St. Theresa Mission & Ministry Plan 2020 - 2025
November 11, 2020

Background of the Planning Process

In the October 2019, a group of parishioners joined Father Phil Lloyd in attending a conference of the Amazing Parish organization in Anaheim, California. In attendance with Fr. Phil were Enrique Benitez, parish administrator, and parishioners Nancy Cochran, Martha Tanios and Greg Robertson. Returning from the conference, this body of five constituted the Parish Leadership Team (PLT) and began to work on a process of discerning a parish vision. This group continued to meet on a regular basis to pray, discuss and discern regarding the parish vision and the future direction of the parish. Later, young adult parishioner, Stuart Seger was added to the Parish Leadership Team.

In April after meeting for six months, the Parish Leadership Team asked Deacon Larry Vaclavik to provide facilitation services for an ongoing comprehensive and integrated planning process for the parish.   Deacon Larry, beyond his assignment to the parish, possess an expertise and experience in strategic planning in faith-based settings. In his secular job, Deacon Larry serves as the managing principal of Dini Spheris, a management and fundraising consulting firm to non-profit organizations. Deacon Larry, in recent years, completed strategic planning exercises on behalf of the University of St. Thomas, United Way of Greater Houston and St. Mary's Seminary. Deacon Larry provided this service on a pro-bono basis and there was no financial benefit to Deacon Larry or to Dini Spheris for this process facilitation.

The Process Goal – An Outstanding, Vital, and Growing Parish

The goal of this process was to take St. Theresa from being a good parish to a great parish or from being a great parish to being a best parish. This is not a work of human effort alone. It is a matter of divine call and grace and our willingness as a parish to continue to

grow and serve in ever more effective and impactful ways to bring the love of Christ and the life of the Spirit to our world.

To accomplish this goal, the planning process was based on prayer and the application of these key principles:

- Essentialism: the discipline of recognizing that there are too many goods and too many challenges to address at one time. Essentialism requires a focus on that which is most critical to address at this time – where we can "make the highest possible contribution towards the things that really matter."
- Being courageous to move beyond the way we have always done things.
- Recognizing that the greater danger for most is to set goals that are too low and too easy to achieve rather than goals that are truly bold and that risk being missed.
- Our planning must address the very Catholic approach of addressing maintenance [the care of our existing membership] and mission [the care for those who are not members or not yet members or are former members], the community beyond St. Theresa and its members.

Mission and Ministry Planning Process

In time, the process was given a name: Mission and Ministry Planning Process. While there are elements in this process that could be characterized or described as "strategic planning," there was a need to ground this plan on gospel values and the life of the Church. For this reason, we choose the outward facing language of mission and ministry which can be used for both the outward facing work of mission and the inward facing work of maintenance. More important than this specific words, this name was important as a way of stating that our central concern was how to live out the gospel call to discipleship as a parish as we enter the third decade of the 21st century.

Critical Assumptions

By the time the planning process was underway, the Church was closed under the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This forced all planning exercise to take place by way of Zoom meeting video-technology.

The decision was made not to include St. Theresa Elementary School as a consideration in this planning process. The School is a distinct ministry of the parish operating with its own budget, board and strategic plan. The decision was made to not engage the school as a

separate element in this planning process. In the end, we would hope that the School leadership would take up the question of how to live this vision within the parameters of its distinct mission and work.

Secondly, given the nature of the Hispanic membership of the parish, it was decided to conduct the process in English only noting that the very small monolingual Spanish membership of the parish would be addressed in a subsequent effort. Monolingual Spanish Mass attendance Sunday-to-Sunday pre-COVID-19 numbered less than 100 and many of these were non-member visitors who traveled to St. Theresa because of the priest presider at this particular Mass. It should be noted that many of the English-speaking and English-language Mass congregations members of St. Theresa are of Hispanic heritage including ethnic and national backgrounds traceable to Spain, Mexico, Central America's diverse countries and South American countries.

