

Priority Plan FAQs

ORGANIZATION, STRUCTURE, AND COMMITTEE/TEAM COMPOSITION

GENERAL:

1. Will there be reorganization or restructuring of parish staff to reflect these priorities?

There are no plans to reorganize or restructure the parish staff. Each priority fits into the responsibilities of existing positions. As always happens, responsibilities and structures will continue to evolve to fit the needs of the parish.

2. If changes are suggested, does the Pastoral Council representative report to Father Straz? Who ultimately approves program development? How long do you anticipate approval to occur?

ALL Councils and Committees are advisory in nature, so any programs or program development is recommended to the Pastor; the ultimate decision rests with him. The length of time for an approved change to occur would depend upon many variables, including the annual calendar/season of the year, possible financial and budgetary commitments, and other factors. Please ask a Pastoral Council member if you have a specific project in mind.

3. Please explain what it means that priorities must be “complex enough that it can’t be delegated to one direct report”, and “requires cross-functional support” and define “cross-functional support”.

The Priority Plan is a five-year “journey” and provides a living roadmap founded on forward-looking, enduring priorities to reach the long-term goals of the parish in alignment with the Parish Vision. Pastoral priorities are “complex” in that they have a significant and far-reaching impact in both time and resources, and as such, require input and participation from a broad cross-section of the parish (people, funds, supplies, property, etc.). Priorities therefore cannot be delegated to one direct report. Careful planning and a strong commitment involving shared responsibility are required to ensure a successful outcome. Thus a “complex” goal becomes a simple vision that all can refer to on a daily basis.

“Cross-functional support” means it requires a group of people with different functional expertise and experience working towards a common goal. For example, it may include people with expertise in finances, operations, engineering, administration and organization, communication, and/or technology. It also includes people from all levels of an organization as well as those from the outside (e.g. consultants). One of the advantages of cross-functional support is it provides a unique opportunity to promote innovation and creativity through a collaboration process as team members with varied expertise and experience bring alternative perspectives to assessing problems and identifying potential solutions.

4. Why is our patron saint not a bigger part of our priority statement?

The short answer is that we should not have to presume that the Good News of Jesus Christ lived and proclaimed at a Catholic parish would NOT include the parish’s patron saint, especially the Blessed Mother! We made sure to reference devotion to the Blessed Mother in the Values section of our Priority Plan and included our central stained glass window of

the Mother and Child on every page of the Priority Plan so that it is unmistakable we are a Marian parish!

COMMITTEES AND TEAMS:

- 1. How many individuals are needed on each Committee/Team in order for our parish to achieve our vision/plan? Will there be a maximum number of members? Are members of the broader faith community needed for the new committees?**

Six (6) to seven (7) members (maximum is 7) will be required for each new Committee/Team and, with the exception of those members representing parish leadership (Pastoral and Finance Council reps, Pastor, etc.), individuals may only serve on one Committee/Team. As subsequent plans are developed and special expertise and/or skills are required, interim ad hoc groups may be formed to assist Committees and/or Teams; this may also include outreach to the broader faith community.

- 2. How many years will volunteers be expected to serve? How much participation is envisioned /expected of Committee members?**

Term:

Members of new Committees/Teams deemed as permanent consultative bodies of St. Mary Parish will have term limits of preferably two years (maximum term is three years) following Archdiocesan guidelines as outlined in the Archdiocesan Policy Manual, "Many Gifts, One Spirit." These include the following: Facilities Planning Committee (FPC), Faith Formation Committee (FFC), Stewardship Committee (SC), Service & Outreach Team (subcommittee of the SC), and Hospitality Team.

The remaining two ad hoc subcommittees, Fr. Auer Center (FAC) Upgrade Team (ad hoc subcommittee of the FPC) and the Adult Faith Formation Committee (ad hoc subcommittee of the FFC) will be dissolved upon completion of their assigned projects, estimated to be 18 months. In the event projects exceed the 18 months, similar to the permanent Committees, the maximum term for a member is three years.

Frequency of Meetings (ideal scenarios):

Monthly: Facility Planning Committee, FAC Upgrade Team, Faith Formation Committee, and Hospitality Team.

