

# ST. BARTHOLOMEW PARISH

## Recommendations

### ISPD Perspective

Over the past twelve months (November 2007 – October 2008), ISPD has had the opportunity to work with St. Bartholomew Parish in creating a plan that allows the parish to meet the stated challenges that it faces. Throughout this process, we have remained focused on one key objective: **to invite and involve people into the mission and vision of the parish.** With this as a guiding principle, parishioner input has been received through a number of vehicles: Development Assessment (DA) interviews, Input Sessions, Core Team meetings, Parish Planning Team meetings, and Parish Town Hall Meeting.

The above is important to note, because through this input, leaders of this process have been able to better understand the parish, the people, and the challenges. The recommendations that we offer are based upon ISPD's comparative analysis of key data, expertise, and what we believe is the very best for St. Bartholomew Parish. Furthermore, most of the ISPD recommendations are made with implementation of the Long-Range Advancement Plan (LRAP) in mind.

Overall, as we reflect upon the process, the following represents our commendations and areas of concern. These are intended to provide further perspective and insight as we anticipate a bright future for St. Bartholomew Parish.

#### Commendations:

- † Pastoral leadership
- † Core Team dedication and cooperation
- † Ability to create a responsive plan for the future
- † Willingness to invite and involve others
- † Enthusiasm created by the work on the long-range plan

#### Areas of Concern:

- † Communication of the LRAP vision to parishioners
- † Implementation of the LRAP
- † Continual invitation and engagement of people
- † Integration of the LRAP into the daily life of the parish
- † Utilization of the LRAP for parish spiritual growth and renewal
- † Maintenance of long-term momentum and energy

**Recommendation #1: Finalize Decisions on Recommendations.**

- With input from the Core Team, Pastor, and Parish Council, parish leaders should make decisions on the recommendations presented by ISPD. They should accept, reject, or amend them. These decisions need to be made as quickly as possible so further implementation can begin.
- Input can be received through open discussion of each recommendation and/or through individual written responses to each recommendation.

**Recommendation #2: Communicate the Plan (LRAP) and Recommendations to Parish Leaders and Others.**

- Based upon leadership approval and the final decisions made, the LRAP and the recommendations need to be shared with all parish leadership groups – ministry leaders, parish staff, Parish Planning Team, and others. Strategies and vehicles would include:

- † LRAP Brochure suggestions:
  - Letter from the Pastor
  - Brief history/background of the LRAP
  - Top Challenges
  - Recommendations
  - Questions and Answers
  - Implementation Plans for the LRAP
  - Invitation to Participate
- † Bulletin articles
- † Parish Web site
- † General Parish Assembly
- † Press releases
- † Pulpit Talks
- † Mass Presentations
- † Small group meetings
- † Parish Town Hall Meeting – 2009 and beyond

**Recommendation #3: Finalize the Work on the Parish Mission Statement.**

- Initiated through the work of the Core Team and presented at the LRAP Town Hall Meeting for examination, ISPD recommends that the Parish Mission Statement be evaluated and a final form be decided upon by December 2008. Upon completion and approval, the Parish Mission Statement should be shared with ministry leaders, leadership groups and parishioners. Discussion should revolve around making the mission of St. Bartholomew come alive in word, action and deed.

**Recommendation #4: Establish LRAP Implementation Commissions.**

- St. Bartholomew Parish should continue the present Core Team to include this new group, the LRAP Implementation Commissions. Over 300 parishioners have taken part in this plan; implementation must take place to call this a success.
- This Core Team, serving as key leaders and facilitators, should concentrate on the following initiatives:
  - Finalizing LRAP Implementation Commission membership from the following groups:
    1. Core Team
    2. Parish Planning Team (PPT)
    3. Town Hall Meeting Delegates – see information on Input Forms
    4. Interested parishioners
  - Choosing two co-chairs for each of the seven Planning Areas of the LRAP with consultation with the pastor. Those Planning Areas are:
    - A. Liturgy and Worship
    - B. Family Life and Youth
    - C. Outreach
    - D. Engaging Parishioners
    - E. Administration and Finance
    - F. Parish Wide Education
    - G. Buildings and Grounds
  - Managing the day-to-day implementation of the LRAP
    1. Small group facilitation
    2. Meeting schedule and timeline
    3. Role of the Parish Council
    4. Oversight and management of Commission strategies
    5. Execution of key strategies
    6. Communication to parish community
  - Communicating and celebrating the success of the LRAP

**Recommendation #5: Initiate Team Education and Training.**

- The Implementation Commissions and the Commission Co-Chairs should be educated and in-serviced in regards to the logistics of the LRAP Implementation. Areas that need to be covered are:
  1. Implementation of the LRAP – process logistics
  2. Decision-making
  3. Communication
  4. Team organization and dynamics

5. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of Commission members and the Parish Council
6. Agendas, minutes, meeting report forms, and group facilitation
7. Keys to success

**Recommendation #6: Concentrate on the Top Seven Challenges**

- The following are the recommended Top Challenges:

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?

- Being true to the Plan, the Top Challenges should be addressed first by the respective Implementation Commissions.

**Recommendation #7: Create a Timeline and Calendar.**

- By December 2008, a timeline and calendar should be established in regards to the Plan and the Recommendations. Parish leaders, as well as all parishioners, need to understand the implementation process and timeline with procedures and clear guidelines.
- A timeline is a great tool to ensure that implementation stays on track.

**Recommendation #8: Continue LRAP Parish Town Hall Meetings.**

● Every 18 months, the parish should conduct Parish Town Hall Meetings in order to maintain the viability and momentum of the Long-Range Advancement Plan (LRAP). The objectives of the Town Hall Meeting are:

- † Information giving and gathering
- † Identification of challenges that are facing specific areas
- † Input into those Challenges
- † Setting new priorities and focus areas
- † Recognition of volunteers
- † Celebration of the success of the LRAP

● The Core Team and Parish Staff would organize and execute the Town Hall Meetings.

**Recommendation #9: Continue Involvement.**

● In order for development to continue to stay viable, St. Bartholomew needs to seek ways to continue to inform, invite and involve all publics. Some ways would be:

- † Input Sessions
- † Parish Assemblies
- † LRAP Implementation Commissions
- † Parish Questionnaires
- † Parish Newsletters
- † Parish Annual Reports
- † Ministry Appreciation Events
- † Home Visits
- † Ministry Fairs
- † Social Events
- † Phone Inquiries
- † Parishioner Buddy System

**Recommendation #10: Establish a Parish Development Office.**

● ISPD recommends that St. Bartholomew consider creating a Parish Development Office, under the leadership of a Director of Development. This office would facilitate the day-to-day base of development operations for the parish. Clear goals, expectations and areas of accountability would need to be established. A Development Action Plan would need to be created. This would ensure the long-term viability of the parish development effort.

● Continue, through the momentum of the implementation process, the execution of a strong resource, people-driven, development effort:

- † Involvement of People

- † Public Relations/Marketing
- † Long-Range Planning (communication and implementation)
- † Total Stewardship
- † Special Events
- † Major Gifts
- † Capital Campaign
- † Communication
- † Planned Giving

**Recommendation #11: Celebrate Early and Ongoing Success!**

● On a consistent basis, success should be reported to and celebrated with the parish. The reporting ensures awareness and accountability, while the celebration affirms and recognizes the efforts of many talented people as we work to “allow the Kingdom of God to take root in people’s lives.”