

The New Evangelization Pastoral Plan



***St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
Corpus Christi, Texas***

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“Put out into the deep.” (Lk 5:4)

PREFACE

The Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI called the Church to celebrate the Year of Faith commemorating with the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council and the 20th anniversary of the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with a sense of urgency as the Pope was providing for the Church a remedy for what he has called the current "profound crisis of faith that has affected many people"ⁱ within the Church. "We see clear signs of a disturbing breakdown in the very foundation of society: many of our contemporaries; increased violence; a weakening of the moral sense; a coarsening of social relations; and a growing forgetfulness of Christ and God."ⁱⁱ

With the challenges of modernity, moral relativism, challenges to the faith, the abuse crisis within the clergy, heterodoxy in doctrine and moral dissent, the Church responds by calling Catholics to a new commitment to faith, a faith that moves beyond the catechetical, but into a deeply scriptural, intensely sacramental. This “rediscovery of faith”, often a part of what Bl. Pope John Paul II called, “the New Evangelization”, is the responsibility of the bishops who are the pastors of the Church, of their co-workers the priests and deacons and the religious men and women who dedicate themselves to education, sanctification of the faithful and of Catholic social justice as well as all the lay faithful.

What is the New Evangelization?

Bl. John Paul II coined the term in his first message to the Bishops of Latin America saying “the commemoration of this half of the millennium of evangelization will achieve its full meaning, if as bishops, with your priests and faithful, you accept it as your commitment; a commitment, not of re-evangelization, but rather of a new evangelization; new in its ardor, methods and expressions”ⁱⁱⁱ

“The New Evangelization calls each of us to deepen our faith, believe in the Gospel message and go forth to proclaim the Gospel. The focus of the New Evangelization calls all Catholics to be evangelized and then go forth to evangelize. In a special way, the New Evangelization is focused on 're-proposing' the Gospel to those who have experienced a crisis of faith. Pope Benedict XVI called for the re-proposing of the Gospel "to those regions awaiting the first evangelization and to those regions where the roots of Christianity are deep but who have experienced a serious crisis of faith due to secularization." The New Evangelization invites each Catholic to renew their relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church.”^{iv}

Why do we need the New Evangelization?

“The New Evangelization offers hope. Jesus grants all people rest and comfort from the world's burdens (Mt. 11:28) by offering us the hope of salvation and eternal life. Through the “re-proposing” of the Gospel, the Church seeks to comfort all those who are burdened. The New Evangelization offers the gifts of faith, hope, love and new life in Christ.”^v “It is the love of Christ that fills our hearts and impels us to evangelize.”^{vi} It is at the very heart of the identity of the Church to evangelize. “She exists in order to evangelize, that is to say, in order to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ’s sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of his death and glorious resurrection.”^{vii}

INTRODUCTION

At St. John the Baptist, we are committed to answering the Holy Father's urgent appeal to faith and initiating the "New Evangelization". The New Evangelization is geared toward the following constituents:

1. Baptized Roman Catholics who regularly practice their faith parish life specifically families and young people, calling them to a deeper conversion and participation in their faith.
2. Lapsed Catholics and nominal Catholics who have set their faith aside (included in this group are the “Easter & Christmas Catholics”), to assist them to rediscover faith and respond to it in their lives.
3. Apostates or those who have rejected their faith embracing atheism, forms of agnosticism, enlightened rationalism or new age spiritualism. Included in this group are Catholics who have converted to another faith but are seeking to restore communion with the Church
4. Those who express interest in the faith, potential converts to Catholicism.
5. Those who have in some way or another have been wounded by sins committed by sons and daughters of the Church (victims of scandal, or have become disillusioned with the Church.), to help heal the wounds of separation and restore them to full communion in the Church.

Guiding us in this endeavor we will employ the Holy Father's own framework threefold focus areas:

1. Doctrinal Awareness
2. Spiritual Renewal
3. Dialogue and Witness

The following is the strategic plan implemented during the Year of Faith using the Holy Father's framework and the outline by the United States Conference of Bishops (2013-2016 USCCB Strategic Plan: Suggested Parish/Diocesan Roadmap). Using as our guide the documents of the Second Vatican Council where we will find “a sure compass...if we interpret and implement it guided by a right hermeneutic, it can be and can become increasingly powerful for the ever necessary renewal of the Church.”^{viii}

THE NEW EVANGELIZATION PASTORAL PLAN

Doctrinal Awareness

"The fidelity and courage with which the Church in this country [the U.S.] will respond to the challenges raised by an increasingly secular and materialistic culture depend in large part upon your own fidelity in handing on the treasure of our Catholic faith."^{ix}

Evangelization depends greatly on a solid catechetical foundation. Catechesis that is faithful and rooted in the Church's teaching is vital for authentic conversion and formation. "Doctrinal clarity is a matter of equipping "the saints", the men and women who have entered into friendship with the Lord Jesus, to become his witnesses in the world and the servants of those most in need to see the face of the Father of mercies."^x The basis for catechetical instruction must be first and foremost Sacred Scripture, with a special emphasis on the Gospels and secondly, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

To accomplish we will focus on the catechetical programs and apostolates that have as their mission the handing down of the Catholic faith to Catholics in the modern world.

