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**All Are Welcome**  
**The Vision Plan**  
**of**  
**St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church**  
**Columbia, Maryland**  
**June 18, 2013**

## **Parish Overview**

St. John the Evangelist, the Catholic parish in the city of Columbia (a city of 100,000 residents) has 10,000 registered parishioners. Columbia was founded in the late 1960's to be a home for economic and social diversity. St. Johns was established in 1967 to be the Catholic parish reflecting and celebrating the diversity of the community. Our parish is a community of great diversity – ethnic, social, economic and age – that shares a common vision and works together to achieve that vision. Every weekend people from many cultures and backgrounds come together to worship at Mass. All ministries within St. Johns reflect the diversity of the parish while allowing parishioners to share their gifts and talents. We warmly welcome those who are challenged physically and developmentally to share in God's love through active participation in the parish.

Our parish is uniquely located in two of Columbia's interfaith centers, the Oakland Mills and the Wilde Lake Interfaith Centers. Sharing centers with various congregations over the years has provided a unique opportunity to learn from each other and to work together for the betterment of Columbia and Howard County. Through active interaction and participation with the other congregations and within the community, St. Johns clergy, staff and parishioners help breakdown stereotypes of who we are as Catholics and raise the visibility of our parish within Columbia. We strive to be an active presence so that Catholics new to Columbia can join us, and so that lapsed Catholics can be inspired to return to the Church. St. Johns has many active ministries described in this Vision Plan, where hundreds of volunteers work to make a difference by bringing Christ's message of love to the community.

Continued growth in our faith, individually and as a community, is essential for St. Johns to continue to work together to achieve its vision. Our parish provides many opportunities to continue one's spiritual growth and Catholic education through its many committees including Religious Education, Youth/Young Adult, Music, and Evangelization. St. Johns has a strong and well established tradition of active 'small church communities' throughout the parish. It is through achieving a deeper understanding of our faith that our parishioners and our parish will continue to grow and thrive.

The parish is known for its strong social ministry, touching people throughout Howard County and beyond, through programs affecting lives elsewhere in this country as well as in other nations. Our parish operates two long-term transitional shelters for families who would otherwise be without adequate housing. The program includes mentorship towards self-sufficiency. We have a vibrant, long-term commitment to prison ministry. Every summer, many high school students and adults from our parish work together with members of the congregation of St. John United Methodist Presbyterian Church to serve in Appalachia to repair homes. With the strong support from our parishioners, The Knights of Columbus, Columbia Council #7559 established a medical clinic to serve orphaned children in Tanzania whose parents have succumbed to HIV/AIDS. Our parish strongly supports the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops "Catholics Confront Global Poverty" program. Through charity and advocacy, our parish works to bring social justice to those in need.

At St. Johns, we are blessed to be able to offer a Hispanic Ministry to our Hispanic community. St. Johns Hispanic Ministry offers our brothers and sisters the opportunity to live our catholic faith in their own Spanish language and their cultural traditions. Through bilingual celebrations, we also bring our brothers and sisters closer so they can pray as one. Sacraments, religious education, pastoral counseling, and any other pastoral needs are offered in Spanish in our Parish. Our Hispanic community grows and so do its blessings. We look forward to welcoming our Hispanic brothers and sisters at every Sunday Mass and every single day. We want our Parish to be a new home for them. St. Johns Hispanic Ministry wants to bring God's love to all those who, through the pains of life need a resting place. Our community provides a family environment, a dwelling in the Father's house. Our goal is to live our faith as we received it: as the most beautiful gift our parents and godparents gave us at our Baptism. For those who want to improve their Spanish, it is also a wonderful opportunity."

## **Vision**

St. Johns strives to be a community alive in the Spirit that embodies the love of the Trinity. By honoring the diversity in our vibrant environment, we strive to express fundamental values and truths of our faith in a way that is relevant to our time and culture in the hope of revealing the reign of God.

## **Our Vision Plan**

Our parish Vision Plan is divided into twelve sections. Our parish mission statement is presented in the first section. The second section presents a note from our Pastor, Fr. Gerry Bowen. The third section provides a brief overview of our parish functional organizations highlighting areas of ministry for which our parish is known within the community. The fourth section details the mission, the goals, and the objectives of the Pastoral Council. The remaining sections do the same for each ministry in the parish. Though each ministry represents a stand-alone effort in its own area of concentration, it is the synergy between these ministries that presents the true image of St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Community.

The original Vision Plan was formulated in 2000 through the efforts of the Pastoral Council and the staff at that time. Each year the plan is to be reviewed with committee and Pastoral Council input. Each ministry will review its section of the document yearly and report to the Pastoral Council, who in turn will communicate the updated Vision to the congregation.

