



St. John Chrysostom
Byzantine Catholic Church

Parish Pastoral Plan

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Heav-en - ly King, Com-fort - er, Spir - it of Truth, ev - 'ry-where pres - ent
and fill - ing all things, Treas - ur - y of Bles - sings and Giv - er of Life,
come and dwell with - in us, cleanse us of all stain, and save
our souls, O gra - cious One.

The image shows a musical score for a prayer to the Holy Spirit. It consists of four staves of music in a treble clef, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff contains the lyrics: "Heav-en - ly King, Com-fort - er, Spir - it of Truth, ev - 'ry-where pres - ent". The second staff contains: "and fill - ing all things, Treas - ur - y of Bles - sings and Giv - er of Life,". The third staff contains: "come and dwell with - in us, cleanse us of all stain, and save". The fourth staff contains: "our souls, O gra - cious One." The music is written in a simple, melodic style with various note values and rests.

Presentation Goals

The goals of today's presentation is to explain:

1. Foundation of the Parish Pastoral Plan
2. How the Categories of the Plan were determined
3. How the Goals & Objectives of the Plan were drafted*
4. Your participation in developing the Parish Pastoral Plan

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*This is a draft of the goals and objectives, not the final version. Your input as a member of St. John Chrysostom Parish is part of the planning process, together with the Parish Advisory Council.

In This Presentation

The Catholic Church

- Two fundamental and essential aspects of the Catholic Church
- Her Twofold Mission (purpose) and Her Vision (final goal)

The Parish Church

- The Catholic Church in This Place
- Parish's Mission and Vision

The Parish Pastoral Plan

- Overarching Goals
- Category Goals and Objectives
- Your Participation in Developing the Plan

Questions/Answers

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There are three main topics in this presentation.

The Catholic Church

The Catholic Church

Two Fundamental & Essential Aspects

- Divinely Instituted Household of God¹
- Holy Mystery/Sacrament of Christ (Visible & Spiritual)²

*What was visible of Christ on earth
has passed over into the Church*
–Pope Leo the Great (440-461 AD)

¹Matt. 16:18, Eph 2:19-21, 1 Tim 3:16

²Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 10:17; 12:27; Eph 4:12; 5:23; Heb 13:3 Col 1:24

Divinely Instituted

The Church is not a human invention, but divinely instituted. “I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock, *I will build my Church*, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matt 16:18).

Jesus says that He will build His Church, not the Apostles or any future generation. The Church is divinely instituted.

The divinely instituted Church is also the Household of God.

“I am writing these instructions to you so that, if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in *the household of God, which is the Church of the living God*, the pillar and bulwark of the truth” (1 Tim 3:16).

“You are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit (Eph 2:19-21).

Thus, the Church is the divinely instituted Household of God build on the foundation of the apostles with Jesus as the cornerstone.

Holy Mystery/Sacrament of Christ

Holy Mysteries or Sacraments are visible signs of invisible grace. The Church has Holy Mysteries, the seven sacraments, but in a similar sense, the Church herself is a Holy Mystery, a Sacrament. This means that the Church, which is Divinely instituted, is both a visible and invisible (i.e., spiritual) reality.

Pope Leo the Great

Pope Leo the Great summed this up when he said, “What was visible of Christ on earth, has passed over into the Church”. This is true in the seven Holy Mysteries, but it is also true of the Church herself. The next slide shows some examples of this.

Visible of Christ on Earth

Passed Over Into the Church

Forgave Sins	⇒	Gave authority to the apostles to forgive sins in His Name – Confession
Healed the Sick	⇒	Apostles healed the sick. Holy Mystery of the Anointing of the Sick
Cast out Demons	⇒	Apostles cast out demons, Church performs exorcisms
Preached	⇒	Apostles sent to preach in His name. <i>"He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me"</i> (Lk 10:16).
Taught, and made Disciples	⇒	Holy Mystery of Baptism <i>"...make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you"</i> (Matt 28:19)
Exercised Authority	⇒	<i>"Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven"</i> (Matt 18:18)
Sent the Holy Spirit	⇒	Holy Chrismation – gift of the Holy Spirit
Miracle at Cana and Teaching on Marriage	⇒	Holy Mystery of Matrimony
Christ the Priest – One Who Offers Sacrifice	⇒	The Priesthood – Bishops offering Eucharistic Sacrifice in the Person of Christ
Sacrificed Himself	⇒	<i>Holy Eucharist – Mystical Sacrifice of His Body and Blood for our Salvation</i>

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This illustrates what Pope Leo the Great said, that what was visible of Christ on earth has passed over into the Church. By these examples, we can begin to see that the Church is the Holy Mystery, the *Sacrament of Christ's presence and ministry* (action) in the world. The summit of the Church as Holy Mystery, however, is the Holy Mystery of the Eucharist, which is Christ Jesus, really and truly present, in the flesh, bringing salvation to the world.

