



Ave Maria Catholic Parish Strategic Plan (2017-2019) Version 5.0

Vision Statement

To Provide Ave Maria Catholic Parish members, visitors, and potential members, with a level of Community, Message, Worship, and Service that exceeds their expectations, and raises the benchmark for vibrant parish life.

Mission Statement

Provide a vibrant, faith-filled Catholic Parish where all are welcome to participate in our Community, Message, Worship, and Service.

Values Statement

Focus on Jesus Christ, Catholicism, Respect all People, Leadership, Communication, Enthusiasm, Teamwork, and Continuous Improvement.

Scope

Our scope is limited to: Ave Maria Parish members, visitors, and potential members.

Goals

- 1) Provide world-class parishioner services.
- 2) Create and maintain a parishioner sense of belonging.
- 3) Create a team-oriented environment that fosters parishioner's desire to participate.
- 4) Continuously improve our effectiveness.
- 5) Identify and measure the quality and quantity of our efforts.
- 6) Help our parish grow.

Objectives

- 1) Provide world-class parishioner services.

- 1.1) Consistently deliver service that exceeds parishioner expectations.
- 1.2) Oversee all parishioner project activities in order to provide world-class services.
- 1.3) Implement process improvement targeted at quality & responsiveness.

Strategies/Action Items:

- A. Develop a process to identify and reach out to non-practicing Catholics (no longer coming to church, who seem invisible, or who have fallen "between the cracks"), or implement the "Catholics Come Home Program" within our parish (whether this has resulted from a merger or not). [2018]

Complete.

The Peg McEvoy Diocesan Evangelization Presentation was conducted on 9-19-2017 at a Special Parish Council Meeting. The Parish Council then met on 10-17-2017 at a regular Parish Council Meeting, and after much dialogue, they decided to take Father Eppenbrock's thoughts on how to approach this unwieldy matter as



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our solution. 1) Do the best we can individually. 2) Pray. 3) Put it into God's hands. In addition, Sister Maria will provide the Parish Council members with the list of inactive Parishioners. If a Parish Council member knows someone on the list... they can try to befriend them, tell them that we miss them, and try to get them to become active, church going Catholics again.

- B.** Develop a program for parishioners who have recently lost a spouse or a loved one. [2017]

Complete.

Grief Recovery Program - Have you lost a loved one and are grieving? Let Ave Maria Parish help you in your time of need. We will present a Grief Recovery Program for one day a week about 1 1/2 hours for 6 weeks. If interested please call Kathleen Marschall at the St. Mary office at 810-622-9904 for more information and scheduling. This program will be repeated annually.

- C.** Develop processes to foster a sense of community and unity among all parishioners. [2017]

Complete.

- a) Giving Tree Program - This program, at Christmas time, helps less fortunate families from our area to celebrate Christmas with dinner and lots of beautifully wrapped presents under the Christmas tree. In addition, gift certificates and lots of foods are provided to help them get through the cold weather season.
- b) Volunteer Appreciation Dinners - For all those who volunteer at Ave Maria Parish, including but not limited to, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, lectors, altar servers, ushers, Women's Society, Men's Groups, Christian Service Committee, Funeral lunch helpers, Choir, Faith Formation and Youth Group helpers. To all who volunteer in any way.
- c) Funeral Lunches - At St. Denis contact JoAnn Martenka. At St. Mary contact Flo Husson.
- d) Dinner & Movie - Monday nights at St. Mary.
- e) Christmas Boutique - Christmas time at St. Denis.
- f) Christmas Boutique - Christmas time at St. Mary.
- g) Project Blessing - Lexington, Mi.
- h) Project Blessing - Carsonville, Mi.
- i) Books for Veterans
- j) Baby Pantry
- k) Coats for Kids
- l) St. Patrick's Day Dinner
- m) Right to Life Dinner
- n) Book Sale
- o) Bach Concert Series



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- p) White Elephant Sale
 - q) Baby Bottle Drive
 - r) Easter Baskets
 - s) Thanksgiving Dinners
 - t) Bingos
 - u) National Day Of Prayer (alternating between St. Mary & The Methodist Church in Port Sanilac)
 - v) Communal Anointing Of The Sick - November
- D.** Develop a clear "open door" policy where people can always reach us and set up a time to talk. [2017]

Complete.

The following verbiage has been placed within our weekly bulletin, and will be repeated weekly: "Any parishioner may come to share, express or question anything regarding Ave Maria Parish at a regularly scheduled Ave Maria Pastoral Parish Council Meeting. We are always available to assist you. Please call the Parish Council Chairperson: 810-622-8803."

- E.** Implement occasional "community forums" in which people are invited to come, share, express, and question. [2017]

Complete.

This item has also been satisfied by the "open door" policy above.

2) Create and maintain a parishioner sense of belonging.

- 2.1) Escalate assessment findings (from 5.3) and everyday issues to leadership.
- 2.2) Actively work as a team to effectively leverage resources.
- 2.3) Communicate openly with all stakeholders.
- 2.4) Disseminate pertinent parishioner information.

Strategies/Action Items:

- A.** Create events to which we might invite lots of people. [2017]

Complete.

