

Strategic Plan and Guiding Principles for 2017 – 2022

Mission Statement of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Buckingham

Embarking on a journey of new beginning, we the faithful of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, affirm our Judeo-Christian tradition and our Roman Catholic Faith in communion with Our Holy Father, our Archbishop and our parish clergy.

We commit ourselves to:

- Worship God through the sacramental, liturgical and devotional life of our parish – especially the celebration of the Eucharist;
- Build a parish community that will cultivate the virtues of faith, hope and love;
- Provide ongoing formation in our faith through education and evangelization;
- Embrace stewardship of time, talent and treasure as a way of life in the service of all our sisters and brothers.

We pray to Father, Son and Holy Spirit through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of America, as we endeavor to reflect the light of Jesus Christ that shines before God's people.

Affirming our Mission Statement first published on December 12, 2002 on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, two and one half years after our being established as a parish on June 1, 2000, we recommit ourselves to building a foundation in faith by proclaiming that foundation and stirring into flame the gift of God. We work toward a goal of *making our community a vibrant welcoming parish family dedicated to growing disciples and making Church matter*. On behalf of the members of our parish, we the members of the Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Finance Council with faith and trust in God, proudly yet humbly offer this report on December 12, 2017.

This present strategic plan is to be read in the context of our previous strategic plan and its accompanying process which was the result of an in-depth evaluation of parish life initiated by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in the form of a required survey to all the parishes of the Archdiocese. Our Pastoral Council worked on this exercise during the 2011 – 2012 fiscal year. The document which resulted entitled, *Call to Conversion and Holiness: In-Depth Evaluation of Our Parish Life*, became the strategic plan in the form of Consensus Statements drawn from the Survey Exercise process along with a list of commendations and recommendations (action items). The Pastoral Council formulated a strategic plan tracking instrument to implement those action items. We believe that we have successfully addressed and implemented as appropriate

all action items of that strategic plan, save for a few, which will resurface as appropriate in the present strategic plan.

One of the major outcomes of the implementation process of the previous strategic plan was the establishment of the Parish Evangelization Committee, made up of members from both the Pastoral Council and Finance Council. As time progressed it was discerned that the best way to assist the Evangelization Committee to fulfill its task was to divide its charge into three key steering or working sub-committees. Members of these subcommittees were appointed from the Pastoral and Finance Councils along with other committed volunteers from outside the two main councils. These three sub-committees are known as:

1. The Outreach/Evangelization Committee
2. The Organization/Institution Review Committee
3. The Fiscal Responsibility/Stewardship Committee

These three sub-committees were key to the success of the completion of our previous strategic plan. As a part of the present strategic plan, these three sub-committees will guide the implementation of the goals and objectives of the present strategic plan, by working with the present committees and organizations of the parish, and when appropriate, creating new ones. These goals and objectives are based on the seven signs, listed below, of a vibrant parish as defined by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

It will be the responsibility of the Pastoral and Finance Councils to make sure the accomplishments of the first strategic plan are monitored, maintained and further developed as appropriate and necessary, as well as monitor and evaluate the success of the proposed goals and objectives of the present strategic plan. This document will be our guide over the next five years, 2017 – 2022.

N.B. This strategic plan is not meant to be restrictive in any way, but rather outlines the guiding principles in moving forward our parish goals and objectives. This document is designed to be flexible enough to adapt to new priorities as they arise, and which may not fit under particular category.

1. A Worshiping Parish

“The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the font from which all her power flows. It is therefore the privileged place for catechizing the People of God.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1074, Sacrosanctum Concilium, #12)

2. A Welcoming and Caring Parish

“The parish is a privileged place where the faithful concretely experience the Church. Parishes are called to be welcoming and fraternal ...attentive to the cultural diversity of the people, open to pastoral projects which go beyond the individual parish... The parish can be the source of great hope. It can gather people in community, assist family life, overcome the sense of anonymity, welcome people and help them to be involved in their neighborhood and in society.” (Ecclesia in America #41)

3. A Witnessing and Proclaiming Parish

“Evangelization is bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the Divine power of the Gospel itself. (Go and Make Disciples #10)