- I. *Biblical Apostolate*** – it was recommended by the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI that all structures of catechesis and formation be places where the laity and lay missionaries can be trained to understand and proclaim the Word of God.^{xi} In his Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation the Pope lays out recommendations for implemented a greater foundation for general catechesis and prayer. We make the following initiatives based on his recommendations:
- a. Baptismal & Sacramental Preparation – implement a stronger connection between the Word of God and the Sacraments being celebrated by strengthening the catechetical formation with a strong use of Biblical formation and education.
 - b. Liturgical Celebrations – implement a focus on the Liturgy of the Word celebrations within the Mass and outside the Mass and when celebrating other sacraments including: Baptism, Marriage outside of Mass, Blessing Rites, Reconciliation/Penance, Anointing of the Sick, and other means of celebrating the Liturgy of the Word with Biblical homilies.
 - c. Homily – improve the quality of homilies to reflect a greater Biblical approach that:
 - i. "brings the scriptural message to life in a way that helps the faithful to realize that God's word is present and at work in their everyday lives."
 - ii. "lead to an understanding of the mystery being celebrated."
 - iii. "serve as a summons to mission, and prepare the assembly for the profession of faith."^{xii}
 - d. Liturgy of the Hours – implement greater use of the Liturgy of the Hours especially in catechetical formation opportunities or classes including with young people.
 - e. Biblical principled agendas – allow the "Bible to inspire all pastoral work...by examining the ordinary activities of Christian communities, in parishes associations and movements to see if they are truly connected with fostering a personal encounter with Christ, who gives himself to us in his word"

- i. All parish policies and procedures must adhere to Biblical principles, especially of charity, compassion, truth and justice.
- ii. Parish organizations ought to be encouraged to implement a greater awareness of scripture and applying it to their organization by-laws and constitutions.
- f. Encourage the study of the Bible in family and small faith community settings.
- g. Make available Catholic Bibles and Catholic Biblical formation.
- h. Use the Bible in large gatherings of the faithful (i.e. Eucharistic Adoration, parish missions, meetings, and classes, and parish organizations.)
- i. The faithful ought to be encouraged to pray the Angelus as well as “scriptural” rosaries.

II. Youth Formation Program

- a. Strengthening and continuing the development and implementation of a comprehensive faith formation program that encompasses the traditional roles of Religious Education for Children, Sacramental Preparation, and Youth Ministry. The new program will serve children from Pre-K 3 through the 12th grade.
- b. Develop a plan to make Sacramental Preparation for Children and Youth part of the Youth Formation Program
 - i. Baptism of Children and Youth – emphasis should be placed on a careful catechetical formation for those preparing for Baptism.
 - 1. Inclusion of parents and godparents to formation sessions will be part of the formation program.
 - 2. Formation sessions will also include a careful review of basis of the Catechism and relying heavily on the use of the Gospels.
 - ii. First Penance (1st Grade) – Students beginning their 2 year Sacramental Preparation for the Sacrament of the Eucharist will be allowed to begin celebrating sacramental confession in the first grade.
 - 1. Emphasis will be placed on understanding of sin and virtue, and the need for reconciliation.
 - 2. Candidates will make eight confessions prior to First Communion so as to facilitate greater comfort and hoping to encourage greater use of the sacrament.
 - iii. First Communion (2nd Grade) – greater attention will be placed on providing a strong catechetical foundation during their two year preparation focusing on the Church, Scripture, sacraments and the moral life.
 - 1. A special emphasis on spiritual formation (retreats, prayer and devotions) will necessarily be part of their formation.
 - 2. Develop a Christian Solidarity program in communion with the St. Elizabeth Society for children to learn to practice charity.
 - 3. Develop a curriculum to encourage and teach Stewardship.
 - iv. Confirmation (10th Grade) – emphasis will be placed on careful catechetical and spiritual formation incorporated into the Life Teen program.
 - 1. Establish a Christian Solidarity program in communion with the St. Elizabeth Society to develop charity.
 - 2. Develop a curriculum of Spiritual Formation which includes a retreat, Eucharistic adoration, and the practice of Sacramental Confession.

