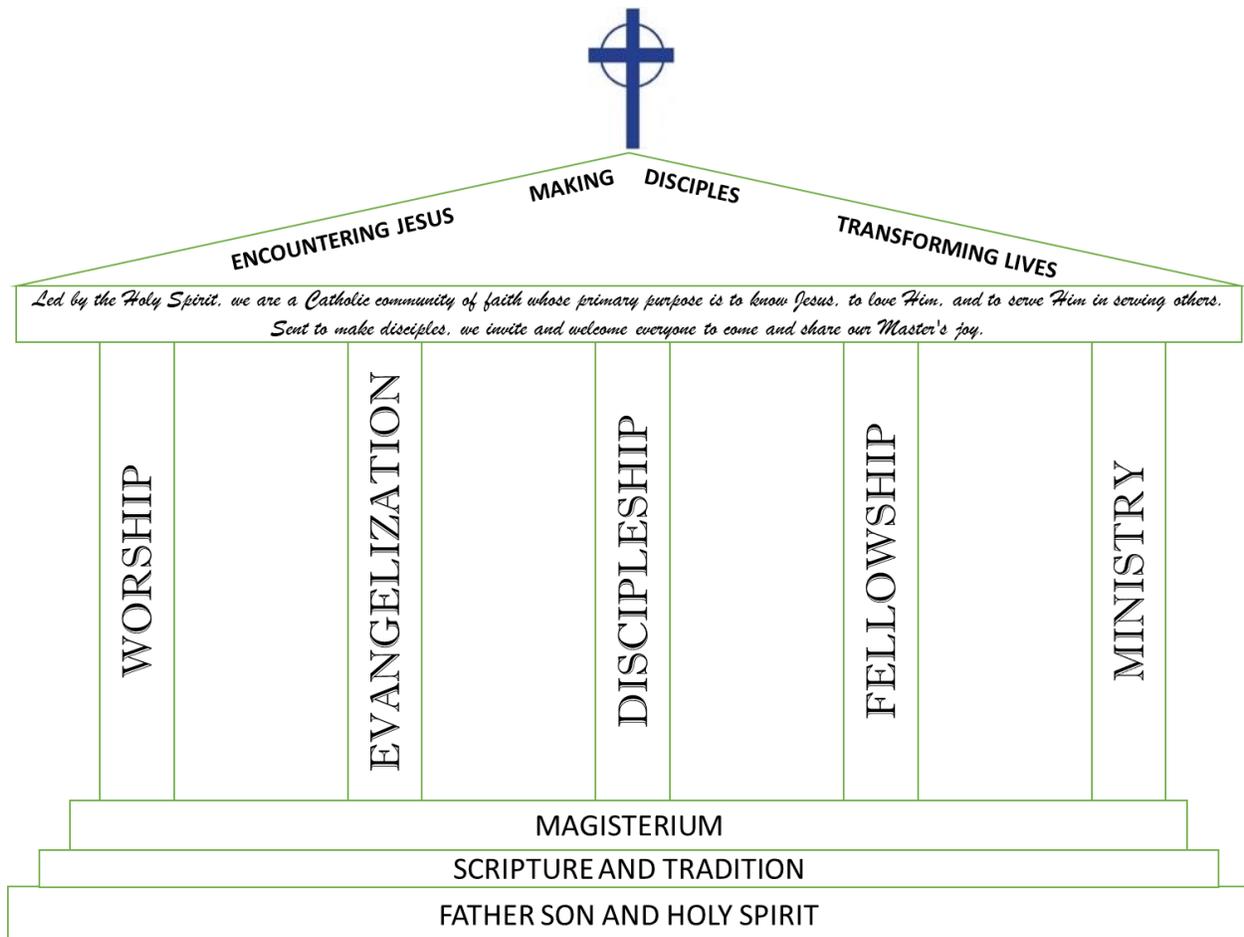




PARISH STRATEGIC PLAN

May 2022 – November 2026



MAY 1, 2022

ST GERALD CATHOLIC CHURCH

Parish Strategic Plan St. Gerald Catholic Church December 2021 – November 2026

We must revive in ourselves the burning conviction of Paul, who cried out: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (1 Cor 9:16). This passion will not fail to stir in the Church a new sense of mission, which cannot be left to a group of "specialists" but must involve the responsibility of all the members of the People of God. Those who have come into genuine contact with Christ cannot keep him for themselves, they must proclaim him.¹

Why a Strategic Plan?

The New Evangelization proclaimed by Popes Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis, challenges each parishioner to respond. As a parish community composed of thousands of individuals, a strategic plan provides focus to our efforts to reach out most effectively to both those inside the parish and to those in our surrounding communities.

. . . the Church does not give up or retreat into herself; instead, she undertakes a project to revitalize herself. She makes the Person of Jesus Christ and a personal encounter with him central to her thinking, knowing that he will give his Spirit and provide the force to announce and proclaim the Gospel in new ways which can speak to today's cultures.²

The intent of this strategic plan is to chart a course for the Parish as an active participant in the Church's efforts to revitalize herself. In it we hope that each ministry, group, and individual member of the St. Gerald community finds guidance on how to use their gifts to fulfill the Parish Vision and Mission.