The Mission and Ministry Planning Committee

In May, after the determination of the parish vision, the members of the Parish Leadership Team was merged for the purpose of the planning process into a larger planning body, the Mission & Ministry Planning Committee (MMPC). This committee is to provide the oversight for the continuation of this planning process with the Parish Leadership Team serving as an as needed Executive Committee for the duration of the process. The members of the MMPC are listed below:

1. Fr. Phil Lloyd, pastor
2. Nick Balser
3. Shannon Balser
4. Enrique Benitez (parish staff)
5. Nancy Cochran
6. Kate Fitzgerald
7. Chrystal Frommert
8. Cynthia Garza (parish staff)
9. Steve Herce
10. Terra Herce
11. William Meister
12. Kristen Meister
13. Kathleen Orr
14. Larry Payne (parish staff)
15. Greg Robertson
16. Stuart Seger
17. Martha Tanios
18. Brenda Tuley

Beginning with the End in View

As the planning process started, the Mission and Ministry Planning Committee was asked to keep an end date in view. The process was to look from 2020 and early 2021 to 2025 as a timeframe for the realization of its goals.

It was exciting to discover that our parish would celebrate a special occasion in the midst of 2025 that could serve as an endpoint for this plan. The universal Church and our parish will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the canonization of St. Theresa on May 17, 2025. So this process began with end date in view.

Articulating the Parish Vision

The first step in the planning process was the articulation of a parish vision. While the mission of the parish is a given, it is impossible to ever fulfill until the final coming of the reign of God. A first stage in this process was for the Parish Leadership Team to articulate a vision that would describe how far we might go toward realizing our mission in the next four to five years. The vision describes a goal and sets forth the challenge of how we are to live the mission in the immediate future of the parish's life.

The parish mission describes what we do as a Catholic parish of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. The parish vision statement address how we are going to realize this vision. Missions are "eternal" as one can never really finish fulfilling a mission. Visions are time-bound, that is they provide a destination – where we want to arrive in the next few years.

In a sense every Catholic parish has a mission that is reflected in the Jesus' words at the end of the Gospel of Matthew – the Great Commission – *"Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you"* (Matthew 28: 16-19). This mission is reflected in the Great Commandment: *"Jesus said to him, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with your entire mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbor as yourself."* (Matthew: 22: 37-39)

The vision statement approved by Fr. Phil was at the heart of the planning process. Vision statements that challenge us can be uncomfortable on the first or second reading. Often, vision statements have to grow on people as they become more comfortable with the terminology of the vision statement and the vision that is expressed.

Vision Statement:

Solidarity in Christ: Let no one walk alone

Vision Background

Our vision statement: "Solidarity in Christ: Let no one walk alone" is challenging. Often we are not used to the word, "solidarity." It is layered over in our present time with strong political overtones. St. Theresa is using "solidarity" as it comes to us in Catholic social doctrine – not as a political position, goal or code. For this process, solidarity is about love, connection, relationship and belonging as grounded in the life, teaching and ministry of Jesus Christ as given to us in the gospels. Solidarity is a way to reflect nature of the Holy Trinity and who we are being called to be as disciples of Christ who chose to live in solidarity with us.

The following are some statements drawn from recent papal documents, magisterial teaching of the Church and the Church's social doctrine:

1. Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, page 46, paragraph #103, it reads in part as follows:

    "… the Pope [John Paul II] writes" What we nowadays call the principle of solidarity … is frequently stated by Pope Leo XIII, who uses the term 'friendship' … Pope Pius XI refers to it with the equally meaningful term 'social charity.' Pope Paul VI expanding the concept to cover the many modern aspects of the social question speaks of a 'civilization of love.'

2. Pope St. John Paul II, encyclical *Sollicitudo rei Socialis, On Social Concern,* #38

    "[Solidarity] is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all."

3. Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Sí, On the Care for Our Common Home*, paragraph #240:

    "The divine Persons are subsistent relations, and the world, created according to the divine model, is a web of relationships. Creatures tend towards God, and in turn it is proper to every living being to tend towards other things, so that throughout the universe we can find any number of constant and secretly interwoven relationships.

This leads us not only to marvel at the manifold connections existing among creatures, but also to discover a key to our own fulfilment. The human person grows more, matures more and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves to live in communion with God, with others and with all creatures. In this way, they make their own that Trinitarian dynamism which God imprinted in them when they were created. Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity."

