

Parish Plan 2007 Accomplishments

In December 2006, we published our first Parish Plan. It was the result of many months of work and prayerfully bringing together the collective wisdom and expertise of staff and parishioners in identification of the issues and challenges that impact successful achievement of the parish mission and the Pastor's vision during the next 3 to 5 years. There are a total of eight goals within the plan, each with several objectives, and all goals are aligned to the key elements within our Mission Statement. The Parish Plan is available on the Parish website.

While the Parish Council is the driving force behind the plan's success, it is the responsibility of all parishioners, to unreservedly support the process by contributing as responsible stewards to the on-going success of this plan. The Parish Council looks forward to working with the Saint Anselm community to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in this Parish Plan. Your comments/recommendations are welcome and may be submitted to any member of our Parish Council.

Our Parish Plan was designed to be implemented over the course of 3-5 years, beginning in 2007. The intent of this report is to provide our community with the accomplishments realized in the 2007 Calendar Year.

Foster Personal and Spiritual Growth

Goal 1 - Enhance St. Anselm's program for Personal and Spiritual Growth. *St. Anselm's religious education program through confirmation age is very strong with active participation. However, there needs to be additional opportunities, increased awareness and coordinaton of existing programs and ministries that provide for continued growth and support.*

Accomplishments:

- Established a leadership program for grades 7-12 called Young Catholic Leaders. It is a training program for kids who want to volunteer in the religious education programs during the summer and on Sundays. They are also eligible to serve on sacrament preparation teams.
- Established a team to deliver 2-4 programs for whole community chatethesis during the year. In 2007, an Intergenerational event took place in December. The theme was 'Advent' and there were approximately 50 attendees. Another event is planned for February 2007; the theme is 'Lent'.
- Open all meetings with faith sharing made participative (by asking questions): 1) monthly prayer and reflections are available and distributed for use at all committee meetings; 2) Each month a "did you know?" flyer is part of the weekly bulletin containing ministry and liturgy information; 3) Young at Heart scheduled for a day at Stella Maris in November; 4) Parishioners to attend Bereavement Workshop; 5) Advent Wreath Gathering was held; 6) Adult Confirmation Classes were conducted on Sep 27 - Nov 15th; 7) we have an active RCIA Program; and 8) Mass of Anointing was conducted on Sunday, Oct 21st.
- Conducted annual Parish Retreat October 19-20, 2007
- Provide Prayer meditation materials: Daily Catholic Devotionals "Living Faith" are available and small books will be available for Lent and Easter.

- Conducted Small Faith Sharing Groups and Christian Yoga programs. These programs will continue in the new year.
- Conducted a Christian Rock Concert on September 7, 2007; featuring ‘Bread of Stone.’
- Formed a young moms faith sharing group. Christian Mom Meets the 1st and 3rd Fridays and the 2nd Saturday of each month. Flyer for MOMS group available in Registration Packets and also in Baptism Packets.
- Revamped our Baptism Program into a four-part program. Information is provided in the Registration packet.

Foster Justice and Peace

Goal 2 - Improve the ability of individual parishioners and the parish at large to take actions that will foster justice and peace in the community at large. *Fostering justice and peace is a significant action component of the Parish’s mission statement that defines the way the church of St. Anselm will live the Gospel. The current Parish environment needs to be improved to encourage and allow parishioners to express their concerns about issues limiting justice and peace in the community at large.*

Accomplishments:

- The Human Concerns & Social Justice (HC&SJ) Committee joined several alert networks; distributed two separate flyers on affordable housing and held a meeting to which all parishioners were invited; flyers on Darfur and Immigration were also distributed in the bulletin and placed on the Social Justice Bulletin Board in the hall. An information table for Immigrants and Refugees was set up in the foyer and is updated regularly. An email list is used to inform interested parishioners of happenings. Parishioners have attended prayer vigils outside of the Federal Detention Center, Elizabeth; others have rallied for peace and affordable housing at street vigils/demonstrations.
- HC&SJ Committee is reenergizing and expanding the 90 Second Letter. Their first letter on affordable housing went out in Jan 07. 800 letters were sent to various state and local officials.
- They are working to publicize diocesan sponsored and other peace & justice events and activities. An item on the 2007 Diocesan Convocation on Peace and Justice was included in the 2007 Easter bulletin with a flyer with more information. Several committee members and other parishioners attend the Convocation. Diocesan awards for both Human Concerns activities and Social Justice were put on the bulletin board along with two other awards.
- HC&SJ Committee is working to implement “Parish Twinning” and has chosen St Anthony's parish, Port Antonio, Jamaica. Committee members and one other member of the Parish Council visited the Parish and its 2 mission churches with the blessing of Fr Gene and all attendees at the 11 a.m. mass. A presentation was made to the Parish Council in November. A video was shown at all masses in Jan. The Pastor, Fr. Francis, will visit St Anselm's during Lent in 08. Parishioners will be encouraged to participate in activities with our sister parish.
- Conducted the Peace Logo contest; placing the winning logo on a T-shirt and offered for sale to the community.
- Conducted a Peace Mass.