The Catholic Church

The Catholic Church is the universal Holy Mystery or sacrament of salvation, whose *source and summit is the Holy Eucharist*, Christ Himself present in the flesh.

The Eucharist makes the Church because Christ makes the Church and the Holy Eucharist is His real and true presence in the Church.

The Catholic Church is...

...the Radiance of the Universal Holy Mystery of salvation, whose source & summit is the Holy Eucharist



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We can say that the Holy Eucharist contains and sums up the Catholic Church as the Sacrament of Christ Himself. Think of our Lord's real and true presence in the Holy Eucharist as shining like the radiance of the sun – shining forth both light (truth) and warmth (love) upon the earth.

Mission

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The Church is the divinely instituted holy mystery, the sacrament of Christ's presence and ministry in the world. What, then, is the Mission, that is, the purpose of this divine institution, this Holy Mystery that is the Church?

Mission

Mission defines an organization's purpose

In business, nonprofits, and clubs, those in charge decide on the organization's mission (i.e., purpose)

The Catholic Church also has a mission (purpose)

The Church's mission, however, is not decided by those in charge of the Church or by its members. The Church is a divine institution; therefore, its purpose is divinely given.

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Mission

If you chose to start a business, or even just a club, you would first have to decide on the purpose of your business or club. If the purpose of your business is to make custom sports cars, then, that is your mission. It's your business, so, you get to decide.

Catholic Church also has a Mission

The Mission of the Church (its purpose) is not up to bishops, priests and deacons; it is not up to the Pastor, the Parish Council, a Committee or any individual or group. It comes from the Lord, Himself. Our role is to understand the mission given to the Church, submit ourselves to it in obedience, and as members of the Lord's Church, strive to further His purpose, His Mission. There is an inseparable relationship between the Church as a Divine Institution and the Church's Mission. The Mission of the Catholic Church, its purpose, follows directly from her being a Divine Institution, from Her founder, Jesus Christ. And He founded a *visible* Church, that is, a Church that is the Holy Mystery, the *Sacrament of Himself*. The Church, really, and truly is His Body, and we are member of Him, and He is our Head. "He is the head of the body, the Church" (Colossians 1:18).

What, then, is the Mission, the purpose, of the Catholic Church?

Twofold Mission of the Church

"The Church's first purpose [mission] is to be the sacrament [Holy Mystery] of the inner union of men with God" (Catechism 775).

"The second purpose [mission] is rooted in the first. Because men's communion with one another is rooted in that union with God, the Church is also the sacrament [Holy Mystery] of the unity of the human race" (Catechism 775)

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First of the Twofold Mission

This is what Jesus came to do, to bring about our inner union with God. The Church is the Holy Mystery, the sacrament of this union. The Church is, then, the visible means of grace by which we are brought into union with God-- the Holy Trinity. The Church is the Divine Holy Mystery or Sacrament of union with God. Union with God is the principle mission of the Catholic Church.

Second of the Twofold Mission

Through our inner union with God (principle mission of the Church), we have communion with one another. This is the second of the twofold mission of the Church.

Jesus speaks of this communion with one another in the Gospel of John. Jesus said, "That they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory which you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (Jn 17:21-23).

We begin to see here that our communion with one another is rooted in the

communion of the Holy Trinity. This is what it means to share in the Divine Nature. The Holy Trinity is relational—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus, the Divine Life Jesus has brought to us is relational, communal. This is, first and foremost, in the Holy Trinity, and then, second, because of our common life in the Trinity, we possess a profound communion with one another.

Summing Up

The Church is the Divinely Instituted Holy Mystery (Sacrament) of Christ's *presence* and *ministry* on earth

The Mission (purpose) of this Holy Mystery (Church) is the inner union of the human person with God, and through this inner union, the unity of the human race.

(See Catechism 775)

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Here we have, in short order, the nature of the Catholic Church, and Her Mission (i.e., her purpose).

