

Parish Strategic Plan

2023-2026

Prepared by and for the parishioners of
The Church of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish
and St. John Chrysostom Mission



The Church of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary

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Pastor's Introduction

June 16, 2023
The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Peace and all good! You have in your hands a significant and essential document. Our Parish Pastoral Plan 2023-26 will guide our pastoral efforts for the next three years and, perhaps, longer. The Parish Pastoral Plan is the fruitful culmination of over two years of study, reflection, discussion, and discernment. Hundreds of people have had a hand in producing this document. We surveyed the communities; we had your feedback. It has provided an invaluable input in the creation of this Plan. Every three-five year the leadership of our parish must take an extensive and honest look at the life, ministry, and overall direction of our community and from it put in place some key goals and strategies for the following years.

I am pleased to be able to share with you our new Parish Pastoral Plan. It is the result of much prayer and reflection as well as many months of hard work and diligent planning by our Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Pastoral Team. As you will see, this new plan is quite extensive, covering all areas of our broad and varied ministry and community life. It was built on the survey achieved a year ago and sets specific goals for each area of our ministry, highlighting the benefits and the steps to be undertaken. At its heart is the Gospel message and the call to share our faith in Christ with others. Having heard the Gospel and accepted its mission we are determined to form strong and committed Christian disciples and families, to celebrate God's enduring presence through our sacramental life and to serve the greater community through outreach and sharing. In short, this plan is geared toward the New Evangelization; challenging us to new methods, expressions and a new ardor and enthusiasm as we fulfill the Gospel's mandate and share its life-giving message. As you read the plan you will notice that its emphasis is both evangelical and relational. We are called as a community of faith to preach and witness to the Risen Christ as part of the universal Church and to build relationships with others that reflect this identity. As a community of faith in Shelbyville and Eminence, the plan encourages the development of greater bonds of cooperation both within and outside of the parish. As you read through it you will notice an added emphasis on collaboration among our parish ministries and the building of new bridges of cooperation with our parish, mission and institutions that will, we pray, strengthen the Catholic presence and influence in Shelby and Henry counties and beyond. As I commend this new pastoral plan to your reflection and prayer, I also wish to share with you too other matters that in time will require our

attention. For many years it has been obvious that we need a new parking lot and rectory. It is my hope that we can begin the construction of this new parking lot in the next two years, and I hope and pray that when the time comes you will join me in supporting this endeavor. Secondly, we are truly blessed by the ethnic and cultural diversity of our parish family. Serving each group and allowing each culture to bring their spiritual treasures and experiences to our parish will strengthen our overall sense of community as well as enriching our common spiritual life. Most importantly among this diversity is the presence of our Latino brothers and sisters who bring so many gifts and talents to our communal life. As a growing part of our community our hope is to be able to serve them in a more initiative-taking and intentional way and to put together an effective ministry that will continue to meet their spiritual needs. Finally, as we begin this new phase in our community life let us first be a people of prayer and service, a people who are filled with a true Christ-like love for all. Since its founding in 1860 our parish has been committed to living the Gospel mandate “to love one another as I have loved you” and with the example of our Blessed Mother and St. John Chrysostom, we have strive to be a Christ-centered expression of God’s family, nourished by the Holy Spirit. Let us pray that what the Lord has begun here will, with his grace and strength and our faith-filled commitment, come to fulfillment for the glory of his name. May Jesus , Our Christ and Lord, continue to intercede for us and help us by the power of his example and prayer.

Paz,

Rev. Fr. David G. Sánchez
Pastor

Our Current Parish Pastoral Team:

Pastor	Rev. David G. Sánchez
Deacons:	Rev. Mr. Bob Heart
	Rev. Mr. John Strain
Business Manager	Mrs. Emilia Agrinoni
Secretary	Mrs. Patricia Smith
Director of Religious Ed.	Mrs. Lynette Kessinger
Music Director	Mr. Wilson Wilder
Finance Council President	Larry Rogers
Bookkeeper	Mr. Mark Elmore
Annunciation Parish Council President	Leslie Sells
St. John Chrysostom Advisory Board Director	Michael Devine

Parish Values

Catholic

"The Church of Christ is really present in all legitimately organized local groups of the faithful, which, in so far as they are united to their pastors, are also quite appropriately called Churches in the New Testament.... In them the faithful are gathered together through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and the mystery of the Lord's Supper is celebrated.... In these communities, though they may often be small and poor, or existing in the diaspora, Christ is present, through whose power and influence the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church is constituted."

