



# ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH PASTORAL PLAN ▸ NOVEMBER 2014

## Introduction

**F**ounded over a century ago, St. Francis of Assisi Parish has prospered and evolved into a parish of excellence and Catholic service. In our 120-year history, St. Francis has been blessed with the leadership and inspiration of the Franciscan Friars, generous financial support from parishioners, and the selfless service of many lay men and women serving as staff or volunteers. St. Francis of Assisi Parish could not be what it is today without the contributions and sacrifice of those who have gone before us. We engaged in this pastoral planning process confident that our parish could do more and be even more of a blessing for its members and the entire community.



Our mission statement proclaims:

***St. Francis Parish is a Catholic Christian Community building the reign of God in the spirit and path of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi.***

***We value vibrant liturgy and personal prayer as a way to worship God and celebrate life.***

***We are an inclusive community respecting the dignity of all persons and supporting the journey of each person.***

***We respond to the command of Jesus to love by welcoming all, evangelizing, supporting spiritual growth, and being Eucharist to each other.***

***Challenged by the Holy Spirit, we reach beyond ourselves to care for our neighbors, the poor, the marginalized, and those alienated by our Catholic Church.***

***We aspire to be witnesses and prophets advocating for justice in the world and in the church.***

To remain faithful to our tradition and mission, and to honor the contributions and work of those who preceded us, St. Francis of Assisi Parish must respond to contemporary circumstances and challenges. Dynamic fidelity to our tradition and mission is the goal of our pastoral plan.

Visionary, comprehensive, and realistic—as well as mission-focused, our pastoral plan is a blueprint for strengthening activities that not only support our parish mission, but also address areas for improvement, and support new accomplishments. Our pastoral plan is a living document that will change over time, as goals are accomplished and circumstances change.

Our future is bright. Our mission is clear. And, our pastoral plan will lead the way.

## Pastoral Planning Process

**B**eginning in 2011, our Parish Council began a pastoral planning process. Our goal was to develop a three-year Pastoral Plan that identified and prioritized goals for the parish that would help us use our time, talent, and treasure to fulfill our parish mission statement.

The Parish Council used a multistep process that included:

- Interviewing the pastor, members of the parish staff, and volunteer heads of various ministries to learn about their hopes and dreams for their ministries and the parish as a whole
- Conducting a day-long, facilitated brainstorming session with members of the parish staff, school staff, Catholic School Advisory Commission, Parish Council, and Finance Council
- Summarizing the data from the brainstorming session and grouping ideas into six focus areas that became the framework for our Pastoral Plan:

***Evangelization***

***Outreach***

***Liturgy/Spirituality***

***Facilities***

***Parish/School Relationship***

***Finances***



- Holding five forums at which parishioners reviewed the ideas from the retreat day, added new ideas, and engaged in an exercise to prioritize those ideas.
- Surveying parishioners online via the parish web page. Paper copies of the survey were also available in the church for parishioners to take home and complete.

Using the priority rankings from the forums and the survey, a subcommittee of the Parish Council developed a draft Pastoral Plan. Not every item on the idea list became a part of the Plan. Many items can be accomplished outside the pastoral planning process. Other items may not be feasible. Still others may be incorporated into future iterations of the Plan.

The full Parish Council, pastor, and staff met in a second facilitated all-day session to determine next steps to finalize the Pastoral Plan. Parish Council members and staff formed work groups to refine the strategic goals and objectives in the draft plan. The full Parish Council and the pastor approved the final plan.

## Parish Mission Focus

Our parish mission statement proclaims that we respond to the call of Jesus to love by welcoming all, evangelizing, supporting spiritual growth, and being Eucharist to each other.

## Accomplishments

- An outstanding Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program that teaches the fundamentals of the Catholic faith to persons preparing to be baptized or received into the Catholic Church.
- An active Adult Faith Formation Committee that provides opportunities for parishioners to deepen their understanding of topics of interest to Christians.
- A vibrant children's faith formation program that provides catechesis to children from pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade, and a teen group.
- Lenten retreats that attract broad participation.

## Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1

Under the guidance of the Director of Faith Formation, explore and expand additional media options for evangelization based on the demographics of the parish.