We can begin to see that the Mission (purpose) of the Catholic Church follows directly from what the Church *is*. We first understand what the Church *is*, and from what the Church *is*, we understand what the Church does (i.e., her purpose). That the Church is the Holy Mystery of our inner union with God is precisely the reason why her mission, her purpose, is this inner union. We can go so far as to say that the Church not only *has* this mission, she *is* the mission. The Church *is* that divinely established communion of persons, both human and divine. Those members of the Church in heaven have fully and completely realize this communion with God and each other. This takes us to what is the Vision, the ultimate goal of the Catholic Church.

Vision

Vision

Visions defines an organization's final end, goal, ultimate achievement

In business, nonprofits, and clubs, those in charge decide on the organization's vision (i.e., what they will seek to achieve)

The Catholic Church also has a vision

The Church's Vision, however, is not decided by those in charge of the Church or by its members. The Church is a divine institution; its Vision is Divine.

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Business Vision

For example, suppose that your business' *Mission* (purpose), as we said before, is to manufacture high-end custom sports cars. The *Vision* of your company, what you are seeking to finally achieve, then, let's say, is to be *recognized as a world-class custom sports car manufacturer, known for its cutting edge technology, and superior product that sets the world's standard for quality and performance.*

This sounds like a television commercial or an advertisement in a magazine. The reason that one sees this sort of thing in advertising is because the company wants you to "see their vision" and so be inspired to join them, by purchasing one of their cars. In other words, you can participate in their achievement by owning one of their world-class vehicles. So, the vision is not only to inspire the company's employees to strive to achieve greatness. It is also to inspire customers to get on board with the vision by buying their cars.

So, your business' *Mission* (purpose) is to make sports cars, but your *Vision* for your business is to be recognized as world-class, number one in technology, and a product that is the world's standard for custom sports cars. And this *Vision* is intended to move people, to inspire them.

Church's Vision

The Church also has a vision, and the Lord seeks to inspire us with this vision. What, then, is the Church's vision?

The Church's Vision

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For our purposes, here, there are four excerpts from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that succinctly summarize the Church's Vision.

The Church's Vision

"...the definitive realization of God's plan to bring under a single head 'all things in [Christ], things in heaven and things on earth'" (Catechism 1043)

...the vision of God in which He "...opens himself in an inexhaustible way to the elect..." (Catechism 1045)

"...the final realization of the unity of the human race" (Catechism 1045)

"...the ever-flowing well-spring of happiness, peace, and mutual communion" (Catechism 1045).

Summing Up...

1. The Church is the Divinely Instituted Holy Mystery (Sacrament) of Christ's *presence* and *ministry* on earth
2. The Mission (purpose) of this Holy Mystery (Church) is the inner union of the human person with God, and through this inner union, the unity of the human race
3. The Vision of the Church is the final realization of God's plan:
 1. All things subject to Christ
 2. Seeing God face-to-face, the well-spring of happiness and mutual communion— *heaven, eternal life in the Holy Trinity.*
 3. Unity of the human race

The Parish Church

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What is *our* place in all of this as a Parish Church? As a Parish Church, what is our *purpose* (i.e., mission) and what ought we be striving to *achieve* (i.e., vision)?

The Parish Church

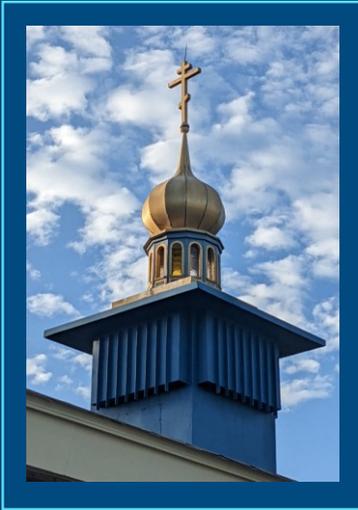
"The Church of Christ is really present in all legitimately organized local groups of the faithful, which, in so far as they are united to their pastors [bishops], are also quite appropriately called Churches..." (Catechism 832)

"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..." (Catechism 832)

"In these communities... Christ is present, through whose power and influence the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church is constituted..." (Catechism 832)

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What does this mean? What exactly is the Parish Church?



St. John Chrysostom
Byzantine Catholic Church
*is the Catholic Church
in this Place*

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Just as Christ is Mystically, Sacramentally present here, whole and entire, in body and blood, in the flesh, so is the Catholic Church, whole and entire, mystically, sacramentally present here, in this place.