4. <u>U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults</u>, Doctrinal Statements, page 337, defines solidarity:

"The principle of solidarity, also articulated in terms of 'friendship' or 'social charity' is a direct demand of human and Christian brotherhood." (CCC #1939). This involves a love for all peoples that transcends national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. It respects the needs of others and the common good in an interdependent world.

Some additional text from the recent work, <u>The Ethics of Encounter</u>, by Marcus Mescher (Orbis, 2020) also illustrate the meaning and importance of this kind of solidarity.

5. *"Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses."* C.S. Lewis quoted in <u>The Ethics of Encounter</u> (p. xi)

6. *"In the end, the ethics of encounter is envisioned as a practice of hope, a way to respond to our vocation to be Christ's ambassadors of reconciliation, healing the wounds in ourselves, our relationships, our communities and the world. This is what it means to love God and neighbor and to be transformed by God's love at work in the world."* (p. xxiii)

7. *Loneliness is a personal and social experience of exclusion. It is the exact opposite of a culture of encounter that seeks to move from accompaniment to exchange to embrace to inclusive belonging. Loneliness is the absence of meaningful connection, a kind of displacement that can leave one feeling lost, unsupported, and unsure of one's identity and purpose."* (p. 11)

8. *"As Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz contends, 'salvation depends on love of neighbor, and because of love of neighbor should be expressed through solidarity, solidarity can and should be considered the sine qua non of salvation.'"* (p. 38)

9. *"Certainly compassion was the wallpaper of Jesus' soul, the contour of his heart, it was who he was… He had room for everybody in his compassion."* Fr. Gregory Boyle, S.J. quoted (p. 138)

10. *"Christ lives in us and leads us, through mutual encounter and commitment, into a new future which we build together for one another. That future is called the Kingdom of God… True encounter with Christ liberates something in us, a power we did not know we had, a hope, a capacity for life, a resilience, an ability to bounce back when we thought we were completely defeated, a capacity to grow and change, a power for creative transformation."* Thomas Merton, He is Risen, quoted in The Ethics of Encounter (p. 1860

Accompaniment

The vision statement as used herein leads us to one of the concepts that is at the heart of the ministry and thought of Pope Francis. Accompaniment is a word used to describe the journeying that Christians travel with one another through moments of joys and suffering in this life. The following offer insights into this concept.

> "As they share the journey of the Christian life with the one accompanied, the mentor evangelizes the accompanied by fostering an encounter with Christ in their daily life, drawing connections between the Gospel message and their everyday experiences, and encouraging them toward ongoing conversion to Christ through the relationship of accompaniment."

> ."In the relationship of accompaniment, the marginalized are provided a space in which they can come to deeply know the love of Jesus Christ through friendship, guidance, and authenticity with a mentor."

The Art of Accompaniment: Theological, Spiritual, and Practical Elements of Building a More Relational Church, by Colleen Campbell and Thomas Carani,

Core Values: The Non-Negotiables of Who We Are

After the articulation of the vision statement, the first formal exercise of the MMPC was to identify and name five to six core values, the non-negotiable values that represent who we are and how the people of St. Theresa parish naturally reflect their faith in action. While

many values were proposed, some authentic and others more aspirational in nature, the MMPC agreed upon six core values. These values are not aspirational or values that we hope to have someday. They are values that are more or less present and visible based on repeated references by parishioners and non-parishioners. The core values are:

1. Joyful
2. Welcoming and inclusive
3. Charitable [note more than just financially]
4. Familial
5. Faithful and faith-filled

These core values were considered at each stage of the planning process.

Data Gathering – Today's Reality

As a part of the planning process, it was important to take stock of where the parish was today, its strengths, and its challenges, where we serve well and where there is room for improvement. In a more traditional model, this would be data gathering that would be used in a SWOT analysis – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The following focus groups were conducted, each having an attendance that ranged from 3 to over 20 participants.

- Young adult parishioners ages 18 -29
- Parishioners age 30 – 45
- Parishioners age 46 – 65
- Parishioners age 66 and older
- Parish Staff

The focus group conversations were conducted over Zoom by members of the MMPC. Comments made during these focus groups were anonymous, that is no record of the speaker was maintained and neither Fr. Phil nor Enrique Benitez were present for the Focus Groups in order to encourage freedom to speak.