Parish Vision:

ENCOUNTERING JESUS - MAKING DISCIPLES - TRANSFORMING LIVES

Parish Mission:

Led by the Holy Spirit, we are a Catholic community of faith whose primary purpose is to know Jesus, to love Him, and to serve Him in serving others. Sent to make disciples, we invite and welcome everyone to come and share our Master's joy.

¹ "Novo Millennio Ineunte (6 January 2001) | John Paul II," www.vatican.va, January 6, 2001.

² Synod Of Bishops, "XIII Ordinary General Assembly: The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith" (Vatican City: The General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops and Libreria Editrice Vaticana, October 2012).

Structure of the Strategic Plan

To achieve our vision and mission we are loosely following the model of Divine Renovation³ first employed at St. Benedict Parish in Nova Scotia, Canada. It consists of five pillars: *worship, evangelization, discipleship, fellowship, and ministry*. Each pillar consists of a goal and supporting objectives. Think of each goal as the desired end state and the objectives as the supporting steps to reach that goal.

The plan covers the next five liturgical years and will undergo periodic review and adjustments as we see the fruits of our efforts. Other contributing sources to the plan were the Archdiocese Pastoral Services Offices and *Amazing Parish*⁴.

Some objectives may seem to be goals that are lofty or even unattainable within the confines of our human abilities. This is on purpose. We want some goals that only God can accomplish, utilizing us, but requiring a miracle.

Worship

Definition: Our primary act of worship is the celebration of the Eucharist. Worship also includes prayer meetings and times of praise experienced in small groups.

Goal: We will deepen the Mass experience and cultivate devotional practices, communal praise opportunities, and intercessory teams such that the people of the St. Gerald Parish more fully embrace their identities as beloved sons and daughters of the Father.

Objectives

- The majority of people are actively participating in the worship at Sunday Mass by the end of year 2 (November 2023).
- Triple the number of Eucharistic adorers by the end of year 3 (November 2024).
- Devotional Intent - Increase personal prayer life by signing up 500 parishioners dedicated to daily prayer, each having an accountability partner or group by the end of year 4 (November 2025).
- Fill the pews at Sunday Mass by the end of year 4 (November 2025).

Evangelization

Definition: Evangelization brings people into an encounter with Jesus Christ and leads them to a decision to trust, follow him and become his disciple. It is directed at those outside of

³ James Mallon, *Divine Renovation : Bringing Your Parish from Maintenance to Mission* (New London, Ct: Twenty-Third Publications, 2014).

⁴ "Amazing Parish - Home," *The Amazing Parish* (The Amazing Parish), accessed April 18, 2022.

the Church but may also be aimed at those within the Church who know about Jesus but do not know him personally.

Goal: Increase the number of disciples at St. Gerald Parish who will walk the road, sow the seed, and reap the harvest of Jesus's Great Commission.

Objectives

- Establish a baseline for social media engagement with the parish by the end of year one (November 2022).
- Seven hundred fifty active adult parishioners have attended Alpha by the end of year 3 (November 2024).
- Two hundred fifty people who have BOTH participated in a conversion-oriented event/program AND invited and accompanied another person to a conversion-oriented event/program by year 4 (November 2025).
- A majority of Alpha participants are from outside the parish by the end of year 4 (November 2025).
- St. Gerald employs a Communications Director to manage web presence, electronic signage, and social media by the end of year 5 (November 2026).

Discipleship

Definition: A lifelong process of growing, maturing, and learning that the believer eagerly enters if truly evangelized. It includes catechesis but cannot be reduced to it. It includes growing in the faith, knowledge, prayer and identifying one's God-given gifts.

Goal: Every member of our parish family has embarked on the journey of discipleship. St. Gerald Parish is ready to guide and support each person in taking the next step on that journey.

Objectives

- Roll out St. Gerald's Clear Path of Discipleship by the end of year 1 (November 2022).
- Each parishioner understands and can explain the expectation of discipleship to others by the end of year 1 (November 2022).
- A sufficient number of parishioners are equipped as disciples to engage and participate in the evangelization goals of the parish by the end of year 2 (November 2023).
- By the end of year 3, each active parishioner can identify where they are on the threshold of conversion and discipleship and are aware of the resources available to take the next step in their journey (November 2024).
- Twenty-five percent of active parishioners (or 300 people) are involved in a small group faith-sharing community by year 3 (November 2024).

Fellowship

Definition: Fellowship is community – what the New Testament calls koinonia, the common life. It is meaningful community where people are known and loved, called by name, and supported in their call to holiness. It may include socializing but cannot be reduced to it. Fellowship happens when parishioners are accountable to and for one another.

Goal: We are a Catholic community where everyone is welcomed and invited to belong to the Body of Christ.