Because we live in the world of time and space, we are in this location in Houston, we have these parishioners and this pastor. But the Church, Herself, as a Holy Mystery, as a Sacrament, transcends time and space. Just as the Eucharist is not a *part* of Christ's body and blood, but the whole Christ, so St. John Chrysostom Church is not a *part*, a *subsidiary*, or some *fragment* of the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church, whole and entire, is mystically present, sacramentally present in this place. And so, St. John Chrysostom Byzantine Catholic Church *is* the Catholic Church in this place, here and now. Our Parish Church is not like a religious franchise or a local office of some business organization. Our Archbishop is not "upper management" as one would see in a company. And the Pope is not the CEO of the Catholic Church. The Church is not a business, a human organization, a club or anything like this. It is the Holy Mystery, the Sacrament of Christ's presence and ministry.

Since our Parish Church *is* the Catholic Church in this place, then, what is our Mission (i.e., purpose) and our Vision (i.e., what we are to achieve)? What is our purpose and what should we be trying to achieve?

Mission & Vision of St. John Chrysostom Byzantine Catholic Church

Parish's Mission – same as the Catholic Church

- Inner union of the human person with God
- Unity of the human race

Parish's Vision – same as the Catholic Church

- Final realization of God's plan
- All things subject to Christ
- Seeing God face-to-face—the well-spring of happiness and mutual communion— *heaven, eternal life in the Holy Trinity.*

The Parish Pastoral Plan

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Everything that has been said up to this point is the basis, the foundation on which the Parish's Pastoral Plan is built

The Parish Pastoral Plan

*The Pastoral Plan is about doing those things that lead to union with God and communion with each other (divinely-given **Mission**), and to eternal life – to be with God and happy with Him forever (divinely-given **Vision**)*

Practical Purpose of the Plan

- Means of focusing, and staying focused, on the right things as they pertain to our parish's divinely given *Mission and Vision*
- Like a spiritual rule of life for our parish church
- Appropriately tailored to the circumstances of our particular parish (St. John Chrysostom), and with respect to our Eastern Catholic Ecclesial Traditions
- Not about buildings, administration, organization or a "business approach" to parish life

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1. The plan, practically speaking, is to keep us, as a Parish Church, on track with what we are all about. It's easy to expend energy, efforts and material goods on things that are not part of the Church's mission, not even indirectly part of the Church's mission. The Parish Church is not a club of any kind; it is not a social club or an ethnic club. There is nothing wrong with a social or ethnic club, or any similar kind of club. It's simply that that is not what we are about here.

There is a parish that has a Bridge Club (cards), a Garden Club, a Ski Club, athletics and open gym for Toddlers and Preschool. They boast of having 75 programs and ministries, even something called, "Donut Ministry". There is certainly nothing wrong with a garden club or playing cards or athletics, or donuts. These are good things and there can be something beneficial to them. As good as such things might be, they are not what the Parish Church is about.

Sometimes individuals join a parish to pursue their own, personal needs, desires or wants. They may have expectations that really have little or nothing to do with the Mission of a Catholic Parish or beyond what a parish can really do for them. And when their expectations are not met, they sometimes leave, and are even critical, even bitter

about the Parish Church. It's not that these desires or wants are bad, but if they personally take priority over the Mission of the Parish, then, something is terribly wrong. We can find ourselves, then, more interested in a church that is entertaining, has lots of fun social activities, and all sorts of programs, and less interested in the truth and the mission of the church, which is our inner union with God, and through his union, genuine unity with each other.

The Parish Pastoral Plan, at least in part, is there to help us avoid these kinds of pitfalls. Being clear about the purpose of a Catholic Parish can help to set appropriate expectations and avoid frustration, confusion and disappointment. It can also help us to make decisions that are fair and objective. What the Parish Church should do, isn't about what the pastor or anyone else likes, or wants, or finds easy.

2. The Parish Pastoral Plan is like a spiritual rule of life. What is a spiritual rule of life? A spiritual rule of life may involve many things, depending on one's state in life. The desert fathers generally followed a rule of life. We have the rule of St. Basil the Great and St. Benedict and many others. Monastics have a very orderly rule of life. None of us are monks, of course, so we are not to live a monastic rule, but the basic idea is very much the same. One's spiritual rule of life could be very simple, such as a brief morning prayer, remembering the Lord for a moment throughout the day, meditating on the Sunday Scripture reading during the week, perhaps a brief evening prayer, going to confession once a month, maybe a retreat once a year, engaging in charity work and so on. If we have family at home, then, the rule could include responsibilities for cooking, cleaning, doing home work and so forth. Again, we must be practical and have a rule that fits with our state in life.