Bi-Monthly: Stewardship Committee, Service & Outreach Committee, Adult Faith Formation Committee

- 3. Why three (3) Subcommittees out of four (4) main Committees/Team (total of seven)? Are these special in some way?**

As noted above, ad hoc subcommittees have a narrower focus with a specific assigned project/purpose of fairly short duration (exception is Service & Outreach Team) after which it will be dissolved. These ad hoc groups are necessary to allow the parent Committee to focus on broader strategic actions and accomplishments necessary to achieve the parish Vision. The ad hoc subcommittee works under the auspices of the parent Committee.

- 4. How are Committee/Team members selected: asked to join, volunteer, other? Is there a format for parishioners to volunteer for specific committees that are of particular interest to them? Are there any qualifications for certain committees?**

Initial members of the new committees were identified by the Pastoral Council (PC) and reviewed with Fr. Straz, after which selected members received a personal invitation from a PC Representative. Parishioners interested in volunteering for a Committee or Team are welcome to contact the PC Representatives (listed on the last page) for the particular group you are interested in joining. The PC Rep will then follow up with you regarding membership.

Qualifications, such as knowledge and experience of the particular area or focus of the group, is preferable for some Committees such as the Facility Planning Committee. The overall goal, however, is to recruit a broad cross-section of parishioners where possible, to provide opportunities for participation and to provide a range of perspectives in identifying and implementing solutions. Consideration will also be given to parishioner involvement in the parish, devotion to our Lord and His Mother, and desire to serve in the capacity they are called to serve.

- 5. Is there a way to obtain more insight as to what each Committee/Team will be responsible for accomplishing? This will allow those who know their strengths to have a better understanding as to where they should volunteer.**

The Priority Plan report contains descriptions and information on each of the Committees and Teams (see “Our Priorities for 2018 – 2023” on pages 5 and 6 and “Our Foundational Ministries” on pages 7 and 8). Parishioners are also welcome to contact the Pastoral Council Representative (listed on the last page) for information.

- 6. Seven (7) Committees/Teams will require a large number of people. How do you plan to encourage more parishioners to become members of these new committees?**

Committee/Team membership has now been established. As additional members are required in the future based on term limits, formation of new ad hoc committees, and vacancies due to unforeseen circumstances, a request for members will be sought as needed in the parish bulletin and through personal recruitment.

- 7. How do you involve people who might only have sporadic/occasional amounts of time to give or work on anything?**

Achieving the Vision outlined in the Priority Plan requires a sustained effort to accomplish timely goals; this will require a commitment of time and resources by those serving on the Committees/Teams. While every effort will be made to accommodate those with limited availability, opportunities may be limited. At the same time, specific temporary projects may arise (like a grounds cleanup) related to committee goals that do not require long-term commitments. Parishioners are also welcome to contact the PC Representatives (listed on the last page) if you are interested in helping out.

COMMUNICATION

- 1. How can the parish better communicate everything the parish does with all parishioners, volunteers and program facilitators incorporating different means of communication (social media, website, etc.)? How do I know whom to call in the parish to get answers to questions that I have?**

Parish staff is currently looking at various social media sites, such as Facebook, to use in addition to our parish website and Constant Contact, and at other methods to push messages out to parishioners (such as group texting). Our goal is to expand our ability to reach all registered parishioners, keeping in the mind the needs of those parishioners who do not have online access or the ability to utilize the newer technology.

In order to communicate with the parish, please initiate your contact with the Parish Administrator (PA) in the Administration Office; you can do this by phone, email, or by visiting the office, and the PA will be sure you get the answers or support you need. Contact information is listed on the last page.

- 2. It looks like much of the detail of progress rests with the teams and committees. How will the parish see their direction and progress? How can we comment? How do the committees evaluate their progress?**

The Pastoral Council representatives on the committees, are accountable to the Pastor. Progress of each Committee/Team will be reported in the parish bulletin as milestones are reached. Each group will begin its work by establishing its own charter, which will guide their work and be used to evaluate their progress. Please contact the Pastoral Council Representative (listed on the last page) assigned to the Team or Committee of interest with your comments; the Pastoral Council Rep will then follow up with you directly as soon as possible.