- c. Provide greater access and use of Bibles geared toward youth, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the *YOUCAT*, *YOUCAT Prayer Book* and other resources for study and formation.
- d. Develop a Christian Solidarity program to instruct young people in practical projects of solidarity to the poor, the hungry, those who suffer and especially children victims of abuse and neglect for all grade levels to participate.
 - i. This replaces “Community Service” or “Service Hours” by directing it greater charity instead of volunteer work.
- e. Provide a staff of director and assistant directors for the three levels of Youth Formation to implement the Youth Formation program.
- f. Provide ongoing catechetical formation and training to the Director and Assistant Directors of the program.
- g. Provide catechetical and spiritual formation for the catechists team members.
- h. Implement auxiliary programs that include:
 - i. A Summer Program
 - ii. Youth Outreach/Peer Evangelization
 - iii. Vocation Awareness
 - iv. Christian Solidarity Projects
 - v. Children's Choir
 - vi. Educational, Liturgical and Formational Opportunities for Youth
 - vii. Ministry to Families
 - viii. Ministry to Parents
 - ix. A Vehicle for Parental Involvement
- i. Implement a Youth Music Ministry Program for all levels
- j. Provide for a youth music minister.
- k. Incorporate new media approach to Youth Formation including web, podcasts, video, and other modes of new communication with youth.
- l. Help phase out the old forms and models of Religious Education and Youth Ministry to a new understanding of a holistic Youth Formation program that extends beyond the classroom instruction.
- m. Build and establish a Youth Formation Center building on campus.

III. *Little Flower Association*

- a. Develop the LFA catechist formation program for future catechists (mothers and daughters).
- b. Establish a five year circulating curriculum to encompass a comprehensive emersion into the Catholic Faith (doctrine, morality, scripture, liturgy/sacraments, spirituality, literature and arts, etc.)
- c. Seek approval from competent Church authority to make LFA a formal “public association of the faithful”.
- d. Establish the association curriculum to be in conformity to the Church’s Magisterium, employing a strong Scriptural foundation using the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

IV. *Sacramental Preparation for Adults*

- a. Develop a parish program that encompasses appropriate tools for assisting adults in receiving the Sacraments.
- b. Strengthen and solidify an RCIA program designed for only those who seek the Sacrament of Baptism followed by the other Sacraments of Initiation.
- c. Establish a mystagogical experience for the neophytes following RCIA.
- d. Establish a team of catechists for RCIA, appoint a RCIA facilitator/head catechist.
- e. Develop a course for those Catholics seeking to complete Christian Initiation and baptized Christians seeking entrance into the Catholic Church providing spiritual and catechetical formation.
- f. Develop a strategic plan by which to help Catholics living in invalid marriages validate their marriages, through careful and thorough catechesis.

V. *Adult Faith Formation*

- a. Create a position for a professional (theologically trained) Adult Faith Formation Director.
- b. Develop a Parish Lay Ministry & Catechetical Training Program for those wishing to do ministerial or apostolic work in the parish. Required for catechists, liturgical ministers, and others as designated by the Pastor.
- c. Provide opportunities for Catholics to understand the Bible, to engage in Biblical studies and spiritual formation, allowing the Word of God to be the primary source of Catholic faith formation.
- d. Offer greater opportunities for all parishioners programs of intellectual formation for growth in faith understanding specifically in Catholic spirituality and training in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
- e. Provide greater educational opportunities to allow our Christianity to penetrate the modern culture (i.e., philosophy, the arts, science, social sciences, medicine, and ethics).

VI. *Stewardship*

- a. Create the position of Parish Stewardship Director that works closely with the Pastor and the Stewardship Council with an emphasis on tithing.
- b. Develop a comprehensive approach to educating parishioners of the rich spiritual benefits of tithing, becoming good stewards of God's bountiful gifts as allotted to each of us.
- c. Provide a practical plan to encourage tithing among parishioners and part of catechetical formation for the Youth Formation Program.
 - i. Increase participation yearly.
 - ii. Encourage online giving as part of the tithing program.
- d. Develop parish policies to promote good stewardship of the Church's resources:
 - i. Strengthen transparency policies and keeping parishioners at large and their representatives in the finance council in greater participation and knowledge of the parish's responsible Stewardship.
 - ii. Develop a plan for proper maintenance and appropriate parish policies that respect and maintains the goods of the parish.

- e. Strengthen opportunities for parishioners to become Stewards of Time and Talent, offering volunteer, service, and charitable programs allowing parishioners to be good stewards of their time and talent.
 - i. Create a yearly ministries and volunteer fair for parishioners to be exposed to opportunities to be generous stewards of time and talent.
- f. Develop a Stewardship of Faith program by which parishioners can understand the need and responsibilities for their own faith development and maturation.

