

**Five Year Plan: 2013-2018: St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish
JUNE 2015**

Year III Report – Looking Toward the Jubilee Year of Mercy

Background:

Following our Jubilee Year (2012), we held a parish-wide Spirituality Survey which surfaced many needs (2013). Based on the Survey, the Team and Council developed 7 Goals for the next five years (2013-2108). Each year the Team and Council review the “accomplishments” of the past year, and set attainable goals for the coming year as the Five Year Goals remain our focus. Year I (2013) began the five-year process. Last year, Year II (2014) allowed us to reflect on the first year. We are now looking forward to Year III (2015) and present to the parish this on-going reflection on this process of strengthening our parish community.

GOAL 1: Sunday Eucharist is the center of our parish. We will review, evaluate and strengthen the celebration of our liturgies.

GOALS 2013-2014

- Use the Spirituality Survey and take an initial look at each of the four Sunday masses.
- Revisit bi-monthly baptism liturgies.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2013-2014

1. New sacristan was hired and continues learning the details of liturgies throughout the church year.
2. Feedback was gathered concerning the experience at parish baptisms: continue to have music at the celebrations, to be welcoming, to keep the liturgy as intimate as possible, and to assist the celebration ministry team members with clear instructions about the liturgy.

GOALS: 2014-2015

1. Establish the Altar Flower Ministry to coordinate enhancing the liturgies, especially at Christmas and Easter.
2. Develop a questionnaire or survey which will elicit information concerning the experience of parishioners at each of the four Sunday masses.

3. Implement recommendations made regarding baptism liturgies.
4. Choose the new hymnal, to be implemented the following year.
5. Investigate the workability of completing the organ.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2014-2015

1. Altar Flower Ministry now oversees Christmas, Easter and some of the parish special occasions. Open invitation to parishioners to assist in decorating the church was well-received and a good experience of community. The youth were especially pleased to be an active part of this experience.
2. A subcommittee of the Pastoral Council developed a worksheet concerning participation and familiarity of music at masses. The subcommittee members, Fr. Frank, Virgil and the cantors evaluated all masses for two months. Findings included the good quality of music and participation, the wide spectrum of personal preferences, and ways the presiders can enhance participation. Results were shared with the Council, Pastoral Team and music ministry.
3. Mass attendance this past year has increased, especially due to the weekly commitment of the Confirmation candidates and their families to participate in the Eucharist in preparation for their celebration of Confirmation.

GOALS: 2015-2016

1. Use Sunday mass as an opportunity to reflect and celebrate the gifts of God's mercy during the Jubilee Year which begins on December 8, 2015.
2. Continue to catechize the parish, especially the parents and students, on the centrality of the Sunday Eucharist. This may call for parish-wide catechesis, use of parent/student meetings, catechist workshops, video materials, etc.
3. Find ways to evaluate the quality of Welcoming at our Sunday masses, especially supporting the ministry of the ushers.
4. Integrate teens into Sunday liturgy through ministries and presence, e.g., readers, greeters, etc.
5. Use Sunday liturgies as a more consistent way to communicate with the young people of the parish, especially those preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

GOAL 2: Evangelization is an essential part of our mission. We will educate one another about how to evangelize and ensure that all in our community feel welcome.

GOALS 2013-2014

- Establish a group of parishioners to discuss our mission as “evangelizers,” those who invite, welcome and encourage participation in the Church.
- Join with the diocesan-wide Evangelization Campaign “Belong More Deeply” in the fall.
- Find ways to deepen the registration process for new parishioners.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2013-2014

1. An initial Evangelization Committee was established to explore ways to implement the diocesan “Belong More Deeply” initiative. The group did very good brainstorming and may be ready at some point to make concrete recommendations.
2. The registration process for all new parishioners continues to be one-on-one with a clear personal focus. New parishioners are put into direct contact with Team members to share Time and Talent, as well as meet any needs.
3. The Pastoral Council updated and revised the 2004 Mission and Vision Statement.
4. The Stewardship Committee expanded their presence at hospitality after masses to an “Information Table” to handle a wider range of questions and needs.

GOALS: 2014-2015

1. The Pastoral Council will focus on the following issues: the parish as more welcoming to all people, the sharing of Time and Talent, and the “interconnectedness” of all our parish ministries.
2. Expand the adult formation of new parents through the Baptism Preparation Class.
3. Investigate ways to have new members meet with other parishioners to share experiences, stories of the parish and details about parish life.
4. Encourage the Evangelization Committee to make recommendations for outreach and welcome to those who do not regularly come to church.