FACILITIES and PROPERTY

1. What are the timeline and priorities for making needed upgrades?

Timeline:

- *By Mid-summer 2018: Complete review/update of all current facility recommendations and assessments for the parish campus (facilities, including the FAC, and properties).*
- *Fall 2018: Preparation of competitive bid process (Request for Qualifications followed by a Request for Proposal) to retain the services of a consultant and/or contractor. Selection process completed early 2019.*
- *Fall 2018 to Early Spring 2019: Recommend, finalize, and initiate fundraising plan*
- *Construction timeline: To Be Determined.*

Priorities:

1. *Upgrades to address facility and community safety and security;*
2. *Mandatory compliance with regulatory requirements (electrical, plumbing, building, seismic, etc.) including the American Disability Act (building access, space requirements, restrooms, etc.); and*
3. *High priority items identified in previous parish campus (facilities and property) assessments.*

2. Are funds currently available to finance facility needs? If not, where will the money come from and where does the money go? Are there limits and who controls them?

Current funds are not sufficient to finance all facility needs. Father Straz, the Pastoral Council, the Finance Council, the FAC Upgrade Team and the Facility Planning Committee are evaluating options to best secure the necessary funding for the broader facility and property improvements. Various funding options are being considered, from utilizing current savings to the potential of a capital campaign.

There will be regular updates in the parish bulletin and the Parish Annual Report, as steps are taken. In addition, Father Straz will be providing annual "State of the Parish" reports to keep parishioners informed and to address any concerns. The goal is to provide transparency regarding all facets of parish operations including the use and disposition of funds. Funding limits and controls are according to Archdiocesan Policy (available on the Archdiocese website: <http://www.seattlearchdiocese.org>).

3. How have donations for kitchen repairs received over several years been invested and/or utilized?

Donations for capital improvements of the facilities have been invested and not yet utilized.

4. In light of the current focus on the general need for enhanced security, are security and safety at the parish being addressed and analyzed?

Yes. Security and safety are priority considerations for identifying needed facility and property improvements. This pertains not only to our parishioners and visitors, but to the structural integrity and safety of our facilities as well.

- 5. Does the parish have “Standard Operating Procedures” (SOPs) to address who will communicate with whom (law enforcement and news media) and to what extent in the event of an incident?**

Yes. These procedures are critical to both safe operations and security, and ensure an effective and efficient response to any security or safety incident. In addition, the Facility Planning Committee and FAC Upgrade Team will be working jointly with the Parish Administrative Office to assess existing procedures in light of the growth of the parish, changing demographics, changing environmental factors, etc. and to identify any necessary improvements and/or procedural changes as well as training needs.

- 6. What improvements are anticipated for the interior of the church (e.g. soundproofing the cry room)?**

The Facility Planning Committee is still in the early stages of identifying necessary improvements. Priority will be given to safety, security, code compliance (including meeting and exceeding American Disability Act requirements), and high priority needs as identified in prior assessments.

- 7. Are there any plans to modify and/or move the Adoration chapel to create more space and/or enhance security and safety?**

As noted above, we are still in the early stages of prioritizing overall campus needs and hopes. The Facility Planning Committee will be assessing all parish facilities, including the Adoration Chapel, to develop a comprehensive improvement plan to meet current and future needs. Some considerations for improvements are adequate lighting, enhanced visibility, security, and accessibility. Consideration will also be given to the feasibility of adding more space to increase the size of the chapel to accommodate additional Adorers.

- 8. Will facility planning and upgrades consider/explore “green” energy conservation and “green” energy savings to defray utilities expenses, for e.g., PV solar, energy audits, etc.?**

Yes. Responsible stewardship is an integral and important part of facility and property planning and upgrades. We recognize that responsible stewardship includes not only giving of time, talent, and treasure, but also safeguarding and responsibly using material and human resources and receiving and cultivating God’s gifts responsibly.

- 9. Will the redesign of the Father Auer Center (FAC) take into account the need to move from a teaching paradigm to a witness paradigm (i.e. think outside the classroom box)?**

The FAC Upgrade Team is evaluating all options to best meet the current and future needs, values, and culture of the parish, with an emphasis on flexibility to allow our infrastructure to transform and grow.

