



CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF THE BLESSED TRINITY

SAINT JUDE - SAINT MARY MAGDALENE - SAINT THOMAS

2014 PARISH UPDATE

Greetings of Peace

The peace of Jesus the newborn Christ be with all of you!

Almost two months ago, October 26, a profile of the parish had been presented to you. The parish profile has pointed out to us our strengths and weaknesses, our past achievements and present and future challenges. The profile made us aware of the *trend of decline* that the parish has experienced for, at least, the past five years. And I believe that there is unanimity among us to focus on and to promote a *trend of increase* in our parish. The trend of increase is the only mentality and behavior that is proper to any true Christian because it is consonant with Jesus' Great Commission, the command he left to all of us, meaning, to you and to me: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them all that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20).

We take advantage of our Christmas attendance to reach out to all parishioners. We are all in this together: our strength as a people of God comes both from God and from our personal commitment to Jesus Christ and His Church. This Christmas, God's faith in all of us is put into flesh in and through the humanity of Jesus. This Christmas, can we all personally renew putting into flesh our faith in God, in His Son Jesus and in His Church in and through our own humanity? Now is the time to renew our active involvement in the life of our parish.

In this Christmas bulletin insert, you will find the Parish Strategic Plan, a fruit of the profile, prayer and discernment. In it, practical steps that are concretized in goals, objectives and corresponding activities so that all of us may be guided on how to own and nurture a mentality and behavior that fosters a trend of increase. This mentality and behavior prompts and challenges us to become **intentional disciples, intentional missionaries and intentional stewards**.

As **intentional disciples**, the focus is on *God calling us to gather as a community of disciples, first and foremost, to encounter Jesus Christ*. Without this personal encounter with Jesus Christ within His Church, there is no Christian disciple. To reflect -

- How often do I pray so as to encounter God who desires what is good for me and for others?
- How often do I read the Scriptures/Bible? How do I allow the Word of God to guide my way of living?
- How often do I celebrate the sacraments, in particular the Mass and the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation? Through these sacraments do I allow God to embrace me with His love and mercy, to nourish me with His Word and the Body and Blood of His Son Jesus?
- How often do I engage in activities that nurture my Christian faith to grow—retreats, reading a spiritual book, the catechism, the life of a saint, listening to a credible Catholic speaker?

As **intentional missionaries**, the focus is on *Jesus sending us forth into our part of the world, which can easily be our family, our circle of friends, our workplace and our local community*. To encounter Jesus is to be sent by Jesus as a missionary, as an apostle. The faith that Jesus gives us is not to be kept to ourselves but meant to be shared to others.

- How do I attend to the spiritual needs of my family? Do I nourish them by praying with them and by doing faith-sharing with them?
- Would people in my school, my workplace and my local community know that I am Catholic by the way I live my life and by the way I share my faith with people around me?
- Do I invite and bring in new people to encounter Jesus in His Church?

As **intentional stewards**, the focus is on *supporting the mission of Jesus through my gifts of time, talent and treasure*.

- Do I share my time, that is, my presence to support parish events and activities?
- Do I share my talents with others by being involved in parish ministries and organizations?
- Do I share my treasure, that is, my financial resources to advance the spread of the Gospel through our parish, local charities and other moral causes?

The sharing of the Parish Strategic Plan with you is a testament that we care for our parish and for one another. It is not meant to overwhelm any of us but simply *to focus our attention on the beautiful work of evangelization that lies ahead of us*.

May this Christmas grant us the grace to allow the incarnate Son of God lead us to live fully the beauty of our faith.