3. The Parish Pastoral Plan should do a similar sort of thing as a spiritual rule of life. It should be tailored to the circumstances of our particular parish. Our parish life, circumstances and history should shape the parish plan. Our Byzantine Catholic Ecclesial Traditions are of critical importance here because this is the context in which we live the Catholic faith. These traditions have developed over the centuries by the influence of the Holy Spirit. It was these traditions, that Pope Paul VI has said "...the Holy Spirit has providentially and supernaturally influenced" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 16).

4. This last point should be quite obvious, given all that we have said. We need buildings, maintenance, administration and organization, but these are not *destinations*. They are not where we are *going*; but they are important because they are a means to furthering the Mission of the parish. We need a place, a temple, in which to worship the Lord. We need a place to teach, that is, classrooms. We need a place to share in fellowship and develop our community life, such as a social hall. And we must keep such things in good order, but only because they are a means to carrying

out our divinely-given Mission.

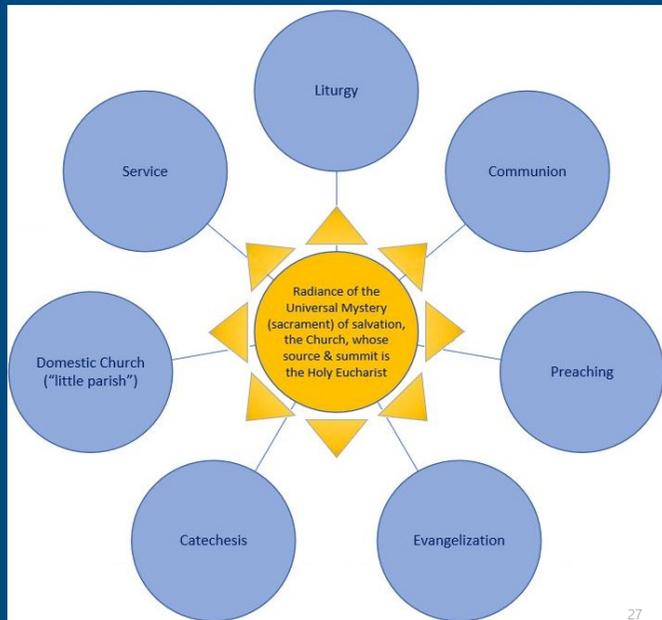
As a parish family, and as individuals members of the parish, we have some serious, soul-searching to do. There is a question that we must face. *As a Parish Church, as the Catholic Church in this place, what are we doing or not doing, to further our divinely-given Mission (i.e., purpose)? Are we being faithful to this Mission?*

Categories of the Pastoral Plan

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We look now at the Categories of the parish plan and see how they are related to the Mission of the Parish Church.

Essential Categories of the Church's Mission



The question behind each of these categories is if each one is essential to the parish, its mission and vision. This was the basis on which these categories for the Parish Pastoral Plan were determined. And so, if we neglect any one of these categories, can we, as a parish family, still claim to be fulfilling our mission as the Catholic Church in this place?

For more details about each of these categories, please see the Appendix of this presentation.

Essential Categories of the Pastoral Plan

- ❖ Liturgy
- ❖ Communion (*of persons*)
- ❖ Preaching
- ❖ Evangelization
- ❖ Catechesis
- ❖ Domestic Church
- ❖ Service

The Categories are based on what the Church is: the Holy Mystery (sacrament) of Christ's Presence and Ministry

The Parish Planning Committee made a study of these categories using the *Christ Our Pascha Catechism*, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and other Church documents and proposed *goals and objectives* for the parish plan.

Your Participation in the Parish Pastoral Plan

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The Parish Planning Committee has spent a great deal of time and study in developing the initial draft of the Parish Pastoral Plan. The Plan, however, is not complete without offering you the opportunity to propose your ideas, the goals and objectives you have in mind.

As a way of helping you contribute to the Plan, we will define what a goal and objective is and then review a few examples of goals and objectives from the draft of the Plan.

What are Goals & Objectives?