Catechism of the Catholic Church # 832.

Compassionate

Christ's compassion toward the sick and his many healings of every kind of infirmity are a resplendent sign that "God has visited his people" and that the Kingdom of God is close at hand. Jesus has the power not only to heal, but also to forgive sins; he has come to heal the whole man, soul, and body; he is the physician the sick has need of. His compassion toward all who suffer goes so far that he identifies himself with them: "I was sick, and you visited me." His preferential love for the sick has not ceased through the centuries to draw the very special attention of Christians toward all those who suffer in body and soul. It is the source of tireless efforts to comfort them.

Catechism of the Catholic Church #1503.

Inclusive

In the beginning God entrusted the earth and its resources to the common stewardship of mankind to take care of them, master them by labor, and enjoy their fruits. The goods of creation are destined for the whole human race. However, the earth is divided up among men to assure the security of their lives, endangered by poverty and threatened by violence. The appropriation of property is legitimate for guaranteeing the freedom and dignity of persons and for helping each of them to meet his basic needs and the needs of those in his charge. It should allow for a natural solidarity to develop between men.

Catechism of the Catholic Church #2402.

Parish Vision

To be a family of Catholic believers showing the Love of God through Faith and Service in our communities.

Parish Mission

As God's disciples, The Church of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, and St. John Chrysostom Mission will invite, welcome, listen, and then respond to the needs of all people through faith, prayer, and works.



In the Words of Pope Francis

“The Church which “goes forth” is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice. An evangelizing community knows that the Lord has taken the initiative, he has loved us first (*cf. 1 Jn 4:19*), and therefore we can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast. Such a community has an endless desire to show mercy, the fruit of its own experience of the power of the Father’s infinite mercy. Let us try a little harder to take the first step and to become involved. Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. The Lord gets involved and he involves his own, as he kneels to wash their feet. He tells his disciples: “You will be blessed if you do this” (*Jn 13:17*).

An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people’s daily lives; it bridges distances, it is willing to abase itself if necessary, and it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others. Evangelizers thus take on the “smell of the sheep” and the sheep are willing to hear their voice. An evangelizing community is also supportive, standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be. It is familiar with patient expectation and apostolic endurance. Evangelization consists mostly of patience and disregard for constraints of time. Faithful to the Lord’s gift, it also bears fruit. An evangelizing community is always concerned with fruit because the Lord wants her to be fruitful. It cares for the grain and does not grow impatient at the weeds. The Sower, when he sees weeds sprouting among the grain, does not grumble or overreact. He or she finds a way to let the word take flesh in a particular situation and bear fruits of new life, however imperfect or incomplete these may appear. The disciple is ready to put his or her whole life on the line, even to accepting martyrdom, in six bearing witnesses to Jesus Christ, yet the goal is not to make enemies but to see God’s word accepted and its capacity for liberation and renewal revealed.

Finally, an evangelizing community is filled with joy; it knows how to rejoice always. It celebrates every small victory, every step forward in the work of evangelization. Evangelization with joy becomes beauty in the liturgy, as part of our daily concern to spread goodness. The Church evangelizes and is herself evangelized through the beauty of the liturgy, which is both a celebration of the task of evangelization and the source of her renewed self-giving.” (*Pope Francis: Joy of the Gospel #24*) “The parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community. While certainly not the only institution which evangelizes, if the parish proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, it continues to be “the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters.” This presumes that it really is in contact with the homes and the lives of its people and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed group made up of a chosen few. The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for

hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship, and celebration. In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a center of constant missionary outreach. We must admit, though, that the call to review and renew our parishes has not yet sufficed to bring them nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission oriented.”
(Pope Francis: *Joy of the Gospel* #26 - #28)



Strategic Goals

Goal 1: To Invite

In recent years, increasing numbers of Christians in our country have left their churches and become religiously unaffiliated. We invite Catholics who have left the Church or who no longer practice the faith to come home. We miss you and we love you. We pray that Jesus will draw you back to your Catholic family, his Mystical Body, through his Eucharistic Body. We repeat words attributed to St. Teresa of Calcutta: “Once you understand the Eucharist, you can never leave the Church. Not because the Church will not let you but because your heart will not let you.”