In Jesus Christ our Lord and Brother,


Father Edison

1. Area of Parish Life: **Liturgy and Sacramental Life**

Coordinators: Cathy Immerman 594-8574 and Dan Arcadi 947-6217

Goals	Objectives	Activities
a. To promote active and conscious participation in the celebration of our liturgies and sacraments.	1. To foster a welcoming atmosphere before and after liturgical and sacramental celebrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have welcoming and cheerful greeters, with nametags, before liturgical celebrations • Make the Coffee Hours after Sunday Mass more inviting and welcoming
	2. To foster active involvement among parishioners in assuming liturgical roles at Sunday Masses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have enthusiastic cantors to lead the congregation in singing at all Masses • Give all parishioners the opportunity to bring gifts during Offertory • Involve the youth in liturgical roles at all Masses
	3. To advertise our liturgical and sacramental celebrations through local (Lake Shore, Post Office, Library, etc.) and diocesan communications, and social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower parishioners to be inviting of others to Mass • Monitor our attendance and provide feedback to the parish • Enhance parish communication via e-mail blast, website and social media presence • Identify a coordinator for parish communications, also photographers, contributors, etc.
b. To promote greater understanding and appreciation for our liturgical and sacramental celebrations.	1. To provide background information on the liturgical and sacramental celebrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage questions from parishioners and respond to them through the bulletin, homily, etc.
	2. To celebrate milestones at liturgical and sacramental celebrations, e.g. RCIA, baptisms, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have parishioners pray for those celebrating milestones • Create a welcoming atmosphere for the celebrants and their families
	3. To encourage families to celebrate and nurture Catholic faith traditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote devotions: rosary, travelling Chalice for vocations, Advent wreaths, etc.

2. Area of Parish Life: **Membership and Community Life**

Coordinators: Patricia Younglove 594-9958 and Richard Campbell 587-2342

Goals	Objectives	Activities
a. To promote a trend of increase and retention in our parish membership	1. Update the parish census in January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update parish registration form • Do in-house updating of registration information, then, phone calls, and lastly, follow-up letters
	2. Reach out to lapsed parishioner, e.g. monthly attendees, Christmas and Easter attendees, attendees at celebrations of sacraments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to parishioners with irregular attendance • Promote contact with summer parishioners through the website, Christmas cards and seasonal mailings • Bring Communion to home-bound and nursing-home-bound parishioners
	3. To invite and welcome new members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a program: <i>one new member per household per year</i> • Write welcome notes in the bulletin, use a sign-up book, send welcome cards, and do follow-up call to new parishioners, newly baptized, newly received into the faith • Acknowledge the presence of permanent migrant workers in the area

	4. To help parishioners get to know more each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Parish Directory
b. To hold social events that nurture and strengthen community life	1. Utilize bulletin, e-mail blasts, website, Facebook, Twitter and local paper to invite and reach out to parishioners and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with coordinator for parish communications or a parish communications committee
	2. Promote social events that are family-oriented and cater to different and all age groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Picnic, Movie Nights, St. Joseph's Table, International Night, Volunteer Appreciation Day, Parish Anniversary Celebration Host receptions to liturgical and sacramental celebrations
	3. Promote small Christian communities in church ministries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide materials for prayer and faith-sharing to parish ministries and organizations

3. Area of Parish Life: **On-Going Faith Formation**

Coordinators: Kathy DeMass 754-6203 and Eric VanFleet 594-9505

Goals	Objectives	Activities
a. To promote and nurture the prayer and spiritual life of all parishioners	1. Offer regular and various opportunities for parishioners to pray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ignatian Spirituality, men's and women's conferences, men's and women's retreat, youth retreat, annual parish retreat, submit and print parishioners' favorite prayers in the bulletin, spiritual direction
	2. Foster regular and various opportunities for parishioners to pray for others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCLA, children and teens preparing for sacraments, sick, home and nursing home-bound Pray for those in the Book of Intentions in the churches Promote a regular or year-end theological reflection to all parish organization and ministries
	3. Promote the sacraments and devotions, and offer blessings at Mass (e.g. annual commissioning of ministry volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rosary, Novena, Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction, offer blessings and perform commissioning of ministers at the Sunday liturgies
b. To promote and facilitate on-going faith formation for all parishioners	1. Provide on-going faith formation for children and youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> religious education, youth program, youth conferences, parish libraries, devotionals (rosary-making, etc)
	2. Provide on-going faith formation for adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study group, days of reflection, book discussions, lectio divina, parish libraries, devotionals, Light House Catholic Media CD's Promote a faith-sharing column in the bulletin