VII. Catholic Education

- a. Develop a plan for raising the awareness of and promotion of a Catholic school to serve the needs of our community and parish.
- b. Develop a strategic plan for the establishment of a primary and middle school for the education in the Catholic faith.
- c. Consider and propose the concept/model of a "regional school" vs. a "parochial school" and develop a proposal.
- d. Develop a financial plan to assure financial viability of the school.
- e. Develop a strong catechetical and liturgical curriculum for the school.
- f. Develop a plan to create and foster an ongoing relationship of the school with parish life.
- g. Consider an academic concentration on technology, math and science for the new school.
- h. Develop a reliable and effective marketing campaign for the new school.
- i. Pursue the possibility of a teaching religious community to assume major roles of leadership and education within the new school.
- j. Seek property for a future sight for the new school
- k. Construct buildings and facilities necessary to house Pre-K 3 through 8th grades which include: classrooms, a cafeteria, chapel, library/media center, gym and athletic facilities.
- l. Consider a proposal for creating a program for special needs children for the new school.

Spiritual Renewal

Encounter with the Lord Jesus is the primary goal of evangelization. Renewal in the Church and the spread of the Gospel relies on an authentic development of our spiritual lives. “Evangelization and the call to holiness are intricately bound together, a matter which needs to be proposed to people here and now, if they are to experience the Kingdom of God in Jesus, and, in turn, become the children of God.”^{xiii}

I. Liturgical: Eucharist

- a. Provide ongoing liturgical catechesis, especially in educating Catholics about the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours.
- b. Continue to assess and evaluate the liturgical celebration of the Mass by making improvements toward conformity to liturgical law and practice.
- c. Employ the richness of the liturgical traditions and rituals as provided by the Church.

- d. Strengthen and grow the participation in the Mass of the Extraordinary Form by providing more opportunities for its celebration and understanding (especially during special feast days and solemnities of the liturgical year).
 - i. Establish a yearly calendar for the celebration of the Mass in the Extraordinary Form.
 - 1. Holy Name of Jesus (Jan 3), St. Joseph (March 19), Feast of Corpus Christi, Ascension Thursday, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Visitation BVM (July 2), Passion of St. John the Baptist (Aug 29), Exaltation of the Cross (Sept 14), OL of the Rosary (Oct. 7), & All Souls Day (Nov. 2).
 - ii. Provide resources such as hymnals and missals for the Mass in the Extraordinary Form.
 - iii. Provide ongoing catechesis on the Extraordinary Form, emphasizing the recovery of the sacred and the prayerful atmosphere of the Mass, helping to influence the Mass in the Ordinary Form.
 - 1. The catechesis should never bring about a rivalry between the two forms of the Roman Rite, however it should open up to influence each other.
 - a. Sacredness, reverence and prayer of the Extraordinary Form
 - b. Biblical preaching of the Ordinary Form
- e. Continue the enrichment of Sacred Music abiding by the priorities set out by the document *Musicam Sacram: Instruction on Music in the Liturgy (1967)*.
 - i. Create a plan for more availability to appreciate Sacred Music (polyphony and Gregorian chant) as well as other forms of music and hymnody that are within the traditions of the Church.
 - ii. Foster a new approach to Sacred Music that serves a prayerful atmosphere instead of simply filler for empty space or transition music.
- f. Strengthen the atmosphere of sacredness and reverence in the Mass to foster a greater spiritual experience and opportunities of prayer and silence.
- g. Provide on-going spiritual and liturgical formation for liturgical ministers (Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and Altar Servers).
- h. Develop greater opportunities for youth involvement in the service of the Sacred Liturgy (i.e. choirs, Altar Servers, Lectors).
- i. Foster greater appreciation for active participation at Mass.
- j. Improve liturgical preaching (the homily) to reflect a deeper awareness of and greater appreciation for the Scriptural or Evangelical preaching.
- k. Develop a plan to help the assembly understand the nature of the Lord's Day and the need for faithfully attending Sunday Mass.
- l. Establish liturgical catechetical days (modeled after the Great Jubilee celebrations and the parish's Year of Faith calendar)
 - i. Day of the BVM (Jan 1), Solemn Renewal of Baptismal Promises (Baptism of the Lord) ,Pro-Life Day (Jan 22), Day of the Sick (Feb. 11), Mass for the Universal Church (March 19), Day of the Priesthood (Holy Thursday), Day of Vocations, Day of Religious Freedom, Day of Prayer for the New Evangelization (Feast of Corpus Christi), Day of Prayer for

Lost Souls (June 13, St. Anthony), Day for Mothers, Day for Fathers, Day for Sacred Music, Day of Tithing (Christ the King), Day of the Family (Holy Family), etc..