In addition to the Focus Groups, parishioners were invited to participate in a confidential online survey. One hundred and nine (109) parishioners responded to this late May-early June survey., While the response was statistically representative, it was lower than hoped for in part because of the fact that the parish was closed and Mass attendance was at 25% or less than the normal Sunday attendance.

While a more complete report was prepared and delivered using PowerPoint, the following is an abbreviated summary of the key findings of this data gathering from the focus groups and the survey. The raw data is also available as are summary reports of the focus groups.

> Words we heard to describe St. Theresa: All are welcome, inclusive and open-minded, hospitality, friendliness, warmth, down-to-earth, pastoral style that is flexible, sense of community, Fr. Phil is great, great liturgies and homilies, and the church building and location are real positives.

> Things we do well at St. Theresa: uplifting and relevant homilies, outstanding music, impressive communications including social media and the In and About videos, streaming Masses are well done, our adaptability.

> Things we do not do as well at St. Theresa: the timing and location of meetings and programs, weeknights are problematic for some, meetings at the parish are preferred, the absence of genuine social opportunities, it is easy to get lost, the desire to make connections with parishioners, a desire to gather in small groups, we do not engage parishioners as volunteers as well as we could, there is not a clear direction of social justice and charity work beyond Christian Community Service Center.

> Hopes for St. Theresa: greater personal engagement and involvement, greater representation of the under 45 age group in leadership positions and advisory groups, lots of opportunities to from small groups for different needs, an expanded base of volunteers, an increase commitment to social justice advocacy and activities, more faith and spiritual formation online and in small groups, short-term volunteer activities and opportunities.

Specifically from the survey, our findings included:

- The usual strong points were reaffirmed: liturgical experience, preaching, quality of the music, the service of the pastor and deacons, the welcome and hospitable environment, being a vibrant and spiritually alive parish.
- Many of the survey respondents did not have direct experience of or comment on: RCIA, marriage prep, bereavement and funeral care, annulments.
- Where there was experience in any of the above-named areas, the tendency was to rate the parish and the activity highly.
- The desire to connect and belong in meaningful ways was reinforced such as a desire for more small groups, Bible studies, social gatherings and adult formation.

- There is a desire to balance growth with the maintenance of the parish charm.
- A few were concerned that the parish was too liberal or political because of too much emphasis on social justice. Others affirmed the courage to address current issues.
- Some expressed a desire for other Mass times during the week.

As with any such process, we can find great lessons in what was not said through the focus groups or the survey. The following represent what we heard that was not said:

- The general parish focus is somewhat inward facing or insular.
- For many, the orientation of their thoughts was more consumer-oriented being concerned about "what appeals to me" vs. "what we should be doing as a parish."
- There was little discussion of outward-facing projects, programs or concerns beyond Christian Community Service Center (CCSC) or Casa Juan Diego.
- People did not speak of "evangelization" of "spreading the gospel" or of "increasing our membership."
- Participants were challenged to think of what we could be doing as a parish to make us better.

The final part of the Today's Reality Report was the stating of six conclusions to this part of the process answering the question, ultimately what did we learn?

1. "*Father Phil rocks*" – with 14 years of pastoral leadership at St. Theresa, there is significant support for Father Phil, his preaching, witness and guidance.
2. There is great enthusiasm for St. Theresa – for its liturgies, culture, beauty, informality, and hospitality.
3. Across the age groups, but more evident in the 30-64 year old parishioners, there is a hunger for personal connection.
4. While there are hints of a broader commitment to social justice and charity as elements of discipleship, there is a sense that the parish is not yet fully developed in terms of ordinary programming.
5. There is a readiness to volunteer and help but there is not a ready sense of how to fit in or get involved outside of the Mass.
6. Social media communications are a giant plus for the parish especially during the season of COVID-19.

Naming the Strategic Issues

With the vision [Solidarity in Christ: Let no one walk alone] in mind along with the core values and the insights of the Today's Reality Report, the MMPC identified a number of

possible global issues that could be priorities to be addressed in the next four years. The question was – which of these strategic issues will move us closer to realizing our parish vision? After a period of dialogue and discernment, the MMPC identified the following strategic issues that are now the topics to be addressed by the Task Teams.

1. <u>Adult Faith Formation and Spirituality</u>: The activity of preparing all adult members of the parish for discipleship, prayer and ministry.