Preaching the Word

Goal 3 - Continue to provide liturgies that encourage living the Gospel, invite participation and strengthen Parishioner's abilities to live their daily lives. *Liturgies at St. Anselm are an important part of the lives of most of the parishioners. Careful consideration needs to be given to their structure and conduct.*

Accomplishments:

- The Liturgy Committee performed a play at the 2007 Parish Retreat on the parts of the Mass and was very well received by attendees.
- The committee approved a pamphlet on etiquette at Mass to be distributed in September via the bulletin and in welcome packets.
- In fall 2007, the liturgy committee conducted mandatory training sessions for liturgical ministers in an effort to have new ministers trained for the beginning of the new liturgical in Advent.

Celebrating the Sacraments

Goal 4 - Refresh the way St. Anselm's parish implements the tenets established by Vatican II. *Over a period of time and with the addition of new parishioners there is a tendency to lose understanding of why St. Anselm's does things the way it does. Therefore, there is a need to reexamine and refresh the culture that exists at St. Anselm's.*

Accomplishments:

- A Lenten Speaker, Fr. Bill Bausch, has been scheduled for Lenten Evenings of Reflection - "Could you not spend one hour with me?"
- Regularly scheduled sacraments with St. Anselm parish community participation – all Baptisms, Confirmation, Communion dates were publicized on the Parish Calendar.
- Mass for the Anointing of the Sick was conducted October 21st.
- Note: we are working to conduct an educational series on the tenets of Vatican II.

Serving the Parish and the Community

Goal 5 - Improve service to parishioners and the community. *To take the parish to a higher level of service to its parishioners and the community, improvements are needed to make the parish more "user-friendly".*

Accomplishments:

- Note: Efforts related to this goal are underway for the year 2008; to include the establishment of a leadership training program to help develop committee leaders and the development of a comprehensive 2 -3 year facilities improvement and maintenance plan.

Goal 6 - Expand internal and external participation in parish. *With less than 50% of the families participating in parish activities and with minimal parish growth there is a need to establish methods and programs that will encourage active participation of those within the parish and the community.*

Accomplishments:

- Note: Efforts related to this goal are underway for the year 2008; to include conducting a survey of non-participating parishioners to determine their needs and Marketing St. Anselm's to the community at large as an open Vatican II Parish.

Goal 7 - Revitalize the financial aspects of being a stewardship parish. *St. Anselm has a strong volunteer base that gives its time and talents to operating the parish. As a stewardship parish with minimal requests for funds or discussion of finances, it appears that the increasing cost of parish operations is not being adequately being met by the collections.*

Accomplishments:

- Implemented Parish Pay in the fall of 2007. Provided information on this program to community during Time & Talent Weekend in September. Plan to have guest speaker during "Witness Weekend" in January specifically address the treasure aspects of being a Stewardship Parish.

Celebrating our Community Spirit

Goal 8 - Continue to find ways to retain St. Anselm's reputation as a welcoming and friendly community. *Saint Anselm's is known as a welcoming and non-judgmental community that takes pride in its spirituality and service. Retaining this community spirit requires regular recognition and awareness throughout the year.*

Accomplishments:

- The 35th Anniversary Mass was celebrated on June 10, 2007. The outdoor mass was celebrated by Fr. Gene and Fr. Bob. The mass was followed by a Parish Picnic. Additional events throughout the year will be sponsored by the various committees to commemorate the 35th Anniversary.
- Social Justice and Human Concerns Committee held a peace logo contest, and the logo with the most votes was selected. That logo was imprinted on T-Shirts which was sold throughout the year.
- The Spiritual Life Committee sponsored a Peace Mass on 22 Aug 07 to commemorate the 35th Anniversary and all attended were encouraged to wear their peace t-shirts.
- Published a 35th Anniversary Commemorative Parish Cookbook, which included the peace logo on one of the introductory pages. The cookbook was compiled by recipes submitted by parishioners and was made available for purchase to the community.
- The Parish Life Committee hosted the following events during the 2007 calendar year: Jan - Blessed Sacrament Choir Performance; Feb - Valentine's Dance; Mar - St. Pat's Party and Belmar Parade; Apr - Seder, Easter Vigil Reception and Easter Egg Hunt; May - Cinco de Mayo Dance; Jun - 35th Anniversary Celebration - mass & picnic; Jul & Aug - Parish breakfast; Aug - outdoor movie night for kids; Sep - Campout and Luau; Oct - International Dinner; Dec - St Nick Party and Sing along. Additionally, Coffee & Donuts weekend is hosted the third weekend of every month following all masses.