- 10. Will we move forward with an individual to care for the day-to-day needs of the campus (facilities and property) or are we going to utilize the Facility Planning Committee to fill this role?**

The parish is currently seeking a Facilities Supervisor to oversee the operations, maintenance, and security of our campus. The Facility Planning Committee is a visioning body to assist the Pastor and staff and, as such, will not be responsible for the daily care of the campus. Until a Facility Supervisor is hired, the care of our beautiful campus will be the responsibility of everyone, but not the particular responsibility of the Facility Planning Committee. If you would like help out around the campus, please call the parish office!

FAITH FORMATION

- 1. Will the parish consider having family based catechesis, forming adults and kids at the same time?**

The Faith Formation Committee will lay the groundwork for making decisions about our direction as a parish for our Faith Formation program. There is discussion and interest in reconsidering how we do Faith Formation at St. Mary, including looking at a model that would form all ages together.

- 2. How can we strengthen the formation of our youth in order to draw in active participation and continued dedication to the Church as adults?**

The Faith Formation Committee will be exploring this question. One effort is to review and evaluate the current and past practices for faith formation and discern what direction our parish should go in order to help form souls towards the ultimate goal of heaven.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

- 1. Is the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program a part of Adult Faith Formation Team, or is it separate?**

RCIA is one of many programs under Adult Faith Formation (AFF), a subcommittee of the Faith Formation Committee. The AFF Team will be evaluating our existing RCIA program to identify any needed improvements, such as outreach to better promote the program, and effective follow-up to assist newly formed adults in becoming active members of the St. Mary faith community, including sharing their faith through evangelization.

- 2. To reach adults who work, could the parish offer some webinars they could watch at home?**

We are looking at all options. Thank you for the suggestion.

3. Are we going to use more social media for evangelism?

The Adult Faith Formation Team and the Faith Formation Committee will be reviewing, developing, and implementing creative and relevant approaches to enhance adult faith formation, which includes evangelization. Opportunities for utilizing communication, including social media, as a tool for evangelizing will certainly be among the considerations.

LITURGY

1. Will you define “review and renew liturgical practices” as well as how our liturgical practices will be renewed?

The elements of our Parish Priority Plan, welcoming, formation, stewardship, building community, growing spiritually, and becoming passionate disciples, will be a part of the ongoing liturgical review and renewal that takes place whenever there is a change of pastors. You are welcome to contact the Pastoral Council with any observations you have about how to improve our liturgical practices at St. Mary.

2. How are new acolytes and readers found, trained, and encouraged? How can our girls and women participate in the liturgy?

St. Mary Parish actively recruits both women and men for liturgical ministry to serve as lectors, music ministers, extraordinary ministers to Holy Communion, ushers and sacristans. Appeals are made at different times during the year and then training is provided. Anyone with interest in serving is encouraged to contact the parish office. If families have other observations or suggestions for how you would like to see girls and women serve in liturgical ministries, please contact the Pastor and he will gladly discuss this with you.

ADORATION CHAPEL:

1. How can we better showcase our Adoration Chapel? I’ve been here over a year and don’t know where it is!

We would love to move our Adoration Chapel to a more visible location to better promote it to visitors, to enhance safety, and to add more room than the three chairs that it currently holds. The Facility Planning Committee will be assessing all facilities including the Adoration Chapel to develop a comprehensive improvement plan to meet current and future needs.

2. Could we have a phone and email list of Adorers to more easily contact someone to fill in when you can’t make it?

Yes. This information is available for current Adorers. Please contact the Adoration Coordinator through the parish office for a copy. We are exploring the option of utilizing the Ministry Scheduler Pro on-line program to manage the Adoration schedule, to make it easier to find substitutes for that reason.

3. Is it possible to be an additional adorer at specific hours?

Yes, it is possible to be an additional adorer for specific hours. Please contact the Adoration Coordinator through the parish office.

4. Where would I go to sign up for adoration?

To sign up for adoration, please contact the Adoration Coordinator through the parish office. To learn more about Eucharistic Adoration and why we do it, please see the beautiful posters on the Eucharistic Miracles in the narthex and the Adoration info table below it. This information is updated each month.