2. <u>Fellowship and Socializing</u>; The activity of promoting new relationships, friendships and various social engagements.

3. <u>Member Outreach</u>: The activity of ensuring contact and engagement with all sectors of our adult parish community and their families.

4. <u>Community Outreach</u>: The activity of reaching out to our neighbors – non-parishioners, members of other faith communities, non-believers, community residents, visitors, etc.

5. <u>Charity and Social Service</u>: The activity of promoting specific projects in support of the poor or those in need such as suffering from disaster relief, human trafficking or homelessness, etc.

6. <u>Social Justice Advocacy</u>: The activity of promoting justice, mercy and the common good as social value including addressing particular social issues impacting the poor.

7. <u>Communication, Technology and Digital Presence</u>: The activity of advertising, print and digital communications and/or providing a digital interaction or presence on behalf of the parish.

8. <u>Young Adults</u>: The activity of connecting with, gathering, engaging and ministry to parishioners in the 18-35 age range – those who are late Gen X, Millennials, and Gen

Task Team Purposes

Around each of these eight strategic issues a Task Team or work group consisting of 6 – 10 parishioners was formed with each Task Team co-chaired by two parishioners or a parishioner and a parish staff member. These Task Teams were to explore, dialogue, pray, and propose opportunities to address the assigned strategic issues. In the end, after six to eight weeks of work, the Task Teams will formulated 1 – 5 SMART goals to address each strategic issue. At the end of their work, the Task Teams proposed 23 goals of which two were merged leaving 22 goals for consideration and implementation. In this process, it

should be noted that the SMART goals as proposed are the specific mandate. The additional metrics, assumptions and recommended action steps are not part of the mandate and as such can be changed, refined, eliminated or augmented.

Beyond the specific and clear goal, there 1 to 3 or more metrics or means of measuring the progress from a baseline to the specific goal were proposed. The metrics provide a way to track progress toward the goal.

In some cases, assumptions were added to help guide the understanding of the proposed SMART goal. The assumptions oftentimes suggest parameters for consideration. Again, the assumptions are added helps and are not considered to be part of the mandate for the SMART goal.

SMART means a <u>specific</u> clear goal for which progress can be <u>measured</u> and which is <u>attainable</u> within the <u>time limits</u> of this process (four to five years) and is <u>relevant</u> to the parish vision.   In other words, a SMART goal is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timebound.

In addition to the SMART goals and metrics, which become part of the process mandates, each Task Team will be asked to test their SMART goals by making recommendations regarding how to address implement the goals. These recommendations can programs, projects, specific actions regarding the who, what, when, where and how of implementation. These recommendations are not considered mandates but will be passed on to the future implementation staff members and teams.

SMART Goals

From September to early November, eight Task Teams met and returned on November 4, 2020 with the following SMART Goals, assumptions and metrics.   These were approved by the Task Team Co-Chairs, the members of the Mission and Ministry Planning Committee and the Parish Leadership Team and were submitted to Father Phil for his consideration as the pastor of St. Theresa.

Each goal was tested to see if it fit the SMART criteria of being specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound.

<u>Adult Faith Formation and Spirituality</u>

Goal #1: *By 2025, St. Theresa Parish will consistently offer faith and spiritual formation programs that result in parishioners having an increased desire to serve God and His people by enriching their personal relationship and understanding of God in addition to enhancing their connection to the community.*

Assumptions:

1. A Committee to plan, schedule and staff programs will exist in early 2021.
2. Programs will be a combination of small and large groups, focused on educational and spiritual growth
   a. Small groups might include rosary, prayer, Scripture study, faith sharing, etc.
   b. Large groups might include retreats and transforming programs such as Alpha, Formed, Word on Fire, etc.
3. Participation numbers for formation and spiritual growth goals are additive and not two distinct measurements.

Metrics:

1. Programs offered from 2-3 per year with annual increases
2. 10% parishioner participation with annual participation increases
3. Each program involves 25-30% young adults (<35)*

   *The aged defined for young adults in this process is age 18 - 35

Goal #2: *By 2025, St. Theresa Parish will establish and train an Advisory Committee for Adult Formation and Spirituality for the purpose of developing, supporting, implementing, and evaluating programming for ongoing formation of parishioners.*

Assumptions:

1. The Committee will serve in an advisory capacity to the pastor and/or staff member responsible for adult formation and spirituality.
2. Current programming for adult formation and spirituality will continue without interruption dependent on the Advisory Committee being formed.