This version is an update based on Pastoral Council meetings with the various committees that constitute the functional organization of the parish during the 2011 – 2012 Council year. This document is a synthesis of the original Vision Plan with the updates and additions. It is intended to aid in guiding and influencing ministerial direction and programming while not limiting the dreams of the congregation. The missions, goals, and objectives stated within will be used to achieve the Vision of St. Johns in the years to come.

The lion's share of the work in the effort to keep the Vision fresh lies with the parish staff who work diligently for our benefit and yet still find time to dream. Our thanks go to them.

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## **Mission Statement**

We, the people of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Community, are gathered together in Columbia, Maryland to enable ourselves and others to experience God's presence in this place and time and in the future. We are called in Baptism to be God's people. As a community centered around the Eucharist, we Joyfully proclaim Jesus Christ as Our Lord and accept His mission as our own.

St. Johns was formed in 1967, within the Archdiocese of Baltimore, to bring a Roman Catholic presence to Columbia as a part of a vision of the interfaith religious life. As a parish uniquely formed within an interfaith community, we are challenged to give expression by our lives to the faith we have received and to discover the new areas in which to cooperate with other faith communities. As a member of the Columbia Cooperative Ministry, we are committed to ministering to the people in our city in a true interfaith and ecumenical spirit. We encourage mutual respect and cooperation among people of all faiths.

We are a faith community of all ages. We span the spectrum of economic levels, cultural backgrounds, and different approaches to social, political and even religious concerns. Yet, the sum of our differences is small in comparison to the great sense of apostleship we share. Our differences are a blessing which challenges us and we commit ourselves to address those conditions which hinder us from becoming one.

We acknowledge the special needs each one of us has, whether living in a family unit or alone. In Jesus name we accept and support one another throughout the stages of our lives. We commit ourselves to discover and nurture each one's talents and to enable each one through catechesis, witness, and worship to respond fully to Christ's call.

We are committed to sharing our gifts with those around us. We pledge ourselves to serve those who are in need, both by our personal and our community's direct assistance and advocacy; to be instruments whereby our service and caring will enable people to be liberated from their burdens; and to witness to all people the values preached in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We treasure the gift of Our Lord in sign and sacrament. We gather as a community of believers to celebrate God's presence in our lives, to deepen our faith, and to renew our commitment to His service. In the breaking of the bread, we seek to be united and to reconcile with the Lord Jesus and with one another. We seek to become that which we celebrate.

Filled with the strength of the spirit and with the love of the Father, we are sent forth to carry out His will in our words and deeds. In all we do, we pray unceasingly for the guidance and peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we are St. John the Evangelist Catholic Community.

## Our Beginnings

Since its inception in 1967, St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Columbia has been faithful to a vision of the Church's understanding of itself that blossomed from the Second Vatican Council, a seminal event contemporaneous with the establishment of this parish church, and a pervasive guiding spirit ever since. The excerpts presented below will help to clarify our church's sense of self and mission, as envisioned by that Council.

Our Pastoral Council, our Parish Leadership, our staff and myself, desire that this document cultivates and captures your energy and hope for the Church, as a living, faithful, and fruitful community. A people of God, entrusted with the care and salvation of souls, by Christ Himself, and nourished always by His Spirit. And, if something in this document speaks to you, or sparks your interest, call me, or a member of our parish leadership. We will be glad to hear from you, and perhaps to fan that flame. God bless!

*Father Gerry Bowen, Pastor*

## THE PEOPLE OF GOD

"It follows that though there are many nations there is but one people of God, which takes its citizens from every race, making them citizens of a kingdom which is of a heavenly rather than of an earthly nature. All the faithful, scattered though they be throughout the world, are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit... This characteristic of universality which adorns the people of God is a gift from the Lord Himself. "

"In virtue of this catholicity each individual part contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church. "According to the gift that each has received, administer it to one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God".

"All people are called to be part of this catholic unity of the people of God which in promoting universal peace presages it. And there belong to or are related to it in various ways, the Catholic faithful, all who believe in Christ, and indeed the whole of humanity for all people are called by the grace of God to salvation. "

