



ST. CHRISTOPHER

A NEW CENTURY OF SERVICE

Established in 1922, St. Christopher Parish continues to be a vibrant Catholic community proudly serving the people of Rocky River for nearly a century. With our Parish Centennial quickly approaching, we celebrate our proud past and strive to provide for our future. To help us grow in living and spreading the gospel, during the Fall of 2018 we launched a comprehensive planning process entitled: *St. Christopher: A New Century of Service*.

The purpose of our planning process is four-fold:

1. Evaluate the present quality of Saint Christopher parish life and ministry
2. Discern unmet needs in the community and parish (spiritual, social service, etc.)
3. Find ways to enhance parishioner engagement and create missionary disciples
4. Establish clear priorities for the future

An initial planning team was formed from the Parish Pastoral Staff, the Parish Pastoral Council, the Parish Finance Council, and DeLambo Consulting Firm. David DeLambo was formerly on the staff of the Cleveland Diocesan Pastoral Planning Office.

A survey assessing various aspects of our parish life and ministry was administered in October 2018. In all, a total of an impressive 1,177 people responded to the survey: 859 (73%) in printed form and 318 (27%) online! The feedback and findings of the parish survey combined with the discernment of the Parish Pastoral Staff and the Parish Pastoral Council form the basis of our plan. What follows are seven goals to support our plan over the next three years.

1. Improve welcoming and community building activities

To do this we will...

- *Assure that the new parishioner interview process includes current information regarding ministries and social groups that match their gifts, needs and interests*
- *Form a committee to discern a plan to expand the procedure of welcoming new parishioners*
- *Create social activities, spiritual experiences, service opportunities and groups that are specifically designed to bring peers (in terms of age or life circumstances) together*
- *Develop the ministry or the role of "greeter" to the ministry of ushering*

2. Increase the percentage of parishioners who are highly active

To do this we will...

- *Define and benchmark the percentage of "highly active" parishioners and track changes annually*
- *Increase the Pastoral Staff to include a person who could focus on ministry to the youth and young adults in the parish.*
- *Form a Stewardship Committee to promote the principles of Christian discipleship and help parishioners use their gifts of time, talent, and treasure to advance the mission of Jesus*

- *Offer gift discernment opportunities for new and current parishioners to help them identify their spiritual gifts, including the diocesan-sponsored “Joyfully Gifted” program*
- *Provide parishioners with opportunities to assume leadership positions and receive ministry training*
- *Improve the experience of weekend Mass as a means of increasing parishioner engagement*

3. Enhance the experience of liturgical music at Mass

To do this we will...

- *Incorporate contemporary music and instrumentation during the 11:30 AM Sunday Mass once a month*
- *Expand the variety of hymns sung during Mass*
- *Increase the tempo and decrease the volume of organ music*
- *Identify ways to encourage fuller participation in singing and responses*

4. Articulate a clear sense of mission and purpose for the parish

To do this we will...

- *Publish the goals developed as a result of the survey, the timeline for its implementation and provide regular updates of progress in implementing the goals*
- *Continue to provide quality education in our Day School and Religious Education Programs*
- *Better communicate the Parish Mission Statement so it is more familiar to all parishioners*

5. Train and empower parishioners to receive electronic communication from the parish

To do this we will...

- *Consult with a marketing professional to develop a plan for better electronic communication of parish information*
- *Offer training for parishioners interested in learning how to receive electronic information from the parish*
- *Offer instructions for the website on how to receive parish communications via web-connected devices*
- *Instruct parishioners on how to download the parish app*

6. Enhance the visibility and level of engagement in our Church in the City partnership with St. Colman

To do this we will...

- *Communicate at Mass and via media (e.g., parish bulletin, Belltower Beacon, website, social media) developments in our CIC relationship with St. Colman, especially volunteer opportunities*
- *Encourage organizations to consider ways to engage St. Colman parish in a reciprocally beneficial relationship*

7. Change the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation to 8th Grade

To do this we will...

- *Immediately begin the process of transitioning from 9th Grade to 8th Grade Confirmation*
- *Expand the Youth Ministry Program to include middle school students*