5. Hold the biennial Parish Picnic this September.
6. Consider arranging for musical-cultural events.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2014-2015

1. The Pastoral Council hosted a general meeting of all ministry heads and shared best practices for meetings, new members and ways of working with other parish ministries.
2. The Council is working on a full revision of the Ministries Booklet, with particular sensitivity to new parishioners. The booklet will help them by being clear, understandable and accessible.
3. The Council considered directions for evangelization: (1) Arise International presented to the Council, (2) draft of the Synod on the Family was studied and (3) "The Face of Mercy" was discussed and the Jubilee Year of Mercy.
4. The Picnic was held in September with approximately 700 people in attendance. We hope to schedule the next parish picnic in September of 2016.
5. The Stewardship Committee has found the "information table" at monthly hospitality being more visited, more new parishioners registered and questions answered or forwarded to the Pastoral Team.

GOALS: 2015-2016

1. The Council will host a meeting of all ministry chairs and build on the good work of the fall 2014 meeting.
2. Sunday Mass, as described above, will be a focus for catechesis, evangelization, and welcome.
3. The Jubilee Year of Mercy will be an opportunity to reflect on our pastoral practices through Pope Francis' Joy of the Gospel and The Face of Mercy. Beginning in the fall, we will initiate a parish-wide process to prepare for the Jubilee Year of Mercy.
4. Begin planning for the parish 55th anniversary (2017), with special focus on welcoming, inclusion and outreach to the community.

GOAL 3: Communication and active involvement are growing challenges. We will strengthen communication among parish leaders, seek more

effective ways to reach all parish households, and encourage all to share their time and talent.

GOALS 2013-2014

- Re-envision the bulletin for a more welcoming “tone.”
- Begin to expand our parish digital communication.
- Expand the role of the “information” table at hospitality.
- Investigate parish data systems with the goal of expanding means of communication and coordination of parishioner information.
- Be conscious of communicating events and ministry opportunities to a wider variety of parish groups and ministries, especially Senior Group and Family Program.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2013-2014

1. The bulletin was re-formatted to emphasize the welcoming nature of our parish, especially about sacramental celebrations. Staff members were highlighted for easier access to contact information.
2. More digital communication was used for the whole parish and in particular Religious Education through “Constant Contact.” The website was used for emergency notifications as well.
3. A professional website coordinator was brought on to maintain the website and work on upgrading and re-formatting areas of the site.

GOALS: 2014-2015

1. Publicize and personally invite parishioner participation in the RCIA Team and Adult Confirmation processes.
2. Create a mobile website so that parishioners can more easily access pertinent information on mobile devices.
3. Re-establish a website committee with the charge to gather information, photos and materials from all parish groups so that the site is updated with more personal and welcoming items.
4. Investigate the data systems now available for parishes.

5. Develop a specific area of the website that is designed for those interested in becoming a member of the parish.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2014-2015

1. The website was redesigned this past fall with special attention to the ease of finding information about the parish. A “mirror” website was established so that the site can be easily viewed on mobile devices.
2. Religious Education materials (policies, registration forms, brochures) are now available on the website.
3. Constant Contact is used throughout the year, especially for emergency notifications for Religious Education, reminders of holydays of obligation and major holidays.

GOALS: 2015-2016

1. Use the website as a means to catechize on the centrality of the Sunday Eucharist.
2. Encourage more parish ministries to contribute information and materials for the website.
3. Revisit last year’s goal about the specific area of the website for new parishioners.

GOAL 4: Spiritual Formation is a lifelong journey. We will develop a cohesive vision of parish faith formation that includes the wide spectrum of persons and families in our parish, “i.e., womb to tomb.”

GOALS 2013-2014

- As a response to the Spirituality Survey, hire a Director of Adult Formation.
- Establish a group of parishioners to discern workable models of adult formation in light of the Survey’s strong concern that “we don’t have enough time” and a felt need for more programs. Review current adult faith formation in the parish.
- Continue to invite all parishioners to the 3 adult courses offered four times a week, and schedule information evenings during the fall and spring.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2013-2014

1. The Pastoral Council used the Spirituality Survey used throughout the year – highlights, interpretations and implementation.