DOGmatic CONSTITUTION ON THE CHURCH *LUMEN GENTIUM (Light of the Nations)*

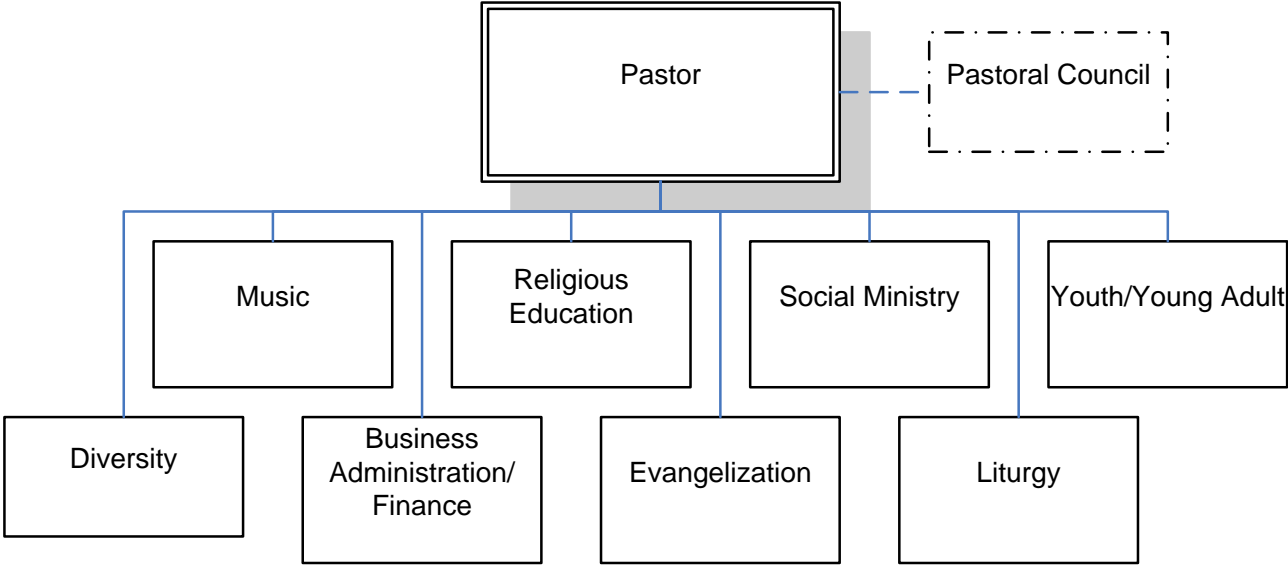
## NOT A MUSEUM BUT A GARDEN

“Pope John XXIII once remarked that **“We are not on earth to guard a museum, but to cultivate a flowering garden of life.”** I absolutely love this quote. I think that we should have it on all of our church doors and signs. It is not enough to place those words at the front door however, if there is not a fire burning within the church that will allow this cultivation to become reality. “

“This gift that we are given is too precious to be diminished to a hall of history. The Church is a living organism that has for centuries lead social change and advanced the cause of justice.. John XXIII saw a need to remind the people of God that ‘cultivating a garden of life’ is a wonderful calling.”

“This is a reminder to us that we are guided by a Spirit that seeks to bring about a great peace and a great hope for all. That Spirit is speaking to the Church. The Spirit sings to the laity as well as the ordained. The Spirit is singing to us to cultivate a garden where justice grows abundant, forgiveness is the bedding, and love like baptism is the constant water poured out to nourish the landscape of hope that God gives us. This is a call to action. It is a call to embrace the tools that God has given to each and every community and start planting and growing.” (Rev. Kevin George)

### Overview of Parish Functional Organization





## **Pastoral Council**

**Mission:** Represent the community at large to provide advice for the pastor and staff regarding all matters as they affect the parish, and facilitate communications within the parish to create its Vision.

**Goal 1:** Insure that the council represents a cross section of the community.

**Objective:** Conduct an annual election process that replaces outgoing council members with three new representatives of the community.

Strategies / Tactics:

- The Council shall establish a nominating committee by the February meeting with the purpose of identifying potential candidates for election to the Council.
- The nominating committee shall prepare a slate of candidates and present them to the Council at the March meeting.
- The nominating committee shall collect candidate statements and pictures by the end of April in order that a ballot can be prepared.
- Council elections by parish members shall be on the weekend in May prior to the Memorial Day weekend.
- The three candidates with the highest number of votes shall be elected members to serve three-year terms.
- The pastor with assistance from Council members shall conduct an orientation meeting with newly elected Council members prior to the June meeting.

**Goal 2:** Insure there is communication between the parish community and the Pastoral Council.

**Objective:** Create an environment where each person can have access to a member of the Council in order to provide input.

Strategies / Tactics:

- Identify each Council member at church functions.
- Encourage each Council member to wear a name tag.
- Encourage each Council member to act proactively to reach out and report back.
- Encourage Council members to visit a committee at least once a year. Council members report on their ministry visits during the next Council meeting.

**Goal 3:** Provide ongoing vision planning for the parish.

**Objective:** Create a process whereby the Vision Plan is revisited and updated annually.

Strategies / Tactics:

- Develop a process whereby each staff person and committee re-assesses their current vision and plan annually. Staff members and committee chairs report to the council on their plan revisions at a Pastoral Council meeting.
- Require each staff person and /or committee to discuss and update the vision document during one of their regularly scheduled meetings.
- Communicate an updated version of the Vision Plan to the community at large.

**Objective:** Review and optimize the use of the facilities, and plan for future expansion and/or renovations.

Strategies / Tactics:

- Assess the needs of the various ministries and seek to accommodate the space and facility needs.
- Support the activities of an Ad Hoc Planning Committee that monitors the space and facility needs and that looks for opportunities to expand or enhance the existing spaces.