- **Goals** (*what*): aspirations, aims, desires, destination
- **Objectives** (*how*): specific, measurable, concrete things one does to further one's goals

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In a way, one never totally achieves one's goals. They represent the direction, the aspiration for which we wish to strive. The objectives are achievable. They are the specific things we will do to further our goals. Examples from the draft of the Plan will help to make this clear. But first, let's look at the *overarching* Goals and Objectives of the Parish Pastoral Plan.

Overarching Goals of Pastoral Plan

- Increase awareness and understanding of the mystical (sacramental) nature of the Church, Her Mission and Her Vision
- Promote a formative experience of the faith that:
 - Integrates into day-to-day life
 - Shapes who we are and how we live
 - Encourages and deepens our relationship with Jesus
- Develop the seven categories of the Parish Pastoral Plan by visibly incorporating them into Parish Life in a practical and wholistic way.

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Now that we have the overarching or general goals of the Pastoral Plan what are a few of the *Category* goals and objectives of the Plan? It is not practical here to review all of the objectives that the committee has developed for the draft of the Parish pastoral Plan. What follows are some examples to help you to propose your own goals and objectives for the plan,

Remember that a goal is a general aspiration, a desire, a direction in which we want to go (i.e., the *what*). An objective is the thing that we will do to further our goals (the *how*).

Examples of Category Goals & Objectives

Category: Liturgy

Goal (*what*): Encourage and support members of the Parish to “take the Divine Liturgy home”, to live it, to unite the Liturgy with daily life.

Objective (*how*): Encourage home icon corners or altars by providing resources for this and volunteers to help people design their home icon corners. Create an icon corner “how to” booklet and an example icon corner display in the parish hall

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The category is “Liturgy”. Notice that the goal is very general, an aspiration, something to which we will strive to achieve regarding the liturgical life of the parish. Notice, however, that the objective is very specific. We know with certainty that we have completed it. It is measurable.

What follows are two more example of Category goals and objectives, which follow the same pattern of an aspiration (what) followed by objectives (how).

Examples of Category Goals & Objectives

Category: Communion (of persons)

Goal (*what*): Further develop a sense of communion among the members of St. John Chrysostom Parish.

Objective (*how*): preach sermons on the meaning of the Church as a communion of persons, human and divine.

Objective (*how*): Provide opportunities for members of the parish to know each other better by organizing social outings such as quarterly dinners out

Examples of Category Goals & Objectives

Category: Evangelization

Goal (*what*): Deepen the parish's understanding of evangelization and how to go about evangelizing.

Objective (*how*): Provide evangelization training workshop (e.g., St. Paul Evangelization Organization).

Objective (*how*): Create an evangelization packet that parishioners could have at home to use with people who come to their door, to family or friends who ask questions, or just to leave in public places.

Your Participation in developing the Parish Pastoral Plan

There are three ways that you can submit your thoughts and ideas on the Parish Pastoral Plan:

1. Use the online form on the parish web site. Under the *About* menu, select *Parish Pastoral Plan*
2. Email: PastoralPlan@StJohnChrysostom.com
3. Drop your ideas in the US Mail

The Pastoral Planning Committee, together with the Parish Advisory Council, is to finalize the initial Parish Pastoral Plan by November 30th , 2022. You may always submit ideas for the Plan as the Plan will continually be reevaluated and adjusted as time goes on

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If you have any questions, please email PastoralPlan@stjohnchrysostom.com or call Fr. Tom at 713 681-3580

Next Steps...

- Review Parish ideas and comments regarding the Pastoral Plan
- Parish Advisory Council recommendations regarding the plan
- Final editing of the plan, prioritization of goals and objectives, and high-level timeline (1, 3 5 year)
- Publication of final version of the Parish Pastoral Plan (1-2 months)
- Begin execution of the plan!

Q&A



Appendix

Liturgy Category of the Parish Pastoral Plan

The first category of the Parish Pastoral Plan is Liturgy. Liturgy is a Greek word. Its original meaning referred to tasks that, today, one would expect a public servant to perform for the common good of society, the nation, or for political unity. In the Church, the word liturgy came to mean her public services (e.g., morning, evening, night prayers), but particularly the sacraments. Preeminent in the Church's liturgical worship is the Divine Liturgy. Referring to the celebration of the Holy Eucharist as the *Divine Liturgy* emphasizes the mystical (sacramental) radiance of Christ's person and His working among us. The Liturgy is not as much a public service that the priest performs for the people (although it is that), or even the people's participation in it (it is that also), but rather a divine service in which God offers to the human person the grace of salvation and communion with Him. It is Christ's liturgy, the One who serves as the "merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people" (Heb 2:27). The liturgy of the Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life, and that which makes the Church, because there it is Christ the high priest who serves. "For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). The liturgical life of the Church, then, is an essential category of the Parish Pastoral Plan.