- m. Develop a plan to make accessible the Mass via video stream and homilies via podcasts.
- n. Evaluate and review the current schedule for the Sunday Mass and it's vigil to better suit the needs of Catholics within the neighborhood and the parish's future growth.
 - i. Consider a proposal for the Sunday schedule to (8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm and 6:00 pm Mass).
 - ii. Consider a proposal for the Weekday schedule to add either a noon Mass or an evening Mass daily.
 - iii. Include in the construction of the Church a daily Mass chapel named in the *Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary*.
- o. Develop and strengthen devotion to the Eucharist by providing greater opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration. (Weekly schedule, youth formation, the Forty Hours Devotion, and during retreats).
 - i. Include in the construction of the new Church a space or chapel to promote Eucharistic Adoration and devotion.
- p. Develop a plan to reeducate in the proper disposition and reception of Holy Communion.
- q. Phase out “blessings” while in the communion line and reintroduce the noble practice of Spiritual Communions through a patient and thorough catechesis.
- r. Promote simplicity and beauty in Sacred Art and environment for the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy.

II. Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation

- a. Create a pastoral plan for preaching, catechizing and encouraging repentance and conversion reminding and calling all to the sacramental reconciliation.
- b. Continue to offer greater opportunities to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance, most especially during the penitential seasons, and during the most convenient times for the majority of Catholics (i.e. during Mass) leading to the inevitable confessions before and during each Sunday Mass.
- c. Develop a strategic plan to implement first confession during the 1st year of communion preparation and expanding the number of times before First Communion to eight required confessions.

III. Liturgical: Other

- a. Foster greater participation and use of the Liturgy of the Hours in the parish community through a daily or weekly schedule for Morning Prayer, use in retreats and other devotional opportunities throughout the year (Advent, Lent, Holy Week, Divine Mercy Sunday, Corpus Christi, Feasts of St. John the Baptist, etc...)
- b. Establish biweekly schedule to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism of Infants and Baptismal Preparation for parents and godparents.

- c. Strengthen catechetical and scriptural formation for Baptismal preparation for parents and godparents.
 - i. Require 6 months of returning to practice of the faith by attending Mass for those parents who are not currently practicing faith but seeking baptism.
 - ii. Develop an extended baptismal preparation for parents that are not currently practicing faith.

IV. *Devotions & Retreats*

- a. Provide various opportunities to celebrate the major devotions customary and familiar to the local church. (i.e. Eucharistic Adoration, the Rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, Novenas, Stations of the Cross and various sacramentals).
- b. Foster the current devotions to the Sacred Heart (First Friday Devotions) and the Holy Name, to the Holy Spirit, Marian Devotions, and to the Saints (St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Therese of Lisieux)
- c. Expose Catholics to various beloved traditions in the devotional life (i.e. Devotions to the Lord Jesus including the 40 Hours Devotions, May Crowning, devotion to the Saints, Marian Devotions including the Total Consecration to the BVM).
- d. Develop a plan to provide faithful and fruitful adult retreats for men, women, high school students, middle school students, and elementary students. (Caritas Christi Retreat for Men, Lydia Retreat for Women, Little Flock Retreat for Elementary students).
- e. Establish small Christian Communities of Prayer that meet in homes.
 - i. Legion of Mary, Confraternity of the Precious Blood, Schoenstatt Family Movement/Rosary Campaigns, Vocations.
- f. Establish at Home Based Bible Study programs by offering training to lay leaders utilizing DVD Bible studies.
 - i. Offer opportunities for private or public groups
 - ii. Allow for groups to be associated into (men's, singles, women, couples, young adults, etc...)
 - iii. Employ the ancient practice of *Lectio Divina* within these small bible study groups.
- g. Offer greater opportunities to foster public prayer (i.e. Family Prayer nights, Parish Days of Prayer, public Rosaries and Divine Mercy Chaplets).

V. *Liturgical Ministries*

- a. Altar Servers
 - i. Develop a plan to phase out current practice of admission of girls to serve at the altar and promote a robust group of boys and young men to foster a male spirituality and become a cradle for priestly vocations.
 - ii. Create a system by which the boys would serve at weddings, funerals, even daily Masses as well as Eucharistic Benediction and Stations of the Cross whenever possible.
 - iii. Develop positions and opportunities for growth in leadership within the organization