#### Objectives

- **Update the parish website** (beginning Fall 2014)
- **Use Facebook as a tool for event information and follow up** (beginning Fall 2014).  
*Action:* Invite volunteers to take and post pictures from parish events.
- **Explore alternative ways to recruit volunteers** (beginning Winter 2014).  
*Action:* Research online volunteer websites such as Volunteer Spot.  
*Action:* Leverage current e-mail blast system as a communication tool.
- **Research preferred ways of communication based on age groups** (beginning Spring 2015).

### Goal 2

Under the guidance of the Director of Faith Formation, reconnect and invite to the parish those who have received sacraments at St. Francis of Assisi Parish.

#### Objectives

- **Send follow up letters to those who received sacraments at St. Francis** (beginning Spring 2015).  
*Action:* Send letters one year after weddings, and six months for all other sacraments.
- **Create small group e-mail based on those who received sacraments at St. Francis** (beginning Spring 2015).

### Goal 3

Under the guidance of the Director of Faith Formation, investigate and create small faith-sharing and faith-formation opportunities in the parish.

#### Objectives

- **Survey parishioners about interest in small faith sharing and education groups** (beginning Fall 2015).  
*Action:* Post link on Facebook.  
*Action:* Add link to parish website.  
*Action:* Add to weekly bulletin.  
*Action:* At Mass, give link for those interested.
- **Using the parish database, identify parishioners by neighborhood groupings** (beginning Spring 2016).



## Parish Mission Focus

Our parish mission statement proclaims that we reach beyond ourselves to care for our neighbors, the poor, the marginalized, and those alienated by the Catholic Church; and to advocate for justice to the world and in the Church.

## Accomplishments

- A Peace and Justice committee dedicated to education and advocacy on social justice issues.
- Ministries to benefit those who are homeless (Step/Breakfast Ministry, and a team that serves meals at Loaves and Fishes).
- A ministry in which lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual individuals may support one another and serve the community.

## Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1

Under the guidance of the Director of Faith Formation and with the assistance of the Director of Outreach, continue to grow the Families on a Mission program (FOAM).

#### Objectives

- **Recruit members to the FOAM Committee to provide ongoing leadership for the program** (beginning Fall 2014).  
**Action:** Encourage existing FOAM Committee members to network with friends in the church and school communities, providing awareness and opportunities to potential Committee members.
- **Raise awareness about the FOAM program in both the church and school communities** (beginning Fall 2014).  
**Action:** Place announcements in the bulletin inviting people to serve as FOAM Committee members.  
**Action:** Promote the FOAM program in a bulletin cover letter and fliers.
- **Identify more volunteer opportunities for FOAM participants** (beginning Fall 2014).  
**Action:** Encourage the FOAM committee to establish a subcommittee charged with compiling a list of organizations to contact regarding volunteer opportunities.
- **Continue to support and expand outreach to our sisters and brothers in need of assistance, including our Step Guests, by providing referral services and connecting them with needed services** (beginning Fall 2014).  
**Action:** Expand our existing referral resource list by contacting additional organizations that may provide assistance, as well as consulting with professionals about the availability of additional resources.

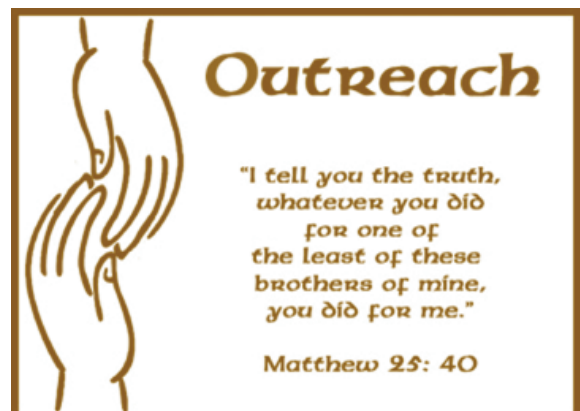
**Action:** Establish a volunteer service program for parishioners to assist with the resource and referral program by the end of calendar year 2014.

### Goal 2

Under the guidance of the Director of Outreach, develop a variety of social, spiritual, and service opportunities that would address the broad demographic profile of our parish, thereby making these groups feel more welcome and involved in the parish.

