

Re-Visioning Our Parish
A Pastoral Plan
Reaching out, Listening,
Building a Stronger Faith Community

Summary Report and Next Steps

Over the past year, our parish has been engaged in a project to involve our entire church community in a process of reflection and *self-evaluation*. We worked with Dr. Mary Ann Gubish, a nationally known expert, and other Parish Pastoral Councils. We surveyed the parish and held two assemblies. This report highlights what we heard from you and how it shapes the *vision* and *direction* of St. Agnes Parish's efforts as a Christian Catholic Community.

Planning Makes a Big Difference.

The process of *Re-Visioning* involves turning your ideas into long and short-term *goals* and *objectives* and developing a *plan of action*. This overall plan will help guide the parish leadership, so that we use our resources of *time*, *talent* and *treasure* as well as we can, and so that we become even better *stewards* than we are.

You Told Us that St. Agnes has a lot of strengths and meets a lot of the needs of our people. You also noted some shortcomings and ways we could be better *witnesses* to Christ and *servants* to others.

Read about them.

About the Family of St. Agnes

You noted these among our many strengths and things to preserve and to grow

- Our happy, energetic, supportive pastor,
- Our superior efforts behind major projects such as our annual Springfest and Parish Fair,
- Our willingness to be involved and work together,
- Our friendliness and dedication of our parishioners and our staff,
- Our beautiful, useful grounds and buildings,
- Our many acts of charity and our reaching out to the community in troubled times,
- Our efforts at the Re-Visioning process.

You, also, identified many areas for us to develop further or to improve, some things we should change and some new directions that we should take. Some of these are

- More spiritual education for youth and adults,
- More and better communication among groups and members of our parish and the general public,
- More active participation by youth in the spiritual life of the parish,
- More active welcoming of new or prospective parishioners,
- More outreach to inactive parishioners.

Your input gave us specific directions and mandates. So, we did some more work.

Parish Pastoral Council, working with Fr. Jozef, the Finance Council and the Stewardship Committee

- Examined our 1980's *Mission Statement* and rewrote it to reflect the unique features of St. Agnes *today*, our role in the community, what we stand for, and what we should be doing,
- Wrote *Five Key Goals* to be reached during the next 3 to 5 years,
- Took your ideas, digested them, condensed them, defined priorities and set 19 *specific objectives* for us to accomplish during the next three to five years.
- Then, we gave priority to 9 of these objectives for St. Agnes Parish to reach during the next year — by September 2006.

From Creed to Mission to Action

Each time we say the *Creed* we state teachings and beliefs of our Church. Our scriptures tell us that it is important for us to take action on these beliefs, just as Jesus took action, as did the saints over the centuries. They had a *mission* — a special purpose and work. And so do we.

Drawn from your input over the past several months our revised parish ***Mission Statement*** describes who we are and our overall purpose as a Parish. It reflects our values, tells what we are doing now, and attests to our vision and direction for the future.

Unless the LORD build this house, they who
labor, labor in vain. *Psalm 127:1*

Our Parish Mission Statement

The family of St. Agnes Parish living as God's people since 1870 welcomes all in faith, hope and love.

Guided by the Holy Spirit we center our faith and worship on the Mission of Jesus Christ.

We strive to meet the needs of all through ministry in thought, word and deed.

Seeking the participation of all and strengthened by the Sacraments, we are committed to nourish our communities through prayer, evangelization, education and service.

The Pastoral Plan for St. Agnes Parish

September 1, 2005 –August 31, 2008 Our Goals and Objectives

Working from more than 36 main ideas and themes, which you provided, Parish Pastoral Council discerned five key goals for St. Agnes for the next three to five years. At our second assembly, we enlisted the aid of the parish to set objectives for each goal. Parish Pastoral Council working with Fr. Jozef, then outlined steps and milestones toward their achievement. Below we have stated the goals and the objectives we have set for each.

GOAL: Create a welcoming environment for all our parishioners and visitors.

- Create *New Member Welcome Packets* to distribute to new or potential members by December 1, 2005.
- Sponsor a workshop by a specialist on the process of welcoming or "remembering" by February 15, 2006.
- Establish a *Welcoming Advisory Team* that will make recommendations to improve our outreach to current, new, prospective or non-participating members by Advent 2006; recommendations to be implemented by Lent 2007.
- Establish an *Outreach Team* to invite non-active members to become active by June, 2007.
- Make contact with and welcome at least ten new families/new parish members by Christmas, 2007.
- Contact at least ten inactive parishioners or families by Easter 2008.

GOAL: Provide religious educational opportunities for adults in our community.