Metrics:

1. A parish staff person is hired or identified by the pastor to serve as the director or coordinator of Adult Formation and Spirituality.
2. The Advisory Committee is formed and functional.
3. 25% of Committee members have spiritual, theological, or catechetical education.

<u>Fellowship and Socializing</u>

Goal #3: *By 2025, to help people know each other by name, St. Theresa Parish will have a functional online directory.*
Assumptions:

1. Not all parishioners will be included in the database due to interest, etc.
2. Parishioners should update their own data when needed (new pictures, ages, etc.)
3. Those unable to update their own data will be helped by a volunteer.
4. The Directory would be tied to a calendar on the website. The technology team will need to create and link the directory and website. [Note that this directory could be accessed by a comprehensive parish app.]

Metrics:

1. Number of people signed up / completing process.
2. Availability and accessibility to parishioners.
3. The number of people that access the directory.

Goal #4: *By 2025, St. Theresa Parish will sponsor various series called "hobby hours" to kick start smaller interest groups that will meet on a regular basis.*

Assumptions:

1. These "clubs" will meet weekly to monthly based on the group's input.
2. Group sizes are to be determined by the group leaders.
3. Activities should be broad enough to include different groups of parishioners (young adults, children, etc.)
4. Suggested ideas could include woodworking, cooking, jewelry making, pottery, candle-making, painting, needlework, knitting, crocheting, etc.

Metrics:

1. Groups have met regularly for six weeks or more.
2. Number of members signed up for each group.
3. Number of regular attendees for each group.

Goal #5: *By 2025, St. Theresa Parish will sponsor various "social interest events" on a large scale to meet others in the parish with similar interests.*

Assumptions:

1. St. Theresa might sponsor a larger event once a quarter.
2. Some events/programs could be repeated if popular.
3. Some ideas would include movies, sports, travel, children's programming, foods, exercise, libations, gardening, etc.

Metrics:

1. The regularity of the events.
2. The numbers of attendees at each event and subsequent events.

Member Outreach

Goal #6: *By 2025, St. Theresa Parish will have a comprehensive program deploying lay ministers to accompany parishioners in need of comfort or support.*

Assumptions:

1. Potential "need groups" for accompaniment might include: (a) homebound including caregivers, (b) families at 1st communion and/or confirmation, (c) newly married couples, (d) newly baptized or received adults after RCIA, (e) divorced persons, (f) persons desiring prayer partners, (g) the grieving, (h) parents of newly baptized children, (i) disabled, the sick and the hospitalized, (j) those having lost jobs or seeking work.

Metrics:

1. Number of parishioners accompanied.
2. Number of appropriately trained lay ministers.
3. Retention of lay ministers.

Community Outreach

Goal #7: *By 2025, St. Theresa Catholic Church will have a "formal Welcoming ministry" to identify, recognize, and welcome visitors and new parish members.*

Metrics:

1. Develop process to identify visitors.
2. Plan four visitor outreach events each year.
3. Create welcoming protocols for all Masses

Goal #8: *By 2025, St. Theresa Catholic Church will have a more structured outreach to St. Theresa Catholic School families.*

Metrics:

1. Include school parent on Welcoming Committee.
2. Welcoming Committee to engage school families.
3. Plan 4 specific parish outreaches to school

Goal #9: *By 2025, St. Theresa Catholic Church will expand its visibility and outreach to users of Memorial Park.*

Metrics:

1. Identify and hold 2 events oriented to park users.
2. Test awareness of the Church among users.
3. Use of Church bells to promote awareness.

Goal #10: *By 2025, St. Theresa Catholic Church will engage in targeted activities to increase its visibility and awareness by those in the surrounding neighborhood.*

Metric:

1. Identify "neighborhoods" within the parish.
2. Identify and develop "neighborhood" contacts.
3. Hold at least two outreach events each year.