1. Create the position of Master of Ceremonies who will meet with the priest for instruction on preparation for the Mass on special occasions and events.
2. Create training captains who are the most experienced servers to facilitate training among the teams serving.
3. Provide training in sacristan duties.
- iv. Develop opportunities for catechesis, especially on the Mass.
- v. Create opportunities for the promotion of Vocations to the priesthood.
- vi. Establish a plan for Altar Boys to participate in Christian Solidarity projects and opportunities for Spiritual Formation.
- vii. Establish an Altar Boy Parent Booster Club for parents to support the boys as well as opportunities for Family Faith Formation and Spiritual growth as well as catechesis.
- viii. Develop an Altar Boy Schola Cantorum to provide opportunities for the boys to sing on special occasions.
- ix. Establish the Junior Holy Name Society for the spiritual and catechetical growth and development of the boys.
- b. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
 - i. Develop a formational program for those seeking to become Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion during Mass and for those who seek to visit the sick and dying in the homes and nursing homes.
- c. Lectors/Readers
 - i. Develop a formation program for those seeking to become Lectors/Readers for Mass.
 - ii. Promote a love of Sacred Scripture for Lectors/Readers (i.e. teaching *Lectio Divina*, Bible studies).
- d. Liturgical Music
 - i. Continue to foster the training of cantors to sing for Mass
 - ii. Develop a plan to create a parish choir that sings for Sunday Mass
 - iii. Foster the development of the children's choir
 - iv. Encourage a greater appreciation for the patrimony of liturgical music
 - v. Create a *schola cantorum* for the Mass in the Extraordinary Form and for use in the Mass of the Ordinary Form
- e. Ushers/Greeters
 - i. Develop a training program for ushers/greeters to make a good impression upon parishioners and visitors who arrive at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days.

VIII. Vocations

- a. Develop a program of parochial promotion of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life.
- b. Establish a Vocations Committee comprised of the clergy, Youth Formation Directors, Altar Server Coordinators, the Holy Name Society, the Women's Council, and the Pastoral Council to be active in the fostering of vocations.
- c. Coordinate with the Knights of Columbus and Catholic Daughters to provide financial support to parish seminarians and those in formation for the consecrated life from the parish.

- d. Develop a plan to work closely with the Diocesan Vocations Director to identify potential candidates for the priesthood and consecrated life.
- e. Develop a plan of support for those discerning their vocations, to visit seminaries and religious convents and communities, which also include a support system for those in discernment.
- f. Coordinate efforts to promote Vocation Days with the Office of Youth Formation.

Dialogue and Witness

I. *Parish Life* – the parish “has the responsibility to become real centers for propagating and bearing witness to the Christian experience and a place for attentively listening to people and ascertaining their needs.” The parish is “a place where a person receives instruction on searching for the truth, where faith is nourished and strengthened and where the Christian message and God’s plan for humanity and the world is communicated.”^{xiv}

- a. Consider the eventual need for a parochial vicar to assist the Pastor in the sacramental and pastoral needs of the parish community.
- b. Evaluate the needs of Diaconal Service to the parish by assessing the needs filled by parish deacons.
- c. Consider the need for a religious community/congregation of women to assist in pastoral ministry, especially in the field of education and catechesis.
- d. Create a Parish Administrative Manager position to oversee human resources office, maintenance, and work with Financial Manager to free up the Pastor for pastoral work in the place of administrative duties.
- e. Construct a New Church, Administrative Building, & Classrooms and Parish Hall
 - i. Develop a Master Plan for the New Church Building Project
 - ii. Establish a Building Committee
 - iii. Include in the plans the remodeling of the current Church building to become a Youth Building.
 - iv. Consider the actual need for a new rectory to accommodate more than one priest on site.
 - v. Consider the need to construct a convent for a religious community/congregation serving the parish/school.
- f. Reestablish and reconstitute the Parish Pastoral Council to a model of advocacy and mission.
 - i. The council should be made up of clerical, religious, and lay representatives from the parish.
 - 1. The council representatives are from
 - a. Parish Administrative and Pastoral Teams
 - b. Parish Organizations
 - c. At Large Representatives
 - d. Designees from the Pastor
 - ii. The council’s role is to embrace the mission of the Church to spread the Gospel and create a parish atmosphere that is:
 - 1. Conducive to prayer and conversion
 - 2. Fosters an encounter with the Lord Jesus through Word and Sacrament