- a) Super Bowl Breakfast - Super Bowl Breakfast held after the 8:30 Mass at St. Mary's Center in Port Sanilac. This event is hosted by the Ave Maria Youth Group. The Menu for the "Super Breakfast" is Pancakes, Sausage, Eggs, Bacon, Potatoes, Orange Juice, & Coffee. There is also be a Bake Sale. Come & Support our Youth Group.
- b) The Men's Group - Coffee & Donuts following the Sunday 8:30 AM Mass at St. Mary Center the second Sunday of the month.
- c) The Women's Society - The second Tuesday of each month for breakfast or lunch.
- d) Mardi Gras Dinner - Held at the parish center. Tickets will be sold at St. Denis & St. Mary Offices - \$10.00 per person, dinner being



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served at 5:45 PM. No tickets will be sold after the close of offices on Feb. 22. All proceeds will go to the Cros-Lex Project Blessing.

- e) Life Chain
- f) K of C Fish Fry
- g) Red Cross Blood Drive
- h) Prayer & Meditation Garden Club
- i) Italian Dinner
- j) Polish Dinner

B. Communicate regularly with all who participate in the parish in an ongoing way. [2017]

Complete.

- a) Ave Maria Parish Weekly Bulletin
- b) Ave Maria Parish Website - www.avemariaparishmi.org
- c) Ave Maria Parish MyParish App
- d) Text messaging under consideration

3) Create a team-oriented environment that fosters parishioner's desire to participate.

- 3.1) Create a parish environment that fosters positive morale and interaction.
- 3.2) Build needed competencies that foster parishioner growth.
- 3.3) Define and instill roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
- 3.4) Provide parish planning, leadership development mentoring, and training.
- 3.5) Provide current tools and technology to enable parishioners to grow and excel.
- 3.6) Implement measures to reward results and performance.

Strategies/Action Items:

A. Clearly identify a point person at the parish who is making sure outreach is being carried out by establishing a communications initiative for various ministry and outreach services currently available, and by reaching out to those in need. [2018]

In Process - A joint effort by the Parish Office Manager & the Communication Manager.

4) Continuously improve our effectiveness.

- 4.1) Identify and disseminate leading practices.
- 4.2) Implement cross-training to facilitate personnel backup.
- 4.3) Implement a parish that is "process driven".
- 4.4) Identify and implement cost savings.
- 4.5) Utilize change management methodologies.
- 4.6) Provide appropriate training.

Strategies/Action Items:



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- A.** Solicit parishioners to volunteer for liturgies – and develop schedules as ministers, plus related training programs. [2017]

Complete.

Lay Ministry Formation Process - The following has been placed within our church bulletin: Are you searching for something? Do you feel that you are volunteering for your parish, but not really ministering? The Lay Ministry Formation Process may be for you. The Lay Ministry Formation Program helps to give those that minister a foundation from which to minister from and a community to ministry with. From Feb. 1 until May 15, the diocesan Office of Lay Ministry will be accepting applications for those who wish to begin the program in September of 2017. It is a four-year formation experience designed for lay people who wish to expand their knowledge of Scripture and Catholic theology, deepen their relationship with God, and fulfill their baptismal call by serving others. Those interested may contact Kellie Deming, Coordinator of Lay Ministry at kdeming@dioceseofsaginaw.org, or call 989-797-6609.

- B.** Create and publicize a list of existing prayer groups, to participate in, and determine if there is a need for more. [2017]

Complete.

- a) Prayer Chain - This is now in effect. Please call Donna LaRose 810-622-8533 with your private prayer requests and she will begin the prayers. You can call the office if you would like it published in the bulletin. Names will remain on the list for one month, unless another end time is requested.
- b) Lenten Soup & Stations of the Cross
- c) Faith Formation
- d) Bible Study
- e) Scripture Meditation
- f) Vacation Bible School
- g) Vocation Camp
- h) Novenas
- i) Adoration
- j) Retreats
- k) Blessing of the Throats
- l) World Day of Prayer
- m) Youth Symposium
- n) Chime Choir
- o) Church Choir

- C.** Expand support for the altar server ministry, including exploring options for recruitment (e.g. both youth and adults). [2018]

Complete.

- D.** Recognize and document what gifts lay people truly possess. [2019]

In Process - Determine subtle way to accomplish this. Possibly at next Parishioner directory photo shoot, develop a questionnaire that requests email address, mobile phone number, and skills.



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5) Identify and measure the quality and quantity of our efforts.

- 5.1) Develop and maintain measurement processes.
- 5.2) Utilize consistent measurement techniques.
- 5.3) Conduct/facilitate quality assurance parish assessments.

Strategies/Action Items:

A. Complete an annual update of our parish plan. [2017]

Complete.

Since this is a "living document", an update is an ongoing process.

6) Help our parish grow.

- 6.1) Enable our parish base to increase through existing parishioner reference, everyday parishioner example, and by exceeding the expectations of all potential parishioners.
- 6.2) Solidify new parishioners with care.

Strategies/Action Items:

A. Establish a Communications Committee to work on improving communications across the parish (e.g. newsletter, bulletins, ministry pamphlet, outreach service contacts, parish website, email messages, My Parish App, text messages). [2017]

Complete.



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While pursuing our plan above, we will continuously refer to The Four Pillars of Forming Disciples:

Community

Disciples who form a diverse community of varied ethnic and national groups that share a sense of belonging to the formal institution of the Catholic Church.

Vatican Council II defined the Church as "a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all [humankind]." As members of the Church, each joins a community that comprises the Body of Christ on earth.

Message

Preaching, proclaiming, and teaching of the Gospel in order that it might be understood.

Worship

The "official" public worship of the Church, especially the Eucharist and the other sacraments.

Service

The "foot washing" mission of disciples which translates our words of love into concrete acts of service for especially the poor, the lonely, the imprisoned, the sick and the suffering.