**Goal 4:** Optimize communication among the members of the parish community.

**Objective:** Create an environment that fosters communication.

Strategies / Tactics:

- Meet with the parish staff at least two times per year (planning, and retreat).
- Provide feedback to the Pastor regarding the ongoing efforts to improve communications through the implementation of recommendations made in the Ad Hoc Communications Committee report.
- Participate in development of plans for and establishment of a communication network discussed at the Fall 2011 Parish Leadership retreat.

## **Business Administration/Finance**

**Mission:** Develop and manage the financial resources of the parish and provide necessary facilities and administrative structure.

**Goal 1:** Make effective use of current assets and revenue.

**Objective:** Provide timely, accurate financial reporting.

Strategies / Tactics

- Finance Committee shall meet monthly to review the finances of the parish and provide monthly budget vs. actual reporting.
- Finance Committee shall print quarterly financial reports in the bulletin.

**Goal 2:** Insure the financial growth of the parish.

**Objective:** Promote ownership. Make parishioners aware that they have a vested interest.

Strategies / Tactics

- Encourage giving through endowments, life insurance (parish as beneficiary), automatic deposits, and money transfer through Internet.
- Finance Committee shall develop a plan to get a higher percentage of parishioners to give at Stewardship time.

**Goal 3:** Provide a high level of administrative support.

**Objective:** Take measures to simplify processes, using technology where possible.

Strategies / Tactics

- Consider out-sourcing of staff Payroll vs. in-house process freeing Business Manager for other tasks.
- Continue implementation of Parish Soft database including entering Religious Education participants and entering committee member information as workflow groups. This allows easier communication to specific groups in the parish.
- Enter all STAND Training volunteer information in the Parish Soft database.

**Objective:** Ensure timely maintenance of parishioner data.

Strategies / Tactics

- Complete update of parish registration records including email addresses.

**Goal 4:** Plan and implement new capital projects and maintain existing facilities.

**Objective:** Expand facilities as required.

Strategies / Tactics

- Work with Planning Committee to determine the best use of facilities given St. John United's planned expansion of the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center.
- Work with the Planning Committee to determine the best use of facilities at the Oakland Mills Interfaith Center.

## **Evangelization**

**Mission:** Insure that St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church is, and is perceived as, a welcoming community.

### **Outreach**

**Goal:** Mobilize parish energy and resources to effectively invite new residents of Columbia to join us for liturgies and other parish events in order to spread the Good News and to form new Catholics.

#### **Objectives:**

- Send letters to new homeowners in Columbia welcoming them and inviting them to find out more about our parish. .
- Utilize internet-based tools (e.g. blogs) in outreach efforts.
- Continue Re-Membering and RCIA programs

### **Welcoming**

**Goal:** Ensure that St. Johns is, and remains known as a welcoming community.

#### **Objectives:** .

- Encourage parishioners to reach out to newcomers.
- Support phone calls to newly registered families.
- Provide resources needed by newcomers – packets, registrations forms, phone numbers, etc.
- Meet with newly registered parishioners on a regular basis
- Meet with those interested in becoming Catholic on a regular basis

### **Adult Faith Formation**

**Goal:** Provide resources, events, and opportunities for parishioners to grow in faith and their understanding of their faith.

#### **Objectives:**

- Provide programs that address the intellect – lectures, books, courses, etc.
- Provide programs that address other dimensions of the self through art, music, dance, etc.
- Provide programs that address the spiritual dimension of persons – mission, prayer, liturgy, etc.
- Explore the use of new technologies in sharing faith – internet, etc.

### **Small Church Communities**

**Goal:** Provide the resources and encouragement needed to support small church communities at St. Johns.

#### **Objectives:**

- Publicity for the goals of SCCs.
- Opportunities for SCC members to gather together during the year.
- Resources for SCCs including At Home With the Word, bibles, alternatives such as DVDs.

## **Liturgy**

**Mission:** Support and promote the spiritual development of the worshipping community.

**Goal 1:** Foster spiritual growth through the celebration of life-giving liturgies.

**Objective:** Recruit members of the community to share their time and talents. Foster lay involvement in liturgical celebrations.

Strategies / Tactics:

- Continued the process of recruiting parishioners to participate in liturgical ministries; current ministers will invite new members at all the Masses on February 25/26, 2012.
- Recognized the service of all ministers through a Commissioning Rite at Mass for each of the parish committees.

**Objective:** Prepare members of the community to participate fully in the liturgical celebrations of the parish.

Strategies / Tactics

- Recruited and oriented lectors, Eucharistic ministers and sacristans to serve at all parish liturgies.
- Provided a workshop for the entire parish and neighboring parishes on the New Roman Rite.
- Established a new protocol for Eucharistic Ministers.