Example Goal (what): Deepen understanding and personal participation in the Divine Liturgy.

Example Objective (how): Create a high-quality display in the social hall about the Divine Liturgy that illustrates and explains its various parts.

Communion Category of the Parish Pastoral Plan

Closely related to Liturgy is the category of communion. The Church is a supernatural communion of persons both human and divine. The ultimate source of this communion is the Eucharist. "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor 10:17). The essential characteristic of this communion is supernatural love, which is a sign of the Church's communion with Christ. "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). This category is relational, and it concerns our charitable interactions with others. When this is lacking among believers, such as at a parish, it is arguably the most damaging to faith, both for believers and those would believe. "...for they preach, but do not practice" (Matt 23:3). This, as well as the rest of the categories, is an essential category of the Parish Pastoral Plan.

Example Goal (what): Further develop communion among the members of St. John Chrysostom Parish

Example Objective (how): Organize social outings, such as quarterly dinners out.

Preaching Category of the Parish Pastoral Plan

The Preaching category of the Parish Pastoral Plan is in the context of liturgy, particularly the Divine Liturgy. It is centered on the Church's divine commission to proclaim and expound on the Gospel. "He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects me rejects him who sent me" (Luke 10:16). Regardless of any other meaning that this category may have, it must first be understood sacramentally (Luke 10:16). It is Christ's Gospel, it is Christ who preaches, and it is He, Himself, who *is* the Gospel, the Word that is preached (1 John 1:1-4; John 1:1-14). The sacramentality of the Church's preaching is most apparent at the Divine Liturgy because Christ is there, sacramentally, in the flesh. The two parts of the Divine Liturgy, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, should remind us of the Incarnation. At the Divine Liturgy, the Gospel, the Word that the Church proclaims, is made flesh (John 1:14). It is there that the faithful receive the Word as a sacrament both in the inspired Scripture and in the Holy Eucharist. This is not to suggest that the reading of the Gospel is a sacrament in the same sense that the Holy Eucharist is a sacrament, but only that they are intimately related. It is Christ in the Gospel that is read and preached, and it is Christ in the Eucharist. When hearing the Gospel at the Divine Liturgy, one should think of receiving Christ, the Word, in a similar way as one thinks of receiving Christ in His body and blood. It is the same Christ, during the liturgy, who is mystically present and giving Himself to us in the Scriptures, although in a different manner than His body and blood in the Eucharist. There are, however, other forms of preaching, that of evangelization and catechesis. These are the next two categories of the Parish Pastoral Plan.

Example Goal (what): Increase the relevancy of preaching by seeking out questions concerning the faith and suggestions for preaching topics.

Example Objective (how): Create a webform on the parish web site where anyone may suggest topics and ask questions

Evangelization Category of the Parish Pastoral Plan

The purpose of Evangelization is “to lead others to the ‘yes’ of faith in Jesus Christ” (Catechism 429). It is impossible to speak of Preaching as something entirely separate from Evangelization, but this category differs from other forms of preaching because of its aim, which is initial conversion (Catechism 1072).

But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? (Romans 10:14).

The Preaching category, which is in the context of Christian worship, emphasizes the Gospel’s intimate connection to the Holy Eucharist (i.e., Word becoming flesh). The Evangelization category emphasizes going out into the world to convert sinners, to bring them into Christ’s sheepfold, to share in the Holy Mysteries, in particular, to be Baptized, Chrismated and to share in the Holy Eucharist. Evangelization is summed up in the words of Jesus to the Apostles. “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” (Matt. 28:19). Thus, Evangelization is a different category than the Preaching category (liturgical preaching) because of its fundamental aim.

Example Goal (what): Deepen the parish’s understanding of Evangelization and how to do it

Example Objective (how): Create an evangelization packet that parishioners could have at home to use with people who come to their door, to family or friends who ask questions, or just to leave in public places.

