lord in a group.)
4. I can be an usher at some Masses.
5. I can be a Lector at some Masses.
6. I can be a greeter for some Masses.
7. My family can serve as a buddy to a family of new parishioners for three months.
8. I can plan, organize, lead and monitor activities.
9. I can do public speaking.
10. I can offer my technology skills.
11. I would like to be a Eucharistic Minister.
12. I can chair a committee to help implement the Parish Pastoral Plan.
13. I would like to facilitate a small group in a home.
14. I can work the church lobby Welcome Center Desk before and after a Mass.
15. I can serve on the St. James' Evangelization Committee.
16. I am a young person and would like to be mentored to effectively serve in a ministry and become a ministry leader.
17. I would like to become a CCD instructor.
18. I would like to become a RCIA leader.
19. I would like to help with the youth ministry.
20. I have a special gift that I would like to use in a ministry or work of the Parish.
(For example, are you artistic, musical, a planner and organizer, a good listener, good with the elderly, a writer, a good voice for reading and announcing, good with technology, a prayer, like to visit people, like help others, good with teenagers, baby sitter, data analyzer, grant writer, good at marketing, good at fixing things, etc.?)

Of the above suggestions, I can help with numbers:

_____> _____> _____> _____> _____> _____> _____> _____>



Please complete this form and place it in the collection basket during the Offertory at any Mass.

PERSONAL INFO:

DATE _____

Your Name: _____

Email: _____ @ _____

Cell: () _____ *Home:* () _____

In addition to, or instead of, the twenty opportunities to help implement the Pastoral Plan, I offer to help in the following ways:

- a.* _____
- b.* _____
- c.* _____

COMMENTS

With God, all things are possible.

Matthew 19:26



Special thanks...

Logo: **Jason Corsetti** (Parishioner)

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