**Goal 2:** Celebrate the diversity and unity of the parish community.

**Objective:** Foster greater understanding of the diversity of the parish community.

Strategies / Tactics

- Collaborated with the Diversity Committee for Cultural Heritage Mass.

**Objective:** Promote unity through worship, service, and social activities.

Strategies / Tactics

- Solicited ministers representing various races and generations for major liturgical services.
- Oriented youth to participate as lectors for the Teen Life Mass.
- Recruited a parishioner to provide reflections for the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent for the parish bulletin.
- Developed a worship aid for the New Roman Rite that was placed in the parish hymnals.

## Music

**Mission:** Inspire the St. Johns community and the community-at-large through spirit-filled song both within the liturgy and outside as well - keeping in mind that it is the assembly's voice that is first and foremost in praising God.

**Goal 1:** Ensure that liturgical music/musicians enable the community to participate in weekly and special liturgies as a vibrant singing assembly.

**Objective:** Ensure that the assembly has access to a wide variety of hymns that encourage participation and invigorate the spirit.

### Strategies / Tactics

- Reevaluation of hymnal and supplement possibilities and practices through the exploration of a wide variety of publishers and composers both local and national on a continual basis.
- Hold frequent repertoire sessions with parish musicians to alert them to this repertoire as it develops.
- Monitor the parish through observation or feedback as to what music is being embraced.

**Objective:** Ensure that parish musicians support the song of the community through creative and liturgically correct means.

### Strategies / Tactics

- Create updated funeral and wedding guidelines.
- Hold workshops and videotape sessions to monitor the effectiveness of the various musicians as song leaders of the parish.
- Constantly share expectations and various methods of leadership through skill-specific training sessions and one-on-one feedback with musicians.
- Train musicians and begin to incorporate music for new Mass parts to ease transition to Mass based on New Roman Missal.

**Goal 2:** Inspire the community (at large, not just the parish community) through spirit-filled music.

**Objective:** Hold frequent events (outside the liturgy) both at St. Johns and larger sites that inspire both the participants and the audience.

### Strategies / Tactics

- Bring in guest artists.
- Explore youth oriented possibilities.
- Establish a yearly concert series exploring old and new music.
- Create CD's for home worship/inspiration.
- Explore new ways of marketing these events on a community-wide level.

**Objective:** Be a responsible presence in the community.

### Strategies / Tactics

- Explore ways of using our people-power for social justice issues, e.g. raise money/food at concerts, Foodshare.
- Participate in community events (interfaith, non-religious, etc.).
- Utilize our people-power in support of evangelization efforts

**Goal 3:** "Raise" children and youth through various music programs.

**Objective:** Improve the impact and attractiveness of the Children's Choir.

Strategies / Tactics

- Increase the presence of the Children's Choir at weekly liturgies.
- Explore more effective techniques of running Children's Choir through research and workshops.
- Emphasize both the catechetical and educational aspects of Children's Choir in marketing.
- Hold monthly planning sessions with Children's Choir staff.

**Objective:** Involve Middle School and High School students.

Strategies / Tactics:

- Put together a youth group for liturgies (e.g. orchestral musician group).
- Program events designed for youth (YouthFest).
- Put together recruitment program for our youth.

**Goal 4:** As the music program grows, improve communication and infrastructure.

**Objective:** To improve communication between coordinator and musicians/parish

Strategies / Tactics

- Create a newsletter for musicians.
- Put notes in bulletin weekly.
- Make weekly phone calls to each group.
- Explore ways of using our website and other internet-based resources.

**Objective:** Explore ways of building an infrastructure

Strategies / Tactics:

- Establish OM/WL captains.
- Develop a greater sense of structure of volunteers in ensembles.
- Establish a Music Committee.

**Goal 5:** As the music program grows, explore financial resources.

**Objective:** Develop methods for obtaining funds for multiple programs.

Strategies / Tactics

- Obtain funds for growing music costs as various ensembles grow (choir, children's choir, hand bells, other groups).
- Fund growing concert series
- Improve the sound system at Oakland Mills.
- Obtain various other equipment.
- Commission new, inspirational works by local artists.
- Review the effectiveness of the budget.
- Explore the possibility of fund raising.
- Explore the possibility of charging for admission to concerts.

**Objective:** Explore a limited compensation program.



Strategies / Tactics

- Provide a study to explore this possibility.

**Goal 6:** Continue to build membership in various music programs.

**Objective:** Explore improved ways of marketing various programs.

**Objective:** Offer means of education to members.

## Religious Education

**Mission:** Insure the faith formation, enrichment and development of parish children by offering diverse programs designed to enhance the continuing spiritual growth and maturity of each parishioner, keeping in mind the fourfold dimension of Catholic catechesis: message, community, worship and service.