STEWARDSHIP

1. Can we incorporate our pre-teens and teens in welcoming, stewardship and fun things in general to draw them in?

Absolutely! The second goal under “Vocations and Evangelization” in our Parish Priority Plan is to incorporate youth into every aspect of parish life.

2. Will the homebound visiting be a part of the Service and Outreach Team or the Hospitality Team?

Currently we have volunteer ministers bringing Holy Communion to the homebound, as well as volunteers visiting the sick as a part of the ministry of the Marian Helpers. As our Service and Outreach, and Hospitality Teams begin to meet and establish their charters, each of these groups of volunteers will fall under the appropriate committee.

3. Will you be providing notebooks for ushers and a listing of their duties?

Yes! The initial welcome we extend to everyone coming through the doors of St. Mary Parish is primarily the responsibility of our Ushers/Greeters as they are the face of St. Mary. Providing the tools for them to be successful will be a focus of the Stewardship Committee and/or Hospitality Team.

4. What kind of ecumenical participation will we have?

It is the firm desire of the parish to participate and reach out to other Christians in our area as we share our love for and our walk with Jesus. The Stewardship Committee will be making this a central component of St. Mary’s mission. Our Pastor has been attending meetings with other local community churches to exchange ideas regarding our faith-based communities and collaborating on efforts to reach out to and support the greater community with a focus on the needy.

5. Will the parish consider offering more multicultural opportunities, events, and liturgies for all ages?

Yes. The Hospitality Team and Stewardship Committee will be collaborating to evaluate, identify, and implement opportunities to embrace the wonderful, cultural diversity at our parish, as well as reaching out to parishioners of all ages. We are rich in our diversity and the goal is to celebrate it!

- 6. How are we going to attract moms with young children who can't come to committee meetings and may not be able to make arrangements for babysitting? I'd like to get involved but tend to feel shut out of things because it's difficult or impractical for me with my little ones.**

We need the voice of parishioners from all walks of life! Please contact the Pastoral Council representative to the Stewardship Committee and let us know where you would like to offer your input and what suggestions you have for your involvement, as well as ways the parish can better incorporate others in your position. There may arise projects where some parts can be accomplished at home, and we can discuss other means to support your involvement.

- 7. How can we encourage more parishioner participation, including our elderly, in various functions and activities at St. Mary, as well as more parishioner involvement in things such as: food donations for hospitality, assistance with coffee hour and receptions, etc.?**

These are important and valuable aspects of parish life, and are ones the Stewardship Committee and Hospitality Team will be working together to address. We welcome and are open to new ideas.

- 8. Can we start a pastoral home group?**

Father Straz is looking into this and is hopeful that this year's Faith on Fire Conference might jump start more small family groups.

SERVICE AND OUTREACH

- 1. What is the face of Saint Mary to the Anacortes Community?**

St. Mary has many faces to the community: our Pastor and parishioners, our ushers and greeters, the services we provide to support and help the needy, our Rummage Sale and Funeral lunches, our buildings (Church, Rectory, FAC) and property, our website, our parish bulletin, and so on. However, the true face of St. Mary is Jesus Christ, our Savior – it is His face that is reflected in our faces and our souls as we interact with the community as Disciples of Christ.

- 2. Is the vision of the Service and Outreach Team to extend beyond the parish to the community or to partner with an existing program in the community?**

The Service and Outreach Team is currently developing a charter which will include its Vision, Purpose, Values, and Outcomes and Goals. "Outreach" will certainly be defined to include outreach within our parish as well as to the larger community. Opportunities

for partnering with existing faith or other community programs will also be evaluated by the Team as part of service and outreach programs.

HOSPITALITY

- 1. With the growing cultural demographic, as regards to welcoming, will there be a closer focus on multi-cultural events and celebrations?**

Yes! We recognize and appreciate the changing demographics and this will be one of the main focuses of the Hospitality Team.

- 2. How can we provide a welcome and more support and opportunities for single, divorced, and single-parent populations within the parish across all age groups?**

We recognize these are areas where more opportunities are needed so that all feel there is a home and community at St. Mary that is inviting and welcoming. The Hospitality Team will be exploring options to provide these opportunities; if you have any suggestions or recommendations, please contact the Pastoral Council Representative on the Hospitality Team (see last page of the Priority Plan report) - we welcome your input!