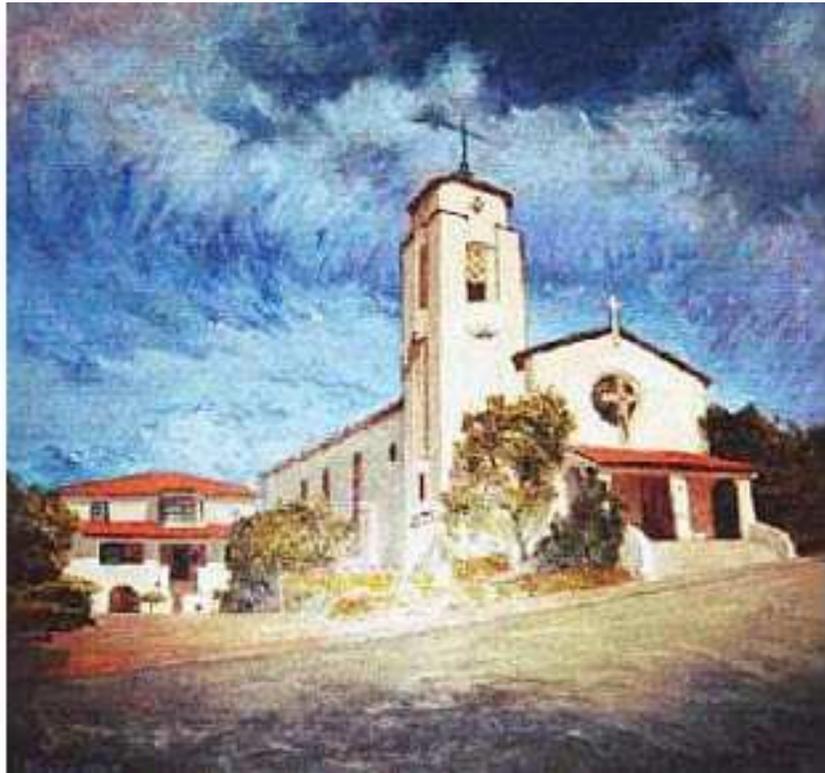
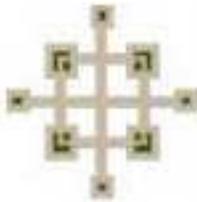


St. Jerome Catholic Church El Cerrito, CA

Strategic Plan



2010-2013

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Christmas 2010

Dear Parishioners of St. Jerome

The St. Jerome Strategic Plan had been conceptualized and formulated in 2003 during the time of Rev. Paul Minihan as pastor of this parish and with whom I am indebted to for envisioning this great mission and task for all of us. This Strategic Plan though was intended for three years and only then can a revision be made.

It is my pleasure then to present to you this revised and updated Strategic Plan of St. Jerome. This Plan will help us to continue the journey we once started as one community toward its fulfillment.

The Revised Strategic Plan is made up of Seven Goals with corresponding objectives and implementation strategies. No Goal is more important than the other. All are equally important. The objectives as well as the implementation strategies will continue to help us concretely fulfill these goals. However, to fulfill these goals and in order to be successful, we need the cooperation of each one. I encourage you then to read and look upon it as an opportunity to engage yourselves in our parish so as to make it more vibrant and active.

My heartfelt gratitude now goes to the Parish Pastoral Council for their hard work and sincere dedication for coming up with the revision. May you be richly blessed for your efforts in sharing your time, talent and treasure.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Rev. Dante B. Tamayo
Parochial Administrator

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

2010 - 2011

- Phyllis Ciardo
- Barbara Cortese
- Miguel De Guzman
- Marla Korte
- Paul Lee
- Barbara Nardi
- Ruben Omega
- Carolyn Pugh
- Ray Saturno
- Mindy Souza
- Judy Valladao
- Natalie Walchuck

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Jerome Catholic Church is a diverse family of faith in Jesus Christ in the Catholic tradition. We gather for worship and faith formation. Our mission is to serve the needs and development of our faith family and build solidarity with our neighbors as a community of welcome and outreach.