**Goal 1:** Structure our programs so that children will understand and experience community.

**Objective:** Ensure that catechists understand the importance of this task of building community in the overall ministry of catechesis.

Strategies / Tactics

- Provide training on building community at yearly in-service for new catechists.
- Choose texts that contain community building in the curriculum. (Texts are reviewed annually in the spring.)
- Educate parents during training sessions that attending Sunday school sessions does not substitute for mass for the children.

**Objective:** Encourage personal prayer, family prayer and prayer during Sunday morning sessions and family program.

Strategies / Tactics

- Make prayer a priority in all sessions in the program.
- Prayer to begin the school year and prayer over “graduating” 6th graders.
- To provide opportunities for group meetings of catechists.

**Objective:** Ensure that there are regular sessions wherein the children meet and experience community - to meet in community and to learn, pray and serve together.

Strategies / Tactics

- Hold catechetical sessions wherein children faith share on Sunday mornings from September through April.
- Provide opportunities six times during the year for children and parents who catechize at home to come together to faith share, socialize, do service projects and pray together.
- Call parents and children together for sacramental preparation.

**Objective:** Ensure that children have the opportunity to listen to the message of Jesus together, have an opportunity to respond together, and have an opportunity for service to the community both at home and abroad.

Strategies / Tactics

Incorporate the following tasks into all planning processes:

- Examine texts and curriculum whenever they are replaced to be sure these tasks are incorporated as a matter of course.
- Plan large group service projects such as, Christmas food collection for poor families, rice bowls during lent, and also individual class projects throughout the school year.

**Goal 2:** Structure our programs so that children will understand the message of Jesus, the “good news”, the church, and moral formation.

**Objective:** Ensure that texts the catechists and children use are based on scripture and church doctrine and the catechism of the Catholic Church.

Strategies / Tactics

- Choose our texts from the Archdiocesan lists.
- Examine texts for conformity whenever texts are changed or chosen.
- Provide training at least once a year in September in the use of the texts for new catechists and in-services for all catechists to insure that they understand how to use the texts in such a way that the above goal can be obtained.
- Provide training for parents during sacramental preparation sessions to promote understanding of church doctrine and history in order that they are able to catechize their children well.
- Evaluate new test books and determine if they should be purchased.
- Evaluate need for new books for First Eucharist, First Reconciliation, and Human Sexuality.

**Goal 3:** Ensure that children may experience prayer and worship:

**Objective:** Structure our sacramental preparation program so that parents and children may understand the importance and experience of ritual prayer on an individual as well as a communal basis.

Strategies / Tactics

- Plan parent and child preparations session based on the catechumenal model and which involve the symbols important to the sacrament being catechized.
- Choose texts which include the catechumenal model.
- Plan parents/child sessions that include the catechumenal model also and educate parents during these sessions of the reason and importance of following it.
- Break open the symbols of the sacrament being catechized during parent/child sessions.
- Include personal and communal prayer using appropriate symbols in each parent/child session.

**Objective:** Increase family attendance at Sunday liturgy.

Strategies / Tactics

- Encourage parents and children to attend mass together, and to emphasize the importance of attending Sunday
- Ensure texts and curriculum contain this material.
- Incorporate prayer into all planning sessions for programs.
- Train catechists, especially new ones, of the importance of this task.
- Encourage the community at large to pray for catechists and children at the Sunday liturgies on a regular basis.

**Goal 4:** Ensure that children may experience Christian living, service at home and within their local communities, and missionary initiation in ways appropriate to their developmental levels.

**Objective:** Ensure that children's texts continue to place service to self, others, and the world as a part of the curriculum.

Strategies / Tactics

- Provide service projects for the children who join the parish at large in serving others, as well as individual classroom and family program projects in the religious education community.
- Encourage catechists to have special service projects for the year, especially personal ones when possible.
- Arrange a local community service project for Christmas for all the children.

- Arrange a global community service project for the children for the Lenten season.

**Goal 5:** Encourage all parishioners who are called by the spirit to minister in our faith formation programs to yield to that call.

**Objective:** Encourage ministry in our programs by parishioners of all ages, races, gender, etc. Invite individuals on a regular basis to discern the movement of the spirit in their lives in this regard.

Strategies / Tactics

- Ask from the pulpit each fall for volunteers of every age, race, etc.
- Invite parents through the yearly letter to volunteer.
- Invite individuals, as they become known to consider the ministry of catechesis.

## Social Ministry

**Mission:** Inform, inspire and invite the parish to consider and act on local and global issues of social justice and support the empowerment of the oppressed and disenfranchised.

**Goal 1:** Inform, Inspire and Invite the parish concerning local and global issues of social justice.

**Objective:** Provide information on social justice issues related to both charity and advocacy to the parish in all available formats.