Goal #11: *By 2025, St. Theresa Catholic Church parishioners will be regularly engaged in ecumenical works and meetings in order to foster mutual understanding among neighboring Church communities.*

Metrics:

1. Relationships with at least 5 area congregations.
2. Parish contacts/relationship managers are in place.
3. Quarterly events held each year with partners.

Charity and Social Service

Goal #12: *By 2025, St. Theresa will have a dedicated ministry team and support structure to generate and implement organized opportunities to volunteer in charitable and social service organizations year round.*

Metrics:

1. Number of volunteers recruited to serve in team.
2. 50% responses to parishioner involvement survey.
3. Funds raised to fund annual operations of the Center.

Goal #13: *By 2025, St. Theresa will have agreements with charitable organizations and will generate volunteer opportunities modeled on the corporal works of mercy every quarter.*

Assumptions:

1. Continue our partnerships with Christian Community Service Center (CCSC) and Casa Juan Diego.

Metrics:

1. Number of opportunities available.
2. Number of repeat and number of one-time opportunities.
3. Number of events/activities per year.

Social Justice Advocacy

Goal #14: *By 2025, St. Theresa will develop a Center for Social Justice to support those in most need.*

Assumptions:

1. The Center need not be a single physical space but should be a durable set of programs, activities, etc.
2. The work of the center will be based on the two feet of social justice: (a) social change guided by Catholic Social Doctrine and (b) direct service.

Metrics:

1. Logo development, use & shirts available for distribution
2. Promotion of a 1st principle of Catholic Social Doctrine (handout, speaker, etc.)
3. First advocacy event is held with 25 in attendance.

4. Implementation team and chair are identified for the Center.

Goal #15: *By 2025, St. Theresa parishioners will be able to identify, speak, embrace and exemplify the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching.*

Assumptions:

1. The formulation of the seven principles should be agreed upon.
2. When communicated, the principle or principles should be shared across the parish from the weekday and Sunday liturgies to parish meetings to faith formation and through online, social media and website communications.

Metrics:

1. Parishioners will regularly quote or use the seven principles.
2. The use of the seven principles in parish planning and with the parish staff.
3. Random samples of parishioner awareness of the seven principles.

Communication and Digital Presence

Goal #16: *By 2025, St. Theresa Parish will form relationships with parishioners using the technology in the manner they prefer to engage in a provable record of monthly two-way communications with 90% of parishioners who have opted in, using their preferred means of communication.*

Assumptions:

1. St. Theresa will continue to use existing means of communications (e.g., printed bulletins, telephone calls, letters and announcement during Masses) alongside newer digital means.
2. Sufficient staff (volunteer or salaried) be assigned to the receipt and reply of questions or requests for information as needed. Any replies given are consistent with messages the parish wants to convey.
3. Communication between parishioners is just as important as communication from the parish staff itself.
4. Communication initiated by a parishioner is just as important as communication initiated from the parish

Metrics:

1. The number of people and percentage of the parish reached through overall communication efforts in each quarter.

2. The number of new people who find St. Theresa Parish in a quarter.
3. Rolling 3-month average of provable two-way interactions with registered parishioners.
4. Percentage of parishioners who self identify as "feeling connected to their parish."
5. Using existing database, track usage by each communication method used by the parish.
6. Tracking usage of technology through annual surveys. Defining success by a percentage of parishioners replying to the survey of parishioners using technology to access information and services.
7. Number of queries received, rating of successful replies, speed of reply for each type of platform.

Goal #17: *By 2025, a minimum of 80% of parishioners will have equitable access to the technology needed to maintain communication with St. Theresa Parish, and will have the requisite knowledge and ability to use the digital platforms used by the parish.*

Assumptions:

1. Technology should be relational, not just informational.
2. Technology is not required for communication to occur.
3. Parish registration will continue to be a big and important initiative each year for the parish.
4. Two-way communication: the initiator of the interaction (parish or parishioner), gets a response that is not automated from the intended recipient in a timely fashion.

Metrics:

1. Number of request for assistance received; responses and response times tracked.
2. Number of parishioners participating in sessions set up to teach use of technology and digital platforms.
3. Tracking use of digital platforms through analytics.
4. Results of annual technology survey of St. Theresa Parish; statistical analysis of parishioners using technology (e.g. breakdown of age groups using specific digital platforms).