Parish History

St. Jerome Parish is one of five parishes established in what was the Archdiocese of San Francisco in 1941 at the end of the Great Depression. Located near the county line, its boundaries rest in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Five years after its founding, with the close of World War II, the parish experienced a boom period of growth in nearby housing and in membership from new homeowners. The church building was completed in June 1942. From 1945 to 1950 the parish population increased by thirty percent, ultimately reaching approximately 3,000 people in 1970.

In the fifties, the parish bustled with activity. It planned, financed, and built its elementary school which opened in 1955. That same year, the parish constructed a facility to house the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary who began to teach and administrate the school in 1956. In 1962 St. Jerome became part of the newly formed Diocese of Oakland.

In the sixties and seventies, St. Jerome wrestled with the nation-wide issues of social unrest and Vatican II reforms. At the same time, the surrounding housing stock was fully built out and the baby boomer generation moved. The parish population plateaued and then dropped by fifty percent between 1970 and 1985. Mass attendance fell. First Communions and Confirmations decreased. New parish activities evolved, as many traditional organizations disappeared and memberships declined. During this time the importance of lay ministry emerged giving focus to ministry in virtue of our common baptism.

In the eighties and nineties, St. Jerome stabilized as a smaller parish. The children of the baby boom generation disappeared, for the most part. The school, though full, drew over half of its students from outside the parish neighborhood. In 1982 the parish planned and completed a major renovation, which included a redesign and dedication of Rohan Hall and the patio outside its doors. In 1991 the parish celebrated its golden anniversary and renovated the worship space.

At the turn of the century, as older parish families retired and moved away, new families with young children settled in the parish boundaries. There has been an increase of young people at Sunday liturgies, however few of these have taken up active roles in parish life. Second- and third-generation children are attending St. Jerome School, but a large number of students at the school are non-Catholics. Following a national trend, overall enrollment in the school has been declining. The parish is redirecting its ministries to meet the needs of youth and young adults. This is also a priority item in the Diocesan plan.

This brief summary of our parish history and the demographic data that follows were considered in the preparation of the Parish Strategic Plan.

Demographic Data*

The following data cover those five US Postal ZIP code areas which are partially within the St. Jerome Parish boundary. We also recognize that many from beyond these boundaries find a welcome at our parish and call St. Jerome home.

40 to 52% of the residents have no faith involvement; 23 to 25% have moderate faith involvement; 27 to 33% have strong faith involvement; 22 to 25% have no religious affiliation preference.

The overall church program preference is "recreation."

The average age is 35 to 44. 6 to 10% were born before 1925. 10 to 16% were born between 1925 and 1942, 26 to 35% between 1943 and 1960, 20 to 26% between 1961 and 1981, and 20 to 32% between 1982 and 2001.

This data indicate that there are a large number of people who are not affiliated with any church and many who have a very low to extremely low faith receptivity level. In one sense, this could be seen as a negative; yet, it could suggest that there is an opportunity to attract some of these people to our church through a well planned and executed evangelization and outreach program. The fact that the overall church program preference from the census indicates "recreation" suggest that a way of initially attracting new membership is to offer attractive recreational and social programs in addition to the parish's spiritual programs.

** - The demographic data was abstracted and compiled from the US 2002 Census by Link2Lead Resources, a research group contracted by the Diocese of Oakland to provide parishes with information for strategic planning purposes.*

Conclusion

Our strategic plan is the result of looking back into our parish and gazing at the current demographic data. It is the result of town hall meetings and the collective energy of the Parish Pastoral Council. The plan provides a blueprint for the direction of the parish into 2006. A vision has been crafted; it is our collective responsibility as the Catholic community to make this vision real.