Strategies / Tactics

- Provide information in the bulletin on issues and activities.
- Provide notices about issues and activities on fliers and in press releases.
- Provide the “To Serve With Love” fliers on a regular basis.
- Investigate ways to target other audiences, such as children and youth, including the web page.
- Use the web page for up to date information on current activities.

**Objective:** Provide for inspirational moments in social justice.

Strategies / Tactics

- Provide press releases for local press and specialized press on “successes”.

**Objective:** To invite participation in social justice activities.

Strategies / Tactics

- Participate in the Welcome Table by providing literature on issues, opportunities and topics.
- Encourage youth and young adult participation by creating a welcoming environment.

**Objective:** Provide adequate training opportunities.

Strategies / Tactics

- Provide adequate training before a volunteer is sent into service.

**Objective:** Provide follow-up on all activities.

Strategies / Tactics

- Ask event leader to ensure that every volunteer receives a personal contact during or after service
- Provide opportunities for feedback from the volunteers on how the experience was for them.
- De-brief activities, evaluate activity. (Note: Hospitality Center, Health Ministry, Prison Ministry, Shelters have all been evaluated in the past 4 years. Some changes were made.)

**Goal 2:** Work with parish ministries and other resources in the community.

**Objective:** Examine all activities for linkages with other parish ministries and community advocates.

Strategies / Tactics

- Work with Liturgy Committee to enhance the reach of justice and outreach, e.g., prayer of the faithful, Advent gifts, Earth Day, Martin Luther King Day (Social Action Box linkages).
- Participate in the Lenten Programs sponsored by the parish.
- Encourage presiders to make reference to social justice themes as appropriate to the scripture readings.

- Attend meetings of other groups: Knights of Columbus, Young Adults, RCIA, Remembering, etc. to share information on social justice.
- Work with the adult education committee to provide consciousness-raising seminars.
- Make an attempt to meet with other parish social ministry groups.
- Invite representatives of other ministries to attend our meetings, e.g., Liturgy, Evangelization, Young Adults.
- Participate in the social justice projects in the Archdiocese of Baltimore.
- Attend the annual Social Ministry Convocation on the first Saturday of March each year.
- Foster cooperation with members of the Interfaith Community of Columbia.
- Cooperate with other ministries, e.g., Religious Education, Small Christian Communities, Adult Education programs that they can provide Social Ministry information to their "audience".

**Goal 3:** Call upon the multicultural gifts embodied in the racial, multi-generational and economic diversity of Columbia.

**Objective:** Foster conscious efforts to inform, inspire, and invite volunteers with an eye toward diversity.

Strategies / Tactics

- Issue special invitations to ensure diversity in the Social Ministry Committee itself and in all Social Ministry projects.
- Specifically recruit members of the Hispanic community to participate in social ministry committee.

**Objective:** Recognize the growth of the aging population.

Strategies / Tactics

- Make the older volunteer welcome by helping them use their skill sets.
- Outreach to younger retirees.

**Goal 4:** Serve as a catalyst for social action.

**Objective:** Increase initiatives of outreach to the community.

Strategies / Tactics

- Expand Hospitality Center participation among all groups within the parish.
- Welcome new community outreach proposals from parishioners for consideration by the committee.

**Objective:** Encourage elected officials to follow policies that are in accord with social justice principles.

Strategies / Tactics

- Write letters to elected officials challenging, chiding and congratulating them on their actions affecting social justice.
- Lobby local, state and national representatives to follow social justice principles.
- Specifically, strongly support the "Catholics Confront Global Poverty" program from CRS and USCCB.

**Goal 5:** Practice a preferential option for the poor and suffering.

**Objective:** Support the empowerment of the oppressed and disenfranchised.

Strategies / Tactics

- Maintain Social Action Box designation each week for a variety of issues related to direct service and advocacy.

- Maintain focus on empowerment and development of the poor.
- Insure a welcoming stance towards gay and lesbian members of the parish community.

**Objective:** To offer a professional level of support to the suffering.

Strategies / Tactics:

- To offer support groups for specific needs as needs of parishioners are discerned.
- To offer support to persons suffering in times of transition or crisis.

## Youth / Young Adult

**Mission:** St. John the Evangelist Youth ministry program is committed to providing our parish youth with spiritual guidance to experience God's omniscient presence. We joyfully proclaim Jesus Christ as our Lord. We accept His mission as our own as we strive to foster a deeper understanding of our Catholic faith and universal calling to be part of the body of Christ. Youth Ministry will elucidate Christ's message through catechesis, through youth involvement in the Mass, and by providing witness by example to encourage our youth to embrace their faith as a way of life.

The ministry incorporates a core curriculum that reflects an ongoing commitment to social justice. The ministry encourages and provides opportunities for youth to share their gifts with those in need, thereby providing active witness to the values preached in the Gospel. We affirm our dedication to foster youth self-discovery of faith and the nurturing of individual talents through catechesis, witness and worship. We feel that the parent role in this is vital. In addition to evangelizing our youth, we foster the faith of the parents so they can truly partner with us in the ministry.