Catechesis Category of the Parish Pastoral Plan

The purpose of catechesis is to mature the faith of Christ's disciples by means of a deeper and more systematic knowledge of Christian doctrine (CT, 19-20). Whereas the Evangelization category is the *making* of disciples (converts), the Catechesis category is the *maturing* of disciples. Both of these categories lead to the Preaching category, that is, to the Divine Liturgy, the Holy Eucharist, the Word made flesh. As with the Evangelization category, it is necessary to maintain a clear-cut distinction in the Parish Pastoral Plan between the elements of Preaching and Catechesis for the purpose of planning, even if this type of distinction does not always exist in practice. Given the particular circumstances of a parish, preaching at the liturgy may need to focus on evangelization or it may be necessary to take a catechetical approach. In the Parish Pastoral Plan, Preaching (liturgical), Evangelization (initial conversion) and Catechesis (maturing disciples) are essentially the same in terms of the Church's proclamation of the Gospel, but they have different aims. Goals and objectives related to the Church's proclamation of the Gospel, however, requires that a distinction between these three categories be carefully maintained. There should be distinct goals and objectives in the parish plan that pertain to proclaiming the Gospel at the Divine Liturgy (Preaching), to the conversion of the world to Christ (Evangelization), and to maturing the faith of believers (Catechesis). This brings us to the next primary element, the Domestic Church.

Example Goal (what): Develop a program of Parish-wide renewal of catechesis

Example Objective (how): Establish the study of the Catechism by Adults as the starting point and core of Parish Catechesis

Domestic Church Category of the Parish Pastoral Plan

The Church is a supernatural communion of persons, both human and divine; it is relational and Trinitarian. The Christian family is a unique reflection and realization of this. The Catechism expresses it best, when it states that, “The Christian family is a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit” (CCC 2205). The Domestic Church bears a true sacramental significance, particularly, since it is based on the sacrament of marriage, which is a specific, supernatural communion of man and woman, and an image of Christ and His Church (CCC 2685). The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church (CCC 1661). All families, properly speaking, constitute a natural communion of persons. Christian families, however, as members of the Church, share in a supernatural communion. The supernatural communion of the body of Christ is, as it were, brought home. This is the very reason that the family is a “specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion” (CCC 2204). The Christian family, as the Domestic Church, is where children receive their primary instruction in faith and morals, both in word and in example. The Domestic Church is “a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and of Christian charity” (CCC 1666). “Thus, the home is the first school of Christian life and ‘a school for human enrichment’ (GS 52§1)” (CCC1657). The Domestic Church category involves living out, in day-to-day life, the supernatural communion that is the Church. Even a household of one person is part of this, and the Church herself, is the “household of the living God” (Matt. 16:18, Eph 2:19-21, 1 Tim 3:16).

Example Goal (what): Help families realize their mission as a Christian family

Example Objective (how): Introduce the Domestic Church Association to the parish and invite a member family to give a parish presentation

Service Category of the Parish Pastoral Plan

The last category of the Parish Pastoral Plan is Service. It is last not because it is least, but so that it may be understood in its proper context with the rest of the categories. Human persons, because of their inherent dignity and communal nature, deserve to be loved and to be in relationships in which they can love others. Human flourishing requires this for at least two reasons. First, genuine love is the deepest human need, the deepest desire of the human heart, without which, no one can attain any measure of true happiness. Second, no one flourishes by himself; he depends on many others, such as family, friends and society. Both the need for love, and the interdependence of human persons for actualizing themselves, is bound up with the human person's communal or relational nature. Through acts of love and interdependence, human persons fulfill each other. This is at the heart of service on a purely natural level. In the Pastoral Plan, however, Service is something even greater.

The category of Service concerns faith working through love, a supernatural love working in and through us. In this respect, everyone who believes and is baptized is a sacrament, an instrument of divine love. Without such love, Service has little or no meaning in the Pastoral Plan (1 Cor 13:1-10). Separated from the sacramentality of the Church, the Service category becomes mere social work or activism. In which case, the parish, in its service, is only concerned with this world, as if human effort could ever solve the problem of the human condition. The category of Service belongs to the mission and vision of the Church as a supernatural communion of persons, human and divine. This communion is so profound, so intimate, that whatever we do to another human being, we do to the Lord Himself.

Example Goal (what): Increase individual and parish understanding and involvement in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Example Objective (how): Put up poster display of works of mercy in the social hall with examples.

Example Objective (how): Form a small committee to select at least one annual charity and determine at least one specific activity in which to engage (e.g., 40 days for life, pregnancy help centers, St. Vincent de Paul Society).