Objectives

- After every Sunday Mass, there is an organized opportunity for fellowship available by the end of year 1 (November 2022).
- To build community, parishioners are encouraged to continually seek to meet others within our community by the end of year 2 (November 2023).
- We have established a childcare ministry robust enough to ensure that people with children are able to participate in discipleship activities (e.g., Alpha, Oasis, etc.) by the end of year 1 (November 2022).
- Members of fellowship groups are intentionally and regularly inviting others to join them to enhance connection to the parish community by the end of year 2 (November 2023).
- Parishioners as a whole community continually seek to invite and mentor the youth and young adults to be participants, engaged parishioners and to live as disciples of Jesus. Additionally, the Parish will work toward supporting these efforts with a fresh zeal and a missionary culture by the end of year 4 (November 2025).

Ministry

Definition: Ministry is service to others. It includes essential ministry within the life of the parish so that it can function and from its members, but exists in a missionary culture to go out and serve those who do not belong.

Goal: As servants of Christ, St. Gerald parishioners will minister to those in need with generosity, love, and compassion.

Objectives

- Assess ways in which the St. Gerald Parish can align the parish ministries to better fulfill the unmet needs within the parish boundaries by the end of year 3 (November 2024).
- The Parish finds ways to identify and utilize the “intentional disciples” who have been developed through the discipleship and evangelization goals in prior years to fulfill the needs of the underserved people within our parish boundaries as described in the phrase “The Church has Left the Building,” by the end of year 4 (November 2025).

It is the firm hope of the Pastoral Council that the Holy Spirit will lead our parish will use this plan to embrace our Mission and Vision more fully. As a community, each of us will use our gifts to revitalize the Church. Each ministry, group, and individual member of the St. Gerald community finds guidance on how to use their gifts to fulfill our parish vision and mission. “We therefore approach the New Evangelization with a sense of enthusiasm.”⁵

And may the world of our time, which is searching, sometimes with anguish, sometimes with hope, be enabled to receive the Good News not from evangelizers who are dejected, discouraged, impatient or anxious, but from ministers of the Gospel whose lives glow with fervor, who have first received the joy of the Christ, and who are willing to risk their lives so that the Kingdom may be proclaimed, and the Church established in the midst of the world.⁶

“Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.” (Luke 1:45)⁷

⁵ Synod of Bishops, The New Evangelization for the transmission of the Christian Faith, 2012, The Joy of Evangelizing 169, Vatican City.va

⁶ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelii nuntiandi, 8 December 1975,80:AAS68(1976)75.

⁷ “The New American Bible - IntraText,” www.vatican.va (Libreria Editrice Vaticana), accessed April 18, 2022, .

Addendum 1 Roles and Responsibilities

A cooperative effort with multiple ears will be needed to accomplish the objectives of the Strategic Plan. This includes every member of Pastoral Council, clergy, staff, Servant Leadership Team, and an every-increasing number of "missionary disciples".

Pastoral Council:

The Pastoral Council conducts long-term strategic planning for the Parish. They collect data on all aspects of parish activities, assess and prioritize resources according to the vision and mission, and develop criteria to assess the effectiveness of work being done to achieve parish goals. The Pastoral Council also provides oversight of the execution of these plans by the SLT.

The Servant Leadership Team (SLT):

The Servant Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for short-range planning and execution of activities in support of the vision and mission. Each member of the SLT is accountable to the Pastor, but the group functions as a team. The SLT meets weekly for several hours to pray and discern as they establish short-term priorities, respond to needs and challenges and execute the strategic goals of the plan established by the Pastoral council.

Finance Council:

The Finance Council advises the pastor on all financial matters. They monitor and provide oversight for the financial health of the Parish. This includes ongoing review of financial performance as well as approving future budgets. It is important that the Finance Council align budget priorities in support of the strategic direction of the Parish.

Addendum 2 Glossary of Terms

Active adult parishioners: a parishioner who has donated at least once per year.

Conversion-oriented event/program: Events, retreats, or courses that are designed to present the central Gospel message (the Kerygma) in such a way that it invites a response from the participant to surrender their life to the Lord Jesus, and invites the Holy Spirit to be activated in their hearts.

Goals: These are the end state envisioned by the Strategic Plan in each pillar supporting the Mission and Vision statements. Ideally, these are things that people coming to the parish would say about us.

Koinonia: intimate spiritual communion and participative sharing in a common religious commitment and spiritual community.⁸

Missionary Disciples: People who have crossed the threshold of intentional discipleship and understand their true identity, call, and mission is to make disciples of others. Missionary disciples are prayerful people who listen to where the Lord is calling them to invite others into conversations and experiences of faith, witness their faith in friendship, acts of service, word, and deed, and courageously accompany others on the journey to knowing God more deeply.

Objectives: These are the measurable, time bound steps being taken to execute our long-range goals. Objectives can adapt as the strategy meeting the real world either in terms of deadlines or what is attempting to be accomplished. Goals should not change.

Sunday Mass: Any Mass that meets one's Sunday obligation, including Saturday evening Masses.

The Great Commission: All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age. (Matthew 28: 18 – 20)⁹

The Church has Left the Building: The Church is meant to thrive outside the walls of the church house by serving others and being a means of God's grace. We must proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and establish the Kingdom of God on earth. *Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord!*

⁸ *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, s.v. "koinonia," accessed April 18, 2022, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/koinonia>.

⁹ "The New American Bible - IntraText," www.vatican.va (Libreria Editrice Vaticana), accessed April 18, 2022