Action: Carolyn gather data

We Invite You to Implement the St. Jerome Strategic Plan

1. Goal One - **Worship**
 - a. Objectives
 - b. Implementation Strategies
2. Goal Two - **Education**
 - a. Objectives
 - b. Implementation Strategies
3. Goal Three - Parish/ School **Community**
 - a. Objectives
 - b. Implementation Strategies
4. Goal Four - **Leadership**
 - a. Objectives
 - b. Implementation Strategies
5. Goal Five - **Stewardship**
 - a. Objectives
 - b. Implementation Strategies
6. Goal Six - **Social Justice**
 - a. Goals
 - b. Implementation Strategies
7. Goal Seven - **Communications**
 - a. Objectives
 - b. Implementation Strategies

Goal One - Worship

Worship at St. Jerome Church affirms faith and guides the parish to a richer encounter with the living Jesus Christ.

Objectives

1. The parish participates actively and joyfully in liturgies.
2. Worship actively challenges parishioners to understand and live their faith.
3. Parishioners gain a deeper appreciation of scripture through worship
4. Attendance at Sunday liturgies increases.
5. Liturgical ministries visibly represent the make-up of the parish and are continually supported and strengthened.

Implementation Strategies

1. Establish an active formation program that periodically offers an explanation and understanding of the Mass and liturgical seasons.
2. Encourage a greater number of people to become involved in ministries that are part of the Eucharistic celebration.
3. Incorporate children and youth into worship and craft worship that respects the multi-generational spiritualities of the parish.
4. Enhance worship with multi-cultural music and traditions.
5. Encourage and advertise prayer and worship opportunities that supplement Sunday liturgies.
6. Expand the music ministry to all liturgical celebrations.
7. Conduct outreach to non-practicing Catholics to encourage Mass attendance.

Goal Two - Education

Opportunities for religious education and spiritual development are provided for all members of St. Jerome Church and those interested in joining the Catholic Church.

Objectives

1. Parishioners are knowledgeable about Catholic teaching and tradition, scripture and liturgy.
2. Parishioners are aware of contemporary moral and social issues in light of Catholic teaching and act on those teachings.
3. Parishioners are spiritually strengthened with a deeper knowledge and understanding of their faith by means of religious education and spiritual formation programs.
4. People interested in becoming members of the Catholic church have means available for exploring our faith.

Implementation Strategies

1. Provide faith formation for children and teenagers to fully prepare them and their sponsors for the sacraments.
2. Offer ongoing faith formation and educational opportunities for adult parishioners.
3. Support and develop programs for estranged and returning Catholics.
4. Provide instruction for people of other faith traditions to prepare them for the sacraments of initiation.
5. Provide information and direction for vocations to Holy Orders and the religious life.
6. Encourage cooperation with other parishes and advertise opportunities offered by the diocese and local retreat centers to maximize parishioners' opportunities for religious education and spiritual development.

Carolyn – I eliminated Strategy 5 (Encourage dialog ...) because it duplicates Goal 6 strategies.

Goal Three – Parish/School Community

St. Jerome Parish and School act together to vitalize our community and to foster and further our collective Catholic Christian identity.

Objectives

1. Dialogue between the pastor and the principal leads to effective integration of parish and school.
2. Activities enable closer relationships to be formed between school and parish families.
3. Parent Teacher Group and Faith Formation collaborate to create community and leadership.
4. Religious outreach and recreational activities are available for parish and families.
5. The School Board and Parish Pastoral Council meet together periodically.

Implementation Strategies

1. Further integrate school-aged children into liturgies.
2. Strengthen the sports program further to encourage participation by both school and parish children.
3. Develop initiatives to welcome school families to join our parish.
4. Develop initiatives to invite parish families to enroll in the school.
5. Encourage parishioners to be more aware of and involved with the parish school.
6. Develop programs to retain our children's involvement in the parish beyond eighth grade.

Goal Four - Leadership

St. Jerome Parish leadership is responsible for future planning and pastor support.

Objectives

1. Responsibility for the parish is shared jointly between parishioners and the pastor.
2. Lay leadership of parish ministries is encouraged and developed.
3. Lay participation in both the Parish and Financial Councils is ongoing, with rotating memberships that fairly represent the parish to provide channels for parishioners' voices to be heard.
4. Parish decision-making processes are transparent.
5. There are external and internal checks on parish lay leadership performance.