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church*, no. 55

Key Initiative 1.1 To update and review media resources.

Action Steps:

- 1.1.1 To provide invitation opportunities on our parish website, and church apps: Facebook, Instagram, WeConnect, and bulletin.
Beginning: Fall 2023 Complete: Winter 2023 (Office Staff)
- 1.1.2 Each member of the parish will be responsible for inviting a friend to visit us for Mass, devotions, or social events.
Beginning: Fall 2023 Complete: On Going (Members)
- 1.1.3 Renew monthly church advertisement in local newspapers in Henry and Shelby counties.
Beginning: Fall 2023 Complete: Winter 2023 (Office Staff)

Goal 2: To Welcome

Pope Benedict XVI reminded us that the “love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all.” We are not the only ones in need of the love that Christ has shown us. We are called to help the rest of the world experience it. “What the world needs is God’s love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him. The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church's life, but also of her mission.”

Pope Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, no. 84

Key Initiative 2.1 To design structural plan to receive visitors.

Action Steps:

- 2.1.1 Design and construction of parking lot at Annunciation, and repaving St. John Chrysostom parking lot.
Beginning: Summer 2023 Complete: Summer 2026 (Administration Committee)
- 2.1.2 To identify the buildings on Annunciation and St. John Chrysostom’s campuses with signs.
Beginning: Winter 2023 Complete: Summer 2024 (Administration Committee)
- 2.1.3 Recruitment of parish leaders for assessing the engagement of Hospitality Ministry for liturgies and the quality of liturgical practices.
Beginning: Fall 2023 Complete: Summer 2024 (Parish and Finance Councils)
- 2.1.4 To promote personal encounters and personal introductions at the beginning of liturgies once a month.
Beginning: Fall 2023 Complete: Summer 2026 (Pastor and members)
- 2.1.5 Provide resources and training for our youth so that they can be ambassadors of our parish.
Beginning: Fall 2023 Complete: Summer 2026 (Youth Minister)

- 2.1.6 Create a new parish directory that parishioners can use to be informed about membership and committees.
Beginning: Winter 2023 Complete: Summer 2024 (Parish Volunteers)
- 2.1.7 To facilitate marketing tools through the offering of shirts, bumper stickers with parish and mission logos. **Beginning: Fall 2023 Complete: On Going (Parish Staff)**

Goal 3: To Listen

“All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized.”

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 120.

Key Initiative 3.1 **Plan, coordinate, and host a series of focus groups or other gatherings in the parish to stimulate sharing opportunities.**

Action Steps:

- 3.1.1 To celebrate coffees/socials encounters between the 10:00 AM and Noon liturgies at Annunciation and after Mass at St. John Chrysostom. St. John Chrysostom will continue monthly lunches. **Beginning: Winter 2023 Complete: Summer 2026 (Altar Society and Parish Groups)**
- 3.1.2 Begin construction of the HUB at Annunciation.
Beginning: Winter 2023 Complete: Summer 2024 (Administration Committee)

- 3.1.3 Continuous Bible studies for adults in English and Spanish. **Beginning: Fall 2023 Complete: On Going (Deacons and Laity)**
- 3.1.4 Continue to develop Parish prayer life through Adorations & Benedictions, public and private devotions: Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Men’s Prayer Group, and Daily and Nocturnal Adoration. **Beginning: Summer 2023 Complete: On Going (Pastor, Parish Staff, and Members).**
- 3.1.5 Parish Social Events. **Beginning: Summer 2023 Complete: On Going (Parish Life Committee and St. John Chrysostom Advisory Board).**

Goal 4: To Respond

The priest prays the following: “For, although you have no need of our praise, yet our thanksgiving is itself your gift, since our praises add nothing to your greatness but profit us for salvation ...”

Roman Missal, *Fourth Common Preface*

Key Initiative 4.1 To celebrate the new and growing breadth of diversity in our Parish.

Action Steps:

- 4.1.1 To create an Outreach Coordinator Position for the Parish and Mission. **Beginning: Winter 2023 Complete: On Going (Pastor and Office Staff).**
- 4.1.2 Help families build relationships and Faith habits through accompaniment, including community events, milestone celebrations, and workshops. **Beginning: Winter 2023 Complete: On Going (Members).**
- 4.1.3 Improve parental engagement in the faith formation of their youth. **Beginning: Winter 2023 complete: On Going (Pastor & Religious Education Coordinator)**