3. Welcomes and promotes the Family and Human Life
4. Becomes a teaching/catechetical foundation for Catholic living
- iii. The council's mission is divided into five areas of pressing need for parish evangelization. The five committees include:
 1. *Human Life & Dignity* – responsible for the organization of events throughout the year and actively promote diocesan events and education of parishioners on issues concerning the protection of the dignity of human life.
 2. *Family Life* – responsible for the promotion of family life through events and special opportunities for families, especially geared toward children. Works closely with the Office of Youth Formation.
 3. *Charity* – responsible for supporting and advocating charitable events as well as designating parish fund to charities chosen with the assistance of the Pastor and the St. Elizabeth Society.
 4. *Spiritual Life* – responsible for helping to organize, support and promote various events throughout the year that help to promote the parish's development.
 5. *New Evangelization* – responsible for assisting the pastor in the implementation and continual development in the New Evangelization Pastoral Plan as well as a marketing and parish promoting committee.
 6. *Community Building* – responsible for promoting and assisting in the various social and community building events at the parish (i.e. Fall Family Festival, Golf Tournament, Spring BBQ, Socials after Sunday Mass, Young Family Gatherings, Couples Night Out, Dinners Groups, Parish Sports Program, etc..)
- g. Enhance the use of media and communications
 - i. Employ greater use of social communications and media to communicate with parishioners and the neighboring community.
 - ii. Make use of communications to broadcast/podcast catechetical talks, liturgical preaching, and spiritual conferences for broader use.
 - iii. Make greater and more effective use of social communications geared toward young people and young adults.
 - iv. Offer more catechetical materials and scriptural study resources.
 - v. Develop a plan by which the parish is marketed using social media and communications to invite others to participate in the life of the parish, especially in outreach to the neighborhood.
 - vi. Develop a professionally designed website and Facebook page to feature, live video stream of Mass, classes and other special events, podcasts, online forms, online giving, “e-parish” or other online services.
- h. Continue the appropriate development and use of the Parish Finance Council
 - i. Establish a three year renewable term of appointed finance council members, as appointed by the Pastor.
 1. Appointment is based on both parish commitment and competency in related fields including (financing, accounting, banking, business, and legal).
 2. Council will meet 4-5 times per year or as needed.

- ii. Enhance transparency tools to ensure honest financial practices
 - iii. Develop appropriate yearly budgets for a proper balance of parish growth and services provided and savings for future parish growth and development.
- i. Develop a plan for marketing and promotion of parish events including (Mass schedule, fundraising activities, and spiritual events).
- j. Create a plan of cooperation with local parishes in bearing witness to the Gospel in our deanery level. (Most Precious Blood, St. Philip the Apostle, St. Helena of the True Cross, and OLPH).
 - i. Establish a group of priests, deacons and religious and lay leaders from these parishes to establish a *Southside New Evangelization Plan* as well as coordinate activities and policies as much as possible.
 - ii. Develop opportunities for combined efforts and evangelical witness
 - 1. Eucharistic or Marian Processions
 - 2. Social Justice Advocacy (Pro-Life, etc...)
 - 3. Charitable Works
 - 4. Youth Ministry/Formation opportunities
 - 5. New Evangelization Efforts
 - 6. Education/Catechetical Opportunities
 - 7. Promotion of the Arts (concerts, theater, displays of art work, crafts etc..)
 - 8. Sporting events and family outings
- k. Generate a plan to encourage greater number of participation in parish life through volunteer work, participation in organizations or ministries, participation in small Christian communities at homes, and taking an active role in the life of the parish.

II. *Human Life & Dignity*

- a. Develop a plan to present a clear and unambiguous defense of Human Dignity which is necessary prior to calling Catholics to a defense of human life.
- b. Create a plan of promotion for Natural Family Planning and a vigorous defense of *Humanae Vitae*.
- c. Provide opportunities for young married couples and youth to learn more about what the Gospel reveals about contraception and family planning.
- d. Develop a robust program for the promotion of the *Evangelium Vitae (the Gospel of Life)* especially a strong defense of human life in the womb.
 - i. Celebrate Pro-Life Days Jan. 22 of every year as we celebrate the Mass for the Legal Protection of the Unborn.
 - ii. Develop a curriculum for Youth Formation to teach the defense of human life
- e. Create a parish organization that seeks to advocate for justice for the unborn.
- f. Religious Liberty – with the recent infringement by the American government on the protection of conscience and right to worship without government interference, this, one of the most important crises to face human dignity must be born witness to. Therefore we set the following goals:
 - i. Establish as a yearly celebration of the Mass for Religious Freedom on the Memorial of St. Christopher Magallanes and the Cristero Martyrs every May 21.

- ii. Provide catechetical and instructional material throughout the year on the current challenges to religious freedom in the U.S.
- iii. Create an advocacy group to lobby for the rights that protect the Freedom of Conscience.