#### Objectives

- **Reach out to the young adult community** (aged 21-39) (beginning Fall 2014).  
**Action:** Assess interest of current young adult parishioners in joining together for social, service and spiritual activities. Develop and provide opportunities based on the results of this assessment.  
**Action:** Identify young adults who could serve as leaders of this ministry.  
**Action:** Implement ways to promote awareness in the neighboring young adult community (Midtown) of opportunities for them at the parish.
- **Organize an ongoing faith-sharing group for young adults** (beginning Fall 2014).  
**Action:** Survey the participants for their interest in social, service, and spiritual activities; use survey results to help plan the direction of the ministry.
- **Develop and promote a wide spectrum of opportunities and activities for parishioners aged 50+ that will help them to share social, spiritual, service and health-giving opportunities** (beginning Fall 2014).  
**Action:** Organize a yoga class for parishioners aged 50+; survey the participants for their interest in other activities.  
**Action:** As other activities and events are identified and implemented, continue to survey participants about their interests, and work toward forming an ongoing leadership group from within the 50+ community.



## Parish Mission Focus

Vatican II's "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy" describes the liturgy as both the source and summit of Christian life. Our parish mission statement notes that we value vibrant liturgy and personal prayer and support spiritual growth.

As a Franciscan community, St. Francis Parish strives to "build... the reign of God in the spirit and path of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi." Led and inspired by the friars who live and work in our parish, we seek to embody and embrace Franciscan spirituality.

## Accomplishments

- Sunday Masses are the primary way that most parishioners participate in our parish community. Parishioners travel to St. Francis from over 100 zip codes, some traveling 60 miles or more to participate in our liturgies.
- The parish staff includes a full-time director of liturgy who is advised by a volunteer liturgy team. In addition, liturgy activities are supported by several hundred volunteers who serves as lectors, Eucharistic ministers, choir members, sacristans, ushers/greeters, dancers, church decorators, and who fill other roles as needed for special liturgies, such as Holy Thursday foot washing.
- In addition to weekend liturgies, St. Francis celebrates daily Mass, school Masses, and special liturgies for feast days and liturgical seasons, provides multiple opportunities for prayer and spiritual reflection, including contemplative prayer, healing prayer, Taizé prayer, the Thomas Merton Circle, and a Sunday gospel reflection group. St. Francis also offers spiritual direction opportunities.

## Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1

Under the guidance of the Director of Liturgy, educate about and promote authentic Franciscan spirituality in the parish, diocese, and greater community.

#### Objectives

- **Annually promote Franciscan spirituality within the diocese** (beginning Summer 2014).  
**Action:** Provide information/invitation to the diocese about the *Transitus* of Clare and the *Transitus* of Francis.  
**Action:** Provide information/invitation online regarding the *Transitus* of Clare; and the *Transitus* of Francis.
- **Educate our neighboring community about Franciscan Spirituality** (beginning Summer 2015).

**Action:** Write a "Hi Neighbor" letter to businesses and residences within a two-block radius, stating who we are and what we are about.

**Action:** Create a flyer-invitation to the Blessing of the Animals at St. Francis and ask businesses who received the earlier letter to post the flyer on their window/bulletin board. Have FOAM families and other volunteers go in person with flyer to each business.

- **Educate our parish about Franciscan spirituality** (beginning Summer 2015).

**Action:** Create an "In the Footsteps of Francis and Clare" column in the bulletin about Francis, Clare, other Franciscan holy men and women, Franciscan prayer, Franciscan values, the Franciscan focus on the poor and marginalized and ecological justice—and how they apply to our own lives. This column would be written by a variety of people.

### Goal 2

Under the guidance of the Director of Liturgy, expand opportunities for full participation by all parishioners in our worship life.