**Goal 1:** Teens become full, active, and conscious members of their faith community.

**Objective:** Grow a love for the sacraments, the Word of God, and the Mass in our youth.

### Strategy / Tactics

- Organize youth-friendly liturgies.
- Recruit teen participants in the mass by offering the following opportunities:
  - Serving as leaders of hospitality
  - Lectors
  - Ushers
  - Musicians
  - Vocalists
  - Eucharistic Ministers (if confirmed within the Church)

**Objective:** To learn about their Catholic Faith.

### Strategy / Tactics

- Regularly scheduled LIFETEEN & EDGE nights
- Annual retreats
- Bi-weekly catechetical meetings
- Theology of the Body

**Objective:** Nurture social justice and provide service opportunities rooted in Catholic spirituality and tradition.

### Strategy / Tactics

- Appalachian Service Project (Interfaith and local service opportunities)
- Camp Glow (Archdiocesan program)
- Hospitality Center (Parish program)
- Peer opportunity (Confirmation & LIFETEEN)
- Boy Scout Troop #649 (Local)

**Goal 2:** Establish a venue for dissemination of Youth Ministry programming that is easily accessible and informative for parents and teens in our community.



**Objective:** Communicate Youth Ministry current events and activities.

Strategy / Tactics

- Maintain current information on parish web page.
- Distribute calendars of all events, classes, and liturgies for parents and teens.
- Erect bulletin board in lobby featuring all activities, dates, etc.
- Use social media to communicate activities, i.e. create a St. Johns Youth Ministry FaceBook page.
- Youth led announcements at monthly Mass.

**Objective:** Increase youth registration and parent participants by 10% in our programs.

Strategy / Tactics

- LIFETEEN & EDGE recruiting drive
- Ice Cream social

**Objective:** Actively recruit participation in youth ministry from various cultural groups within the parish (e.g. Hispanic community).

Strategy / Tactics:

- Increase minority group registration by ten percent.
- Solicit support from various cultural groups via Diversity Committee.
- Solicit support from Hispanic Pastoral Committee for a potential LIFETEEN & EDGE gathering after 12noon Hispanic Sunday Mass
- Recruit teachers from various cultural groups via open house, teacher fair, social gathering.
- Conduct outreach to minority youth to include, but not limited to, Hispanics and Haitians.
- Include minority youth in leadership positions.

**Goal 3:** Provide leadership training and service opportunities for our youth.

**Objective:** Increase youth participation in youth leadership trainings.

Strategy / Tactics:

- Advertise leadership and service opportunities.
- Mentor students and prepare for programs.
- Invite interested students to participate in various leadership programs offered by our parish:
  - National Catholic Youth Conference
  - Cornerstone program
  - Micah 6:8 (social Justice Weekend)
  - HighLi program

**Objective:** Volunteer and/or participate in service opportunities

Strategy/ Tactics:

- Hospitality Center (Parish)
- Our Daily Bread (Catholic Charities)
- Sarah's House (Catholic Charities)
- Appalachia Service Project (Saint John United and our parish)

**Goal 4:** Create an environment for youth fellowship and social interactions.

**Objective:** Organize sporting events

Strategy/Tactics:

- Develop CYO basketball team
- Youth Band
- Art club

**Objective:** Offer monthly social events

Strategy/Tactics:

- Movie night
- Game night

**Objective:** Offer committee member opportunities

Strategy/Tactics:

- Youth ministry committee member
- Youth representative to Pastoral Council

## Diversity Committee

**Vision:** We envision a parish where all know they are welcomed, valued and encouraged to participate in Christian community, and a parish that seeks to be enriched by the full inclusion of all cultures, traditions and social backgrounds.

**Mission:** We commit to developing programs and to encouraging full participation from parishioners from all cultures and social backgrounds so that St. Johns may realize the full benefit of the diversity within is parish

### Strategy / Tactics

- Promote a deeper understanding of diversity within community as including cultural, and socio-economic similarities and differences and how active participation from the various groups enrich the parish.
- Promote participation in parish social events from a wider range of parishioners representing different cultural and socio-economic groups.
- Promote participation in the liturgy from parishioners representing a diverse cross-section of the community (e.g. Eucharistic minister's lectors, offertory procession, cross bearers, musicians, etc), especially in the early morning masses.
- Promote more bi-lingual masses and bi-lingual parts of regular masses.
- Promote and encourage the incorporation of cultural songs and music in regular masses.
- Organize and facilitate cultural masses (African heritage in February, Asian Pacific in May and Hispanic in September)
- Organize cultural discussion groups where various cultural similarities and differences are explored.
- Encouragement of parishioners to learn and experience other cultures through social events.