2. The new Director of Formation began in September, 2013.
3. The Adult Formation Committee hosted a number of focus sessions to gather more precise details from the survey regarding the pressures on people's time and the call for more formation opportunities. Recommendations were made and accepted.
4. More than 500 adults participated in the 12 weekly sessions of faith formation held throughout the year, family program parents and a growing number of other parishioners. More than 100 participated in bible study after Easter.
5. Special information and formation evenings were held throughout the year, including Marriage and Annulments, Adolescent issues, teaching skills and caring for the caregiver.

GOALS: 2014-2015

1. Implement the recommendations of the Adult Faith Formation Group.
2. Continue to enrich the Confirmation process by challenging families to live out their faith by weekly Mass attendance and concrete service to the poor.
3. Re-design the curriculum from a 22-week program into 4 five-week mini-courses so that, in response to the Survey, this format will be more accessible to parishioners.
4. Expand the adult formation of new parents through the Baptism Preparation Class.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2014-2015

1. The Confirmation Preparation Program was revamped: new materials, books, use of video discussion presentations, variety of ways to engage in service. Sunday Mass as the weekly way to prepare for the celebration of Confirmation was emphasized; confirmandi were accountable through a sign-in each week.
2. Adult Formation through the Family Program sessions was redesigned using the recommendations of the Spirituality Survey. Three tracks of 22-weeks became 4 different courses throughout the year, thus creating 12 adult ed courses offered 4 times a week. These options attracted more participants.
3. The Baptism Preparation program was reviewed. Finding included: declining number of baptisms, difficulty of new parents in finding the time away from the family. This is a very challenging segment of the parish to evangelize.

GOALS: 2015-2016

1. Confirmation Preparation will benefit from the increased involvement of the Youth Minister.
2. A further twelve new adult education courses will be offered in the fall and spring, with 4 options each course (Monday afternoon, Tuesday afternoon and evening, Wednesday afternoon).
3. Take a small step in reaching out to the young families who have joined our parish, especially because of baptisms. Find a practical way to reach out to the parents of the newly baptized, e.g., letter on the first anniversary.

GOAL 5: Youth and young families are the future of our parish. We will continue to find ways to stir the imaginations of our young people, their parents, and young families.

GOALS 2013-2014

- Hire Youth Minister and “jumpstart” youth ministry.
- Expand Baptism Ministry and begin to develop ways of follow-up and support.
- Enrich the Confirmation preparation and process for middle schoolers.
- Work to re-establish the Family Celebrations Committee.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2013-2014

1. Youth Minister was hired at the end of the summer and met regularly throughout the year. The Youth Group focused on (1) socializing and friendship, (2) work with the poor and (3) catechesis and prayer.
2. The new Director of Confirmation oversaw the program this year, worked closely with the catechists for advice and direction, and evaluated the current program.
3. The Family Celebrations Committee was able to be re-established at the end of May 2014 with parishioners willing to work on this ministry.

GOALS: 2014-2015

1. Establish a Baptism Peer Ministry where parents welcome and share faith with young parents, assisting their integration into the parish faith community.
2. Investigate the use of new materials for grades K through 6 (Our Sunday Visitor – Alive in Christ) re-envisioning catechist training and curriculum planning.

3. Restructure Family Program adult class offerings to include a broader spectrum of subjects in 4 to 5 week time frames.
4. Offer concrete ways for young parents to share their Time and Talent by facilitating VIRTUS training sessions for parents in Family Program.
5. Hire a new youth minister.
6. Support the newly re-established Family Celebrations Committee in planning for this year.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2014-2015

1. New program materials (Alive in Christ) went very well.
2. Two in-service workshops were provided to catechists with representatives from the publisher to assist in understanding a different approach to catechesis (divine pedagogy) and to encourage the use of on-line resources. Each grade level curriculum was reviewed and revised by revising lesson calendars.
3. New members were recruited for Family Mass, Joy and Justice, and Special Needs religious Ed.
4. Classroom space increased dramatically with the departure of our tenant. Classrooms were equipped with necessary seating and audio visuals.
5. The new Youth Minister began work in the fall and worked to re-start the program. Weekly meetings, service to the poor, prayer and community-building were emphasized. The Living Stations of the Cross was once again led by the Youth Group on Good Friday.