- Sponsor one workshop by a specialist on a topic related to a specific form of personal prayer, church teachings, or the *Bible* by February 1, 2006.
- Initiate and conduct at least one *Bible* or other study group to meet regularly in the evenings by the beginning of Lent 2006.
- Offer seasonal faith sharing programs (Advent and Lent) for parishioners and guests by Advent 2007.
Authorize a work team to review materials and resources to make recommendations for implementing a continuing adult education program by January 2008.

GOAL: Foster a friendly atmosphere of participation and leadership

among our youth.

- Establish quarterly weekend liturgies designed and directed by our youth with the first occurring before January 30, 2006.
- Conduct at least one *Youth Assembly*, to gather specific information and discuss how to make our parish better by Easter of 2006.
- Host a training workshop for our youth, their leaders and educators by Advent 2006.
- Host one retreat for our youth conducted by specialists which the youth help to determine by Easter 2007.

GOAL: Implement a variety of communication systems in order to inform parishioners and the broader community of our activities.

- Publish and distribute a quarterly newsletter to all registered parishioners detailing the life activities of our parish; the first newsletter available by Christmas 2005.
- Designate a Public Relations Team to submit announcements about parish activities and religious services to the area newspapers, The Register and radio and TV stations by Easter 2006.
- Initiate a public relations study team that will develop an ongoing program to increase exposure of St. Agnes Parish activities by September 2006.

GOAL: Utilize a variety of liturgical approaches to enrich our worship.

- Host a liturgical workshop conducted by specialists for all our current and prospective liturgical ministers by June 30, 2006.
- Host an interdenominational prayer service by Easter of 2007.

...the LORD answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets... Habakuk 2: 2

Pastoral Plan for Year One

September 1, 2005 — August 31, 2006

We have decided upon the nine objectives below for the coming year. Some of these can be implemented soon and, perhaps, easily. Others will require, more time, effort and planning. All of them require your help.

1. Create *New Member Welcome Packets* to distribute to new and/or potential members by December 1, 2005.
2. Publish and distribute a quarterly newsletter to all registered parishioners detailing the life activities of our parish; the first newsletter available by Christmas 2005.
3. Establish quarterly weekend liturgies designed and directed by our youth with the first occurring before January 30, 2006.
4. Sponsor one workshop by a specialist on a topic related to a specific form of personal prayer, church teachings and the Bible by February 1, 2006.
5. Sponsor a workshop by a specialist on the process of welcoming (and/or) "re-membering" by February 15, 2006.
6. Initiate and conduct at least one Bible or other study group to meet regularly in the evenings by the beginning of Lent 2006.
7. Conduct at least one Youth Assembly to gather specific information and discuss how to make our parish better by Easter 2006.
8. Designate a public relations team to submit announcements about parish activities and religious services to the area newspapers, The Register and radio and TV stations by Easter 2006.
9. Host a liturgical workshop conducted by specialists for all our current and prospective liturgical ministers by June 30, 2006.

Our Work for the Next Year

Exercising Our Stewardship Sharing Our Time and Talent

Naturally, these nine objectives do not take the place of things that are already ongoing. You have suggested these ways to make our parish better. With your help, and **only** with your help St. Agnes Parish will meet these objectives — and as well as others. They are not going to be met solely by the Parish Pastoral Council, the clergy or parish staff. They are not going to be assigned to specific committees.

As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's Varied Grace. 1 Peter 4:10

At St. Agnes there is a ministry for everyone. There are opportunities for all of us to be stewards, to “be Christ” to others in our own personal way in today’s world. You are invited to make a commitment to work on one or more of these objectives. At the Second Parish Assembly some parishioners have already expressed their willingness to serve. However, for us to achieve our mission and to complete our goals and objectives, many more of us are needed.

There are dozens of St. Agnes parishioners who already give of their time and talents in countless and extraordinary ways. This is not a summons to them to commit even more of themselves. This is a challenge to, and an opportunity for, those who have not been as active in our parish community as they could be. We, all, are called.

**You are invited to offer your time and talent,
your ideas and energy, your experience and
wisdom to help St. Agnes Parish fulfill its
Mission, meet its goals and accomplish its
objectives.**

How will you serve?

Tell us how you want to serve.

As a body without a spirit is dead, so is faith without deeds. James 2: 26

At masses the first weekend in October, we will provide sign-up cards for you to offer your talents toward the objectives in the areas of your interests. However, you can let us know before these cards are available. Here's how.

Call or e-mail

Steve Murray, Parish Pastoral Council Chair

(570) 748-1053

smurray@lhup.edu

The Rectory

(570) 748-4594

stagnespa@adelphia.net

Jerry Cierpilowski, Re-Visioning Coordinator

(570) 748-3227

gcierpil@adelphia.net

Marie Lingle, Stewardship Committee

(570) 769-6575

wlingle@cub.kcnet.org

OR

Use the Parish Pastoral Council *Suggestion Box*
in the back of the church.

**This is important work.
Let us hear from you soon.
We can do this together.**