

Introduction

The Long-Range Advancement Plan is a new comprehensive plan for St. Bartholomew Parish. This is a guide for those decision-makers working in parish development. Key decisions must be made now to assure future growth and vitality as the parish moves forward. This is a new Plan—identifying many challenges the parish faces, deciding what needs to be done about them, and then proposing specific directions that will help the parish advance its vision. The Long-Range Advancement Plan is also a working Plan in that the implementation will come from a newly-formed Implementation Team who will work to decide specific timelines, persons responsible, priorities, etc. The work and decisions made should go hand-in-hand with this working Plan.

This Plan is the culmination of twelve months of work by the Core Team and the Parish Planning Team. Input and recommendations were solicited from input sheets and a Parish Town Hall Meeting held on Sunday, August 17, 2008, in which parishioners from throughout the parish attended and offered suggestions.

Appreciation

The staff of the Institute of School and Parish Development wishes to thank the many individuals, especially the Core Team and the Parish Planning Team, who took the time to work with the staff of ISPD in an effort to create this Long-Range Advancement Plan for St. Bartholomew Parish. Special thanks go to Father Robert Farrell and all who helped in creating this report.

Development of the Plan

Responsibility for refining the Plan rested with the Core Team, which was made up of leaders from throughout the parish. The consulting firm, Institute of School and Parish Development (ISPD), facilitated the Plan, offered recommendations, and assisted in bringing it to the final product. As stated above, throughout the planning process, people in the parish were invited to be part of the many input processes. Literally hundreds of people from St. Bartholomew Parish have offered input in the following ways:

- One-on-One interviews in the Present Situation Analysis;
- Input from the Parish Planning Team;
- Input from the people who attended the input sessions;
- Input from those who handed/mailed in their input sheets;
- Input from the Parish-Wide Town Hall Meeting.

Plan Review

The Final Plan was submitted to the pastor, the Core Team, and staff on October 23, 2008. The priorities and recommendations should be presented to other parish leaders over the next few months through various communication vehicles.

Organization of the Plan

The Long-Range Advancement Plan includes the following components:

- Introduction
- Charts of the top 7 Challenges
- Planning Document
- Recommendations
- Implementation
- Addendum

The Overall Challenges

With Catholic parish planning for the new millennium, a Plan for St. Bartholomew Parish should express a collective vision of what the parishioners want their parish to address now and in the future. The central theme must center on developing the many ways in which people can be meaningfully invited and involved -- all within the framework of an organizational structure that coordinates with the recommendations of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

St. Bartholomew already possesses many exciting opportunities for its future. Although, there are also some key challenges that need to be addressed such as:

- Stronger knowledge of ministry opportunities;
- Commitment and involvement level of parishioners;
- Personal invitation from staff to parishioners to be an active part of the parish.

The Vision

A vision of the future for the parish is a matter of pride and concern to all. In presenting this suggested Plan, ISPD sought to express a vision for St. Bartholomew as a parish that already possesses many of the attributes and qualities needed to move forward in a positive direction. However, more than these existing assets, the

vision of St. Bartholomew Parish is one of realizing the potential of becoming an outstanding Catholic parish for all parishioners and the surrounding community.

The Long-Range Advancement Plan is the springboard into future growth. Besides offering organization, direction and strategy, it is hoped that this Plan will serve to guide more creative thought, more insight, and even future vision.

The success of this Plan rests in three areas:

- The ability to communicate the Plan;
- The ability to implement the Plan;
- The ability to use this Plan for future vision.

What the Plan Means for St. Bartholomew Parish

The many hours committed by so many people to shaping this Plan, attest to the desire for the future growth of St. Bartholomew Parish. The leaders of this effort have sought to involve the entire parish, demonstrating their commitment to a process and to involvement. This commitment is also evidenced by the broad scope of the Plan, addressing many areas of the parish and organizing them in such a way that will allow for easy implementation. The effort and time contributed by everyone committed to the betterment of the parish require that great care be taken in making decisions about what should be done and when.

In the future, circumstances will change and new issues will require modifications to the Plan. Some directions and strategies in this Plan will be unworkable and better solutions will be found to some challenges. More than any of its strategies or charts, the fundamental value of the Plan is in the demonstrated commitment to the betterment of St. Bartholomew Parish. The effectiveness of the Plan lies in the commitment of parish leaders to live out the parish's mission for the future, and to apply that mission to all future actions.

The Priorities of the Plan

Interestingly, the Top Seven Challenges that grew out of the planning process actually evolved over the past twelve months. With the interviews, the questionnaires, the Core Team, the Parish Planning Team, the input sessions, and the Town Hall Meeting, there were a number of challenges that emerged -- challenges that need addressing. The Top Seven Challenges are:

- Challenge A-1: How can we increase active participation of youth in liturgy and worship?
- Challenge D-1: How can we re-engage parishioners who are no longer active in the parish?
- Challenge B-4: How do we create an environment within Mass that welcomes more people and supports our faith community?
- Challenge B-2: How can we improve communication between all groups within the parish?
- Challenge D-3: How do we involve more of the youth in all areas of our parish?
- Challenge D-2: What can we do to create a welcoming environment that makes people feel that they are an integral part of the parish?
- Challenge F-1: How can we encourage all parishioners (young children, teens, single adults, married couples, families, divorced or separated, widows, seniors) to live a strong faith life everyday, to continue to strengthen that spiritual life, and make spiritual growth a priority?

Obviously, there are many other Challenges that were addressed over these past twelve months, and the key point to understand is that they all grew out of parish input. The Challenge priorities of this Plan clearly represent the needs of many parishioners in St. Bartholomew Parish.

Using the Charts

A set of blank charts are provided in the addendum section of the report. These charts have been designed as "working charts." The Planning Area Implementation Teams can use these to organize and track progress. *The following is an explanation of the components of those charts.*

1. Challenge

A "Challenge" is a question that is asked in regards to a specific Planning Area. It usually is seeking answers in terms of which direction we need to go.

2. Strategies

These are suggested actions to be taken place in order for the Challenge to be carried out. Strategy = Action Plan. How are we going to carry out the Challenge?

3. Budget

It needs to be determined here whether or not a strategy needs money in order to operate. Many strategies require no budget at all, yet others do need money.

The following suggestions are offered:

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| Yes | Means that the strategy needs money to operate. |
| Yes-SS | Means that the strategy needs money to operate; however, it is self-supporting. |
| No | This strategy does not need funds to operate. |
| TBD | It has not yet been determined who will be funding this strategy--to be determined. |

4. Person(s) in Charge (PIC)

This part will name the person(s) in charge or who could also be the contact for that strategy. The initials TBD are used; this indicates "to be determined."

5. Implementation Steps

These are the steps that need to be taken in order to implement a particular strategy.

6. General Timeline

- Begun
- In Progress
- Complete