

Saint Christopher Parish Pastoral Plan 2004-05



**Prepared by:
St. Christopher Parish Pastoral Council**

Mission Statement of the St. Christopher Parish Community

We, the faithful of St. Christopher Parish, in communion with the Roman Catholic Church, proclaim our mission to embrace Christ and carry Christ to others. We carry out our mission by providing sacramental, spiritual, educational and social programs offered within our Eucharistic community.

Parish Goals

As representatives of our community, the Pastoral Council of St. Christopher Parish developed a Pastoral Plan to explain how each member of our parish can support our mission.

The Pastoral Council created various goals for our parish community. Goals were organized into five major categories:

- (1) Adult and Young Adult Formation
- (2) Catholic Education of Youth
- (3) Evangelization
- (4) Roles of Service in the Church: Priests and Religious
- (5) Roles of Service in the Church: Laity.

In order to realize these goals, the Pastoral Council proposed short-term and long-term objectives along with related strategies. The Pastoral Council defined **short-term** as *those objectives that can be achieved or measured within the first 12 months* and **long-term** as *those objectives that can be achieved or measured within the next year to three years*.

While the parishioners' contributions of time and talent are vital to achieving these goals and are not underestimated, the Pastoral Council has also provided a tentative budget for those recommended items that require monetary consideration over and above the time and effort yielded from our human resources.

It is the intention of the Pastoral Council to update this Pastoral Plan at the beginning of every calendar year.

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Section One Adult (and Young Adult) Faith Formation

Goal: Continue to expand our efforts in developing Catholic leadership within our community and provide opportunities for adults and young adults to enrich their faith through educational, spiritual and social programs.

Short-Term Objective One: Build awareness of the programs offered by our own parish. These programs include retreats (Lent), on-going group discussions (Monday nights), topical seminars (summer) and RCIA (year-long). Publicize programs offered by the greater Catholic community. These include half-day and full-day workshops and seminars offered through the Archdiocese's Office for Formation of the Laity as well as retreats and seminars conducted at various retreat houses (Cranaleith, Malvern, Dominican Retreat House, etc.).

Tactic One: Continue to use the weekly bulletin to promote these programs.

Tactic Two: Use the bulletin boards at church exits to display appropriate flyers and announcements.

Tactic Three: Require parents of School-age children to attend some faith formation activity once or twice a year.

Budget/Resources: Minimal expenditures.

Short-Term Objective Two: Implement a program of faith development for parish ministries

Tactic One: Promote an increase of faith development for members of parish ministries through the use of Holy Hours, seminars, workshops and retreats.

Long Term Objective: Explore program ideas with other members of our Cluster and develop a program that would be targeted to young adults (between the ages of 20 and 30).

Tactic One: Recognize that attempts to initiate a similar program are currently underway and are being coordinated through the pastor of St. Anselm Parish, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth and the Sisters of the Holy Redeemer (collectively referred to as the "Young Adult Planning Committee"). Conduct additional research into exploring how best to reach this target audience and how to assist the current outreach efforts already underway.

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Tactic Two: Identify and recruit 2-3 young adults from our own parish to assist the Young Adult Planning Committee in designing the most effective outreach means.

Budget/Resources: To be developed by the Young Adult Planning Committee.

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Section Two Catholic Education of Youth

Goal: Develop whole people with faith and knowledge and form modern day Catholic witnesses of the Twenty-First Century.

Short-Term Objective: Continue to market St. Christopher School to the Catholic community.

Tactic One: Explore the possibility of obtaining grants or similar assistance in financing our school in addition to tuition and parish subsidy. Expand the role of the Home and School Association to form a Funding Development Committee.

Tactic Two: Investigate the Pennsylvania Educational Tax Credit Program for corporate sponsorship of the school.

Tactic Three: Study the establishment of need-based scholarships. Investigate various ways (other than an annual collection at Sunday mass) to increase the Sister Phyllis Fund that provides stipends to students of needy families.

Budget/Resources: Expenditures may be necessary for seminars and workshops on Grant Writing and identifying sources of grant money.

Long-Term Objective (One): Develop a comprehensive catechetical formation plan for all catechists responsible for the faith development of our youth. A catechetical formation plan may take the form of an annual workshop, a catechistic mentoring program or some other formal program to aid catechists in their efforts to properly instruct our Catholic faith to our youth.

Tactic One: Determine if the Archdiocese provides any resources or training into the establishment of a catechetical formation plan.

Tactic Two: Establish a Catechetical Formation Committee consisting of and administered by the laity (teachers from both the school and the CCD program) with general direction from the Director of Christian Formation (Sister Michele Fisher). Recognize the need for the laity to assume the major tasks, arising from their recommendations, so as not overburden our already overburdened religious staff.

Budget/Resources: To be developed by the to-be-formed Catechetical Formation Committee.

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Long-Term Objective (Two): Increase participation of the parents of the children attending our school since their active role in the life of our parish is as equally important in instilling Christian values as the instruction and example provided by our teachers.

Tactic One: Provide opportunities for parents to volunteer at least two hours per month (or some other defined time commitment) to serving parish needs. This service (“School Stewardship Program”) may be fulfilled by joining one of the parish’s various ministries (Extraordinary Ministers, CCD, etc.) or by tending to the administrative needs of the parish (Parish Office functions, SCRIP program operations, building and landscape maintenance, Holy Family Hall management, etc.).