4. Area of Parish Life: **Social Ministry and Outreach**

Coordinators: Deacon Bob Lee 553-2243, Eileen Bielemeier 594-2385, Jill Lee 553-2243

Goals	Objectives	Activities
a. To deepen our understanding of our Christian mission to serve our neighbor	1. Provide opportunities for workshops, discussions, lectures on the Social Teaching of the Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer Just Neighbor in the parish, use bulletin inserts on social ministry and its themes
b. To promote parish-wide active involvement in the Christian mission to serve, guided by the seven themes of the social teaching of the church	1. Establish a parish-based umbrella group that will coordinate all our social ministry and outreach activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Parish Social Ministry Committee
	2. Address life and dignity of the human person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care Net, March for Life, 40 Days for Life, Prayer Shawl Ministry
	3. Address call to family, community and participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Hygiene Collections, Handyman Ministry

	4. Address option for the poor and vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Assistance, Food Vouchers, Advent Giving Tree, Thanksgiving Baskets, Clothing Drives, Rice Bowls
	5. Address dignity of work and right of workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrant Ministry (transient and permanent), Mass in Spanish
	6. Address rights and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy, Diocesan Public Policy
	7. Address solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy, Inter-religious and ecumenical events, Praying Our Losses, Visiting the sick and home-bounds
	8. Address care for God's creation (environment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garden and Grounds Groups, environmental stewardship education; Promote recycling

5. Area of Parish Life: Stewardship

Coordinators: Bill Adams 587-9764, Chuck Boyland 576-6619 and Chuck VonHoltz 947-5547

Goals	Objectives	Activities
a. Promote proper understanding and living out the stewardship of time	1. Encourage a healthy and balanced use of time for God, for oneself, for family, for church and for local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print articles in the bulletin on balanced lifestyles, and witness stories Use e-mail blasts, website and social media to send reminders on church events Provide regular feedback on attendance to church events Provide annual opportunity to commit to the stewardship of time
b. Promote proper understanding and living out the stewardship of talent	1. Promote discernment opportunities for parishioners concerning their talents and responding to the needs in the parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print articles in the bulletin on discerning gifts, talents and needs, and witness stories Hold an annual Parish Ministry Fair Provide annual opportunity to commit to the stewardship of talent
c. Promote proper understanding and living out the stewardship of treasure	1. Promote discernment opportunities for parishioners about their financial resources and living the Christian mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print articles in the bulletin and hold workshops on tithing, planned giving, budget, quarterly financial reports, surplus and deficits, witness stories, and parish wish list Promote use of parish envelopes, and 'online' giving Designate Weekend Masses with Collective Mass Intentions Provide annual opportunity to commit to the stewardship of treasure

Parish Strategic Plan Timeline

- December 24-25 - Share with the parish at large the Parish Strategic Plan and announce updating of census in January
- January 2015 - Update the Parish Census: first phase: in-house after the weekend Masses, second phase: phone calls, and third phase: mail
- Build-up coordinating committees for each area of parish life (if interested in helping, contact one of the coordinators. Please refer to names and contact info above.)
- February 2015 - Parish-wide discernment process through faith-sharing on Discipleship and Missionary Work
- March 2015 (Lent) - Parish-wide discernment on Stewardship: Time, Talent and Treasure
- Enter into Parish-Parishioner Covenantal Agreement
- April 2015 (Easter) - Parish Ministry Fair
- May 24, 2015 (Pentecost) - Commissioning of all parish volunteers, including new parish volunteers, and recognition of parishioners who are assuming parish leadership roles

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love...