“The pastor...is to make every effort with the aid of the Christian faithful, to bring the gospel message also to those who have ceased practicing their religion or who do not profess the true faith.” (Code of Canon Law #528)

4. An Educational and Formational Parish

“The parish is, without doubt, the most important locus in which the Christian community is formed and expressed. The parish is also the usual place in which the faith is born and in which it grows...the prime mover and pre-eminent place for catechesis.” (The General Directory for Catechesis # 257)

5. A Parish Responsive to Others

“To live charity is a primary form of mission. The word proclaimed becomes visible when it is incarnated in acts of solidarity and sharing and in gestures that concretely demonstrate the face of Christ, the true friend of humanity.” (Pope Benedict XVI, Papal Address May 26, 2009)

6. An Effectively Administered Parish

“Today, the pressing pastoral task of the new evangelization calls for the involvement of the entire People of God, and requires a new fervor, new methods and a new expression for the announcing and witnessing of the Gospel. This task demands priests who are deeply and fully immersed in the mystery of Christ and capable of embodying a new style of pastoral life, marked by a profound communion with the pope, bishops and priests, and a fruitful cooperation with the lay faithful, always respecting and fostering the different roles, charisms and ministries present within the ecclesial community.” (John Paul II, *On the Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day* #38)

7. A Gifted Parish, Living Responsibly

“The Christian faithful are obliged to assist with the needs of the Church so that the Church has what is necessary for divine worship, for apostolic works and works of charity and for the decent sustenance of ministers.” (Code of Canon Law #222)

“As Christian stewards, we receive God’s gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.”
(Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops)

Goals and objectives for the next three to five years:

We commend our initiatives and accomplishments listed in our previous strategic plan. In order to assist us in fulfilling our mission in order that we may continue to be *a vibrant welcoming parish family community, growing disciples and making Church matter*, and continue to respond to our pastoral needs, we propose the following recommendations:

Outreach/Evangelization Committee

- Increase attendance and participation at all Sunday Masses with a goal of increasing attendance and active participation by another 20% over the next five years.
- Evaluate and recommend a marriage preparation program in coordination with the parish clergy in order to prepare couples for a grace and joy filled marriage in the Catholic Church.
- Expand our out-reach to the family members of the Spanish speaking cultures of our parish in order to provide sacramental and educational needs as well as other assistance as appropriate.
- Expand programs sponsored by the Adult Faith Formation Committee in order to increase new members.
- Enhance our use of technology to address the needs of the various age groups in our parish.
- Assist Pastoral Council to monitor and implement *Remain in My Love: Archdiocese of Philadelphia Initiative for the Renewal of Marriage and Family Life*.

Organization/Institution Review Committee

- Evaluate present infrastructure of the institution and propose a plan of *standard operating procedures*.
- Monitor present ministries, organizations and committees of the parish to insure: new recruitment, succession of leadership, development and on-going education.
- If debt has been significantly reduced by this time **consider** conducting a feasibility study at the appropriate time (fiscal year 2020-2021) regarding the needs as they develop, to build a Parish Educational Center and Sports Complex on the lower end of the property.
- Assist Pastoral Council to provide proper committee support to implement *Remain in My Love: Archdiocese of Philadelphia Initiative for the Renewal of Marriage and Family Life*.

Fiscal Responsibility/Stewardship Committee

- Update and modify fiscal plan to fully support parish mission/strategic plan and all our pastoral needs including: operating and extraordinary expenses along with significant debt reduction.
 - o Increase efforts to modify and better publicize memorial opportunities in order to fulfill the iconographic art schedule of completing the church, chapel and courtyard.
- If debt has been significantly reduced by this time ***consider*** conducting a feasibility study at the appropriate time (fiscal year 2020-2021) regarding the needs as they develop, to build a Parish Educational Center and Sports Complex on the lower end of the property.
- Assist Pastoral Council to financially support activities associated with *Remain in My Love: Archdiocese of Philadelphia Initiative for the Renewal of Marriage and Family Life*.

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