Tactic Two: To actively encourage participation, make the School Stewardship Program an absolute requirement to gaining enrollment in our school (similar to the minimum weekly financial contribution that allows parents to obtain the special discounted tuition rate). This requirement will also help build a broader Stewardship Program as described in Section Five.

Tactic Three: To remain sensitive to specific and unique family demands (parents with two jobs, one-parent households, etc.), establish a School Stewardship Committee, comprised of parents of children attending our school, and empower them to decide if the two-hour per month volunteer service requirement is a hardship on any individual family on a case-by-case basis.

Budget/Resources: Minimal expenditures.

Long-Term Objective (Three): Investigate the acceptance by the parish community of reinstating the offering envelopes for children. The purpose of this program would not be to increase revenues (which would be minimal) but to make children feel like they are part of the community.

Tactic One: Conduct an informal survey of all of the volunteers currently active within the parish.

Budget/Resources: Minimal expenditures.

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Section Three Evangelization

Goal: Spread the Good News as it is adhered to and loved by those who carry our Catholic identity into the family, our parish, the marketplace and the community at large.

Short-Term Objective (One): Develop a Neighborhood Faith Communities program that takes an active role in engaging members our parish.

Tactic One: Provide training to the individuals (the “Ambassadors”) who will be outreaching to new members who joined our parish in the past twelve months.

Tactic Two: Contact new parish members through the Ambassadors’ efforts. Provide opportunities for them to share with us their needs from the Church and their interests in parish life.

Budget/Resources: Minimal expenditures.

Short Term Objective (Two): Conduct a social event that reinforces a Christian message and that further strengthens this outreach effort.

Tactic One: Invite new members, who have already been contacted by Ambassadors, as well as active members (Extraordinary Ministers, Greeters, other volunteers, etc.) to an event that will be organized and hosted by the Neighborhood Faith Communities Committee.

Budget/Resources: To be developed by the Neighborhood Faith Communities Committee.

Long Term Objective (One): Draw back to the Church those Catholics who are no longer practicing their religion or who are not active in the parish.

Tactic One: To be decided.

Budget/Resources: To be decided.

Long Term Objective (Two): Develop means to attract people of other faiths to our Church.

Tactic One: To be decided

Budget/Resources: To be decided.

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Section Four

Roles of Service in the Church: Priests and Religious

Goal: Affirm and support the critical role of our priests and religious in proclaiming the Gospel and building up our community of faith in the name and person of Christ.

Short-Term and Long-Term, On-Going Objective (One): Encourage youth to consider priestly or religious vocations in order to continue the vitality of our Church.

Tactic One: Continue to provide annual Vocations Day in the school and CCD program.

Tactic Two: Arrange school retreats to St. Charles Seminary and religious communities.

Budget/Resources: Minimum expenditures (beyond transportation charges).

Short-Term and Long-Term, On-Going Objective (Two): Enable our priests and religious to focus primarily on administering the sacraments and pastoral counseling.

Tactic One: Reduce unnecessary time constraints (administrative and clerical duties) by seeking assistance from the laity through the efforts of the Stewardship Program as described in Section Five.

Budget/Resources: Minimal expenditures.

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Section Five

Roles of Service in the Church: Laity

Goal: Articulate and reinforce the important and necessary role which laypersons, young and old, fulfill in the life and mission of the Church.

Short-Term Objective (One): Continue to provide our priests consultative support to assist their efforts in administering to the spiritual needs of our parish.

Tactic One: Continue to assist our priests in this capacity through the laypersons appointed to the Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Finance Committee.

Tactic Two: Make this objective an on-going one.

Budget/Resources: Minimal expenditures.

Short-Term Objective (Two): Support ongoing development of a Stewardship Program that provides opportunities for parishioners to share their time, talent and resources with the entire Church.

Tactic One: Through efforts of the Council subcommittee, provide education and training for core committee in implementing a stewardship program.

Tactic Two: Committee will introduce awareness of stewardship program through use of a regular column in the weekly bulletin and presentation of Ministry Fairs as needed.

Tactic Three: Committee will develop a Time and Talent assessment survey for possible use with the parish census.

Budget/Resources: Minimal Expenditures

Long-Term Objective (One): Increase the participation in the to-be-formed Stewardship Program so that every parishioner can take an ownership role in our Church.

Tactic One: Make this a guiding principle of the Stewardship Committee.

Tactic Two: Make this an on-going concern of the Pastoral Council.

Budget/Resources: Minimal expenditures.

Long-Term Objective (Two): Increase awareness of the various opportunities available within our parish.

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Tactic One: Redesign our web site so that it addresses all aspects of parish life and appropriate opportunities for parishioners to be of service.

Budget/Resources: Depending upon the Stewardship Committee's efforts in recruiting (parishioners with computer technical skills), this effort could incur minimal expenditures (software, domain registration) of several hundred dollars to far greater expenses as high as \$15,000 (if using an outside consultant).

Long-Term Objective (Three): Utilize parishioners in the building trades to assist in building and plant maintenance (similar to the "Honest Abes" program organized in the parish twenty years ago).

Tactic One: Assign this task to the Stewardship Committee for further study. Investigate insurance and other liability issues related with this recommendation. Recognize that any volunteer building and plant maintenance program would need to be coordinated through the plant manager.

Budget/Resources: Minimal expenditures.