Implementation Strategies

1. The pastor's chief advisory bodies – Pastoral Council and Finance Council – are afforded an active and consultative voice that affects the management and vision of the parish. A consensus model is utilized in decision-making. Diocesan resources may be used to train members of these advisory bodies and lay ministry leaders.
2. The chief advisory bodies use a model of discernment to call forth a diversity of parishioners by name to utilize their gifts and talents in leadership.
3. The Pastoral Council members serve as liaisons to specific parish committees and organizations.
4. The Pastoral Council establishes procedures to safeguard that parish leadership hears parishioners' voices.
5. The Finance Council provides timely advice on parish financial health to the pastor, provides an annual report to the Pastoral Council, and publishes the annual budget to parishioners.
6. The chief advisory bodies make available the minutes of their meetings.

Goal Five - Stewardship

All St. Jerome parishioners are engaged in ministry through a broad understanding of Christian stewardship.

Objectives

1. Parishioners honor their baptismal call to ministry by offering their services through lay ministries.
2. Parishioners accept responsibility for the welfare of the parish community and care of its physical facilities.
3. Parishioners participate in the creation of new ministries as well as increase their level of participation in ongoing service ministries.

Implementation Strategies

1. Develop programs for formation in Christian stewardship and preparation for lay ministries.
2. Engage parishioners in active ministry in various ways, for example:
 - Publish and explain existing ministries;
 - Hold periodic parish-wide recruitment campaigns; and
 - Ask currently active ministers to invite other to participate.
3. Provide a process to assess ministerial needs of the parish on a regular basis.

Goal Six – Social Justice

As heir to a rich history of Catholic social thought and in response to the call of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the St. Jerome community promotes the common good and defends human rights in our neighborhoods and beyond.

Objective

1. The parish introduces and develops an awareness of Catholic social justice teaching.
2. The parish actively promotes social justice by developing and joining networks with other religious groups and social agencies.
3. The parish discerns and speaks out on public issues related to Catholic social thought.
4. The parish upholds and promotes personal and collective respect for the dignity of the human person and the rights and responsibilities that flow from it.

Implementation Strategies

1. Provide educational opportunities for the parish to understand the fundamentals of Catholic social justice and connections between Sunday worship and the real transformation of persons and structures in society.
2. Activate the Social Justice Committee working in coordination with the pastor and open to all parishioners to oversee the following:
 - The role that the St. Jerome community can play in local community organizations;
 - The implementation of parish activities that exercise Catholic social justice in action.
3. Explore opportunities for joint activities with local parishes to advocate for justice.
4. Exchange resources with another parish in need in the diocese.

Goal Seven - Communications

Effectively communicate St. Jerome Church's activities, values, and ministries, both within and beyond the parish community.

Objectives

1. Communication media is utilized to inform the St. Jerome community of its activities, values, and ministries.
2. Communication media invites the wider community (such as family, friends, local communities, businesses, government, etc.) to share in St. Jerome's activities, values, and ministries.

Implementation Strategies

1. Communicate St. Jerome's activities and special news to other parishes, the diocese, and the broader community through a variety of means:
 - word of mouth, printed bulletin announcements and flyers;
 - notices in the Catholic Voice and local press; and
 - websites, and other media.
2. Use local civic events and the activities of other religious denominations as opportunities to share upcoming events or relevant ministries at St. Jerome Church.
3. Coordinate parish activities with suitable activities of local civic and religious groups.
4. Effectively use our web presence to communicate joint efforts so that parishioners and community members can easily find out about them.

St. Jerome Catholic Church Succession of Pastors

Rev. Msgr. James J. Rohan	1941-1973
Rev. Msgr. Parnell J. McCarthy	1973-1980
Rev. John J. Kennedy	1980-1984
Rev. John J. Manning	1984-1990
Rev. E. Donald Osuna	1990-2001
Rev. Paul D. Minnihan	2001-2004
Rev. Jerry Kennedy	2004-