GOALS: 2015-2016

1. Organize the materials gathered over the past six years for Special Needs program. Investigate the feasibility of "2 tracks" to accommodate the growing number of participants.
2. Update the Family Program brochure to reflect the enhancements over the past few years.
3. Monitor the results of the Synod on the Family and be attentive to the Jubilee Year of Mercy and determine its impact on the Family Program.
4. Continue to grow youth ministry program from a solid, clear vision statement.

5. Deepen involvement and connection with Middle Schoolers, e.g. retreat, encouragement for weekly mass, some events, etc.
6. Strengthen youth ministry's adult leadership and support.

GOAL 6: Outreach to the poor is a primary parish charism. We will work to strengthen our direct services to the poor and the needy.

GOALS 2013-2014

- Hire a new Director of Parish Social Ministry.
- Use the coming year as a time of learning, with emphasis on what we do well and what we can do better.
- Re-establish the Pasta Dinner as a way to raise consciousness and support for the local homeless.
- Find ways to connect with the broader Church and community to enhance our awareness and support of the poor.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2013-2014

1. The new Director of Parish Social Ministry was hired in September and has spent the year learning the details of the parish social ministry programs and assessing what works well and how we can serve the poor better.
2. The Pasta Dinner was held in October and was experienced by all as a great success. Not only was the night well-attended and a generous donation given to HIHI, but it heightened the awareness of all to the plight of the local homeless and gave people the concrete opportunity to assist the needy.
3. The Driving Ministry was reorganized and now reaches out to those who especially need help in transportation to medical appointments.
4. Connections were made so that cooperation has been enhanced with local parishes and the St. Vincent de Paul Society.
5. A wide spectrum of church and civic conferences offered the Director ways to connect with the broader Church and community and has enhanced our work with the poor.

GOALS: 2014-2015

1. Focus on education concerning the local resources available to serve the needy (e.g., town, state, federal and other churches).
2. Invite the youth, especially teenagers, to be educated about Catholic Social Teaching and give them hands-on work with the poor and needy.
3. Discern what support groups are needed at this time in our parish (as a response to the Survey which called for “more support groups”).
4. Develop a concrete plan of converting the Spiritual Life Center into a facility where the parish can offer more direct services to the poor and the needy.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2014-2015

1. The resignation of the Director in the fall called for a Search Committee of core workers, who interviewed during the winter. The new Director began work at the end of March. The job description was modified to a part-time position with focus on the Outreach component of our social ministry. With the departure of the Director, plans for the Spiritual Life Center were not investigated.
2. The youth have been more involved in social ministry through the work of the new Youth Minister. Service has been a strong focus throughout the year.

GOALS: 2015-2016

1. The new Director will continue learn the daily details of outreach throughout the coming year and meet the ministry chairs who are coordinated by PSM.
2. We will actively recruit additional core workers and participate in the Catholic Charities core worker training.
3. Review procedures in the office to ensure that all clients are treated fairly and according to the Catholic Charities guidelines.
4. Strengthen Eucharistic Ministry to the Homebound by actively seeking more Eucharistic ministers who are able to bring Communion to the sick in their homes.

GOAL 7: Connection to and support of our diocese are essential components of our parish. We will deepen our awareness of the broader Church and find ways to meet our annual Catholic Ministries Appeal goal.

GOALS 2013-2014

- Use the bulletin and website for regular communication and awareness of the CMA.
- Coordinate the diocesan CMA schedule with the parish schedule.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2013-2014

1. Bulletin has been used for parish education, mailings have been coordinated with the diocesan appeal office. The website houses the bulletin and contains the same information.
2. This year we have added a special weekend at the end of June for the CMA and next year dates are now on the parish calendar for the winter and spring of 2015. Dates are carefully coordinated with parish Stewardship.

GOALS: 2014-2015

1. Open the 2015 CMA campaign through means that will capture the imagination of the parish community, e.g., special speaker, multimedia presentation, etc.
2. Bring our parish closer to at least over 50% of the goal.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2014-2015

1. The Catholic Ministries goal was met for 2014, and the parish realized a considerable rebate.
2. The CMA video presentation was presented at parish masses this spring, with diocesan representative available for questions.

GOAL: 2015-2016

Using the momentum of the past year, bring our parish as close as possible to meet the goal for 2015 and again benefit from the rebate.

This Report was discussed at the annual joint meeting of the Pastoral Council and the Pastoral Team on June 1, 2015.

It will be published on the parish website and the bulletin.