#### Objectives

- **Promote opportunities for more youth participation in liturgy** (beginning Fall 2015).  
**Action:** Create a process to encourage youth participation in our music ministry.  
**Action:** Create a process to develop youth lectors through our CLOW program and school liturgies.  
**Action:** Train families with children as usher/greeters.
- **Increase opportunities for greater participation in the parish's worship life** (beginning Fall 2014).  
**Action:** Hold a Ministry Fair in Brunsman Hall all weekend during the Feast of Francis, staffed by current ministers in all ministries.  
**Action:** Continue to invite people of all ages and abilities to be a part of high points in the liturgical year (e.g., the procession of candle bearers at Christmas liturgies).  
**Action:** By Advent 2014, foster greater use of Covenant of Sharing responses.  
**Action:** Immediately, ask ministry leaders and ministers to give personal invitations to others to minister.  
**Action:** By Advent 2014, revitalize/restructure the Usher/Greeter Ministry to include more volunteers.

### Goal 3

Under the guidance of the Director of Liturgy, provide parish-wide liturgical catechesis.

#### Objectives

- **Educate through the bulletin and online** (beginning Advent 2014).

**Action:** Beginning Advent 2014, create a regular liturgy column in the bulletin about liturgical issues, new liturgical developments, writings and events.

**Action:** Create a group of volunteers with experience/education in liturgy to monitor new material.

- **Provide annual education through "Book of the Year" project** (beginning Lent 2015).

**Action:** Choose a "Book of the Year" on liturgy, e.g., Henri Nouwen's *With Burning Hearts*, and invite the entire parish to read it.

**Action:** Use small faith communities for this project. (Evangelization Goal #3)

**Action:** Have guided reflection/questions in the bulletin and online; have homilies tie in to book; ask parishioners to share reflection with pew mates.



### Parish Mission Focus

The St. Francis of Assisi Church, Friary, Elementary School, and Parish Center are critical to the mission, character, and identity of our parish community. These spaces are the venues for a wide range of ministries and services and are iconic elements of our parish and the larger Sacramento community. The buildings that make up the parish campus provide space for worship, outreach, education, community, and shelter.

### Accomplishments

- The parish has a Capital Improvement and Long-Term Maintenance Committee. This committee has identified projects to be addressed within the next one to five years. The parish recently benefitted from several bequests that funded some of these projects.

### Goals and Objectives

#### Goal 1

Under the guidance of the Parish Plant Manager and consistent with the Campus Facilities and Maintenance Committee Plan (CFMCP), fund shorter-term projects.

#### Objectives

- **Install a new altar, ambo, and presider's chair in the church** (by Advent 2014).

**Action:** Obtain designs, cost estimates, and construction plans.

**Action:** Share design plans and installation schedule with the parish community.

**Action:** Complete construction and installation.

- **Repair church ceiling paint and canvas**, beginning Fall 2014.

**Action:** Obtain estimates.

**Action:** Complete work.



## Facilities (cont'd)

### Goal 2

Under the guidance of the Pastor, and with the participation of the Parish Plant Manager, establish a formal capital outlay planning process.

#### Objectives

- **The CFMCP will draft a procedures manual for identifying capital outlay projects** (beginning Fall 2014).

**Action:** Conduct an annual facility tour and assessment.

**Action:** Obtain input from parish staff and Parish Council.

**Action:** Categorize projects as routine maintenance, critical infrastructure ready to fail, discretionary and non-critical deferred maintenance projects.

**Action:** Align projects with the parish budget.

### Goal 3

Under the guidance of the Pastor and with the participation of the Finance Council, develop a transparent process for identifying and budgeting routine, ongoing maintenance.

#### Objectives

- **Set aside up to ten percent of the annual maintenance budget for unanticipated repairs or facility equipment replacement** (beginning July 2015).

**Action:** Include in the budget an annual three % growth factor for routine maintenance and facility management.

**Action:** Include in the budget an annual project list and prior year accomplishments.

**Action:** Roll over any unexpended monies to the following year's budget.



## Parish & School Relationship

### Parish Mission Focus

St. Francis of Assisi Elementary School is an integral part of the parish community and one of the parish's key ministries, reaching over 300 children and their families every day. Families choose our school because of its Franciscan Catholic mission, vibrant community spirit, quality curriculum and its convenient location.

About 40 percent of school families are St. Francis of Assisi parishioners. The remaining 60 percent of families are not active in the parish community (e.g., they do not attend Mass at St. Francis). As a result, the school is often regarded as a "commuter school." This creates a perceived, and sometimes actual, "disconnect" between the parish and the school—two distinct communities operating independently and not interacting in a meaningful or regular manner. We are challenged to integrate school families into our parish life.

### Accomplishments

- Over the last five years, the parish and school relationship has improved.
- During the 2010-11 school year, the parish supported the school through its temporary relocation while the school gymnasium underwent retrofit work, including financing the repairs.
- School children played an active role in the parish picnics in October 2012 and 2013 and assisted with the New Parishioner Welcome Brunch in May 2013.

### Goals and Objectives

#### Goal 1

Under the guidance of the Pastor and School Principal and with the participation of the Catholic School Advisory commission (CSAC), further develop and enhance the relationship and interaction between the parish and school.

#### Objectives

- Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, identify opportunities for the parish and school communities to serve one another and the greater community.

**Action:** Survey school staff regarding areas of interaction between school and church.

**Action:** Interview parish staff regarding interaction between school and church.

**Action:** Invite St. Francis Elementary students to announce upcoming school events at parish Mass.

**Action:** Promote participation with FOAM in three projects during the school year.

**Action:** Invite the school choir to sing at least three times a year at parish Sunday Masses.

**Action:** Continue publishing parish events in the *Gubbio* and school events in the church bulletin

## Parish & School Relationship (cont'd)

### Goal 2

Under the guidance of the Pastor, the Director of Liturgy, and the School Principal, foster unity between parish and school liturgical life.

#### Objectives

- **Identify ways for the school to be more involved in parish liturgy** (beginning with the 2014-15 school year).  
**Action:** Invite the Director of Liturgy to attend school Masses.  
**Action:** Involve students once a trimester in parish Masses.
- **Identify ways for school liturgies to conform to parish liturgical practices** (beginning with the 2014-15 school year).  
**Action:** Coordinate inclusive language in school liturgies.  
**Action:** Train Eucharistic ministers (staff and parents) for the school.



## Finances

### Parish Mission Focus

Each of the other focus areas— Evangelization, Outreach, Liturgy/Spirituality, Facilities, and Parish and School Relationship, depends to varying degrees on the parish finances to achieve their goals.

### Accomplishments

- The parish has a Finance Council that advises the pastor on the parish budget.
- We are in sound financial condition.
- Annually, the parish conducts a Covenant of Sharing campaign to encourage parishioners to pledge their time, talent, and treasure to support our parish.
- Contributions have increased over the last three years by seven percent.
- Our Mardi Gras Gala fundraiser has netted between \$20,000-\$25,000 each year over the past five years.



## Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1

Under guidance of the Pastor and with the participation of the Finance Council, increase the transparency of the parish finances and provide more opportunities for parishioners to review the parish budget before it is adopted each year.

#### Objectives

- **Publish quarterly financial report summaries in the church bulletin and invite questions** (beginning Summer 2014).  
**Action:** The Finance Council will assemble a calendar of quarterly report publications.
- **Encourage parishioners to review the proposed budget** (beginning Spring 2015).  
**Action:** Place notices in the bulletin and on the parish website three to four weeks before each budget presentation by the Finance Council to the Parish council.  
**Action:** Invite parishioners to participate in these meetings.
- **Discuss the financial interactions between the parish and the diocese in the parish annual report** (beginning Fall 2014).  
**Action:** Publish the annual report in September, to lead into the Covenant of Sharing (stewardship) appeal in October.

### Goal 2

Under the guidance of the Pastor and Finance Council, develop a long-range financial plan for the parish.

#### Objectives

- **The Finance Council will work with the Campus Facilities and Maintenance Committee's capital improvement plan to develop an annual capital improvement budget** (beginning Spring 2015).  
**Action:** Planning and implementation will begin as soon as the Campus Facilities and Maintenance Committee develops an updated plan.
- **The Finance Council will oversee the development of an estate planning program for the parish and school and a policy for the use of unrestricted large gifts** (by 2015).  
**Action:** The Finance Council will work with the Diocesan Catholic Foundation.  
**Action:** Parish administrative associate will work on communications and publicity.  
**Action:** Develop policies and procedures for unrestricted income, including unanticipated income (beginning Fall 2014).