Goal #18: *By 2025, St. Theresa Parish will increase participation in the Sacraments as well as all of the services provided by the parish by 30% using technology and digital platforms.*

Assumptions:

1. St. Theresa will continue to provide access to services (e.g. requests for Mass intentions or scheduling Reconciliation) through traditional means (phone calls, etc.) as well as utilizing digital platforms.
2. St. Theresa will continually upgrade, improve, and, if necessary, replace technology and software currently used in providing services. For example, the quality of streaming Masses should be continually improved and upgraded.

Metrics:

1. The number of services that become available via digital means.
2. Measure the use of and participation in the service or sacrament by traditional and digital means.
3. Comparison over time of request for and access to sacraments and services by traditional and digital means.

Goal #19: *By 2025, St. Theresa Parish will use technology and its digital presence to document that 75% of repeat visitors to Memorial Pak and surrounding neighborhoods are aware of St. Theresa Catholic Church.*

Assumptions:

1. Memorial Park continues to be a highly visited Houston park for families, runners, walkers and golfers.
2. Digital presence of St. Theresa's continues to be more "laid back" and welcoming in tone and style.

Metrics:

1. Analytics associated with St. Theresa's digital platforms used to document "repeat visitor" – someone who self-identifies as having visited Memorial Park at least once before; "aware of the presence" – repeat visitor can affirm that there is a Catholic Church nearby.
2. Documentation of awareness through surveys of visitors to Memorial Park and to St. Theresa Parish.

Young Adults

Goal #20: *By 2025, St. Theresa will have a recognizable and sustainable parish-led young adult ministry, complete with a variety of small groups, social activities, retreats, service projects, and having durable volunteers.*

Metrics:

1. Number of young adults signed up and attending programs/events regularly.
2. Total number and variety of events available: small group, social activities, retreats, and service projects throughout the year.
3. First time attendees, establishing follow-up with newcomers.
4. Retention: how many attend an event for the first time and come back.
5. Attrition: new young adult parishioners each year versus those that go on to register elsewhere.
6. Number of attendees at each program/event used to help identify most popular and successful activities.

Goal #21: *By 2025, St. Theresa will have increased its retention of young adult families by offering small group programs and social opportunities specifically geared toward this demographic.*

Metrics:

1. Establishing the baseline of total number of young adult families at the parish.
2. Identifying those who join as young adult families and those who start a family after becoming established members.
3. Retention of marriage and baptism preparation attendees who become parishioners or further engage in events after sacramental preparation.
4. Attrition of young adult families who leave the parish.
5. Number of families engaged in regular program as a percentage of the total.
6. Number of events available (variety of events as well: small groups, social activities, retreats, and service projects throughout the year).
7. Number of attendees at each program/event (helps identify most popular & successful).

Goal #22: *By 2025, St. Theresa will have the most new young adults registered annually of any parish in the diocese.*

Metrics:

1. Number of new registered parishioners between the ages of 13-15 (establish baseline)
2. Comparison of our number of new registered 18-35 year olds to other parishes around the archdiocese.
3. College/University attended and/or hometown from which they came.
4. Survey of new young adults parishioners regarding how they learned about St. Theresa

Toward Implementation

With the proposal and approval of the SMART Goals, the actual work of the Mission and Ministry Planning Process is just beginning. One of the first acts after the pastor's approval will be the organization of a Mission and Ministry Plan Implementation Oversight Committee. The role of this group will be to prioritize and then organize strategies for the implementation of these goals including the recruitment of parishioners to work on addressing each goal. To take on 22 goals at one time would overwhelm the most competent and completely staffed parish. Therefore, it will be important to triage and stagger the implementation planning over a 3 to 5 year period beginning with only 3 to five goals in the first year.

It will be important to promulgate the vision, values, and SMART Goals to the parish including the incorporation of the vision language in signage, meeting agendas, and in our preaching and liturgical life.

It is with great gratitude that we end this report recognizing the work of our pastor, Fr. Phil, every member of the Parish Leadership Team, the members of the Mission and Ministry Planning Committee, the members of our Task Teams, all who participated in the focus groups and the parish survey and the members of St. Theresa's outstanding parish staff. May we all share in *Solidarity in Christ!* and *may no one walk alone!*