III. *Marriage and Family Life*

- a. Establish a Marriage and Family Life Council at the parish level to foster and support marriage and offer services to families which includes but not limited to:
 - i. Sponsor Couples for those young couples preparing for marriage.
 - ii. Theology of the Body seminars for married couples and those preparing for marriage.
- b. Develop spiritual and formational opportunities for married couples (novenas for married life, couples retreats and days of reflection, etc.)
- c. Develop a pastoral plan to meet the needs of *newly married couples, couples with young children, couples with teenagers and young adults and older couples*.
- d. Develop a comprehensive Marriage Preparation and Formation Program to assist engaged couples in their preparation for a Catholic Marriage.
- e. Create a program to assist troubled marriages.
- f. Create a Marriage Preparation and Sacramental Preparation program for couples living an invalid marriage to receive the Sacraments needed.
- g. Create and develop a robust Marriage and Human Sexuality curriculum for the Youth Formation Program, focusing on the Theology of the Body.

IV. *Lay Apostolate and Mission*

- a. Develop and establish a catholic organization for lay professional and business leaders (medical, political, legal, education, business leaders and entrepreneurs) with the intent of offering formation both catechetical and spiritual.
- b. Develop a system to create missionary Catholic neophytes from those who complete the RCIA program to assist with future converts to the faith.
- c. Evangelical Communities
 - i. Develop a plan to reach out to nominal and fallen away Catholics, as well as welcoming newly arrived families in the neighborhoods by inviting them to neighborhood social gatherings to find out more information.
 - ii. Create a program of training for host families and missionary teams to be able to present the basics and answer questions in sessions.
 - iii. Coordinate the beginning of this movement with the construction of the new Church, to pave the way for new Catholics and returning Catholics to seek parish life.
- d. Organize the women's parish organizations (CDA, Women's Council & Guadalupanas) to be geared toward women's issues:
 - i. Advocate for the protection of unborn human life
 - ii. Support motherhood
 - iii. Advocate for Natural Family Planning
 - iv. Help provide catechesis against contraception and artificial means of reproduction

- v. Support women's vocations and those in formation
- vi. Fight pornography and the sex industry
- vii. Advocate against Domestic Violence (spousal & child abuse)
- viii. Defend traditional marriage
- e. Establish a Holy Name Society Charter for men in the parish as a tool for both spiritual growth and development as well as catechetical formation for men.
 - i. The charter will also be responsible to serve as the Vocations Committee for the parish
 - ii. A Junior Holy Name Society for altar boys would also be established.
 - iii. Direct the charter to advocate various men's issues
 - 1. Advocate for the protection of human life
 - 2. Support true fatherhood/manhood
 - 3. Fighting pornography and the sex industry
 - 4. Advocate against domestic violence (spousal & child abuse)
- f. Establish an organization for the catechetical and spiritual formation of young fathers known as the Apostles of St. Joseph.
- g. Establish a Young Adult Apostolic Outreach initiative.

V. *St. Elizabeth Society for Human Dignity*

- a. Continue to strengthen and develop a charitable organization dedicated to St. Elizabeth of Hungary (known for her love of the poor, the hungry and the sick) by which parishioners can contribute to organizations within our community that serve the needs of the poor, the hungry, children in need, and other such charitable works.
- b. Create a committee to decide to which charitable organization and institution will be granted parish tithe and contributions.
- c. Establish with the help of the Youth Formation Office a Christian Solidarity program for those in Sacramental Preparation.

This pastoral plan is presented appropriately during the Year of Faith as called for by Pope Benedict XVI and will serve as a guide for the carrying out of the New Evangelization at St. John the Baptist parish for the period beginning Easter Sunday 2013-2023. We commend our efforts to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the protection and prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Star of the New Evangelization.

The following pastoral plan has been written and implemented by:

Fr. Rodolfo D. Vásquez, *Pastor*
 March 31, 2013 (Easter Sunday)

ⁱ Pope Benedict XVI. *Porta Fidei*. 2011. 2

ⁱⁱ Homily of Pope Benedict XVI, National Stadium, Washington, D.C. April 17, 2008

ⁱⁱⁱ Bl. Pope John Paul II. *Discourse to the XIX Assembly of CELAM*. March 9, 1983.

^{iv} USCCB website on the New Evangelization

^v Ibid.

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- ^{vi} Pope Benedict XVI. *Porta Fidei*. 2011. 7
- ^{vii} Pope Paul VI. Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii muntiandi*. 1975. 14.
- ^{viii} Pope Benedict XVI. *Porta Fidei*. 2011. 5
- ^{ix} Homily of Pope Benedict XVI, Nationals Stadium, Washington, D.C. April 17, 2008
- ^x Weigel, George. *Evangelical Catholicism: Deep Reform in the 21st Century Church*. 2013. Pg. 36.
- ^{xi} Pope Benedict XVI. *Verbum Domini: The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*. 2010. 75
- ^{xii} *Ibid* 59.
- ^{xiii} Synod of Bishops XIII Ordinary General Assembly. *The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith: Instruementum Laboris* 2012. 13.
- ^{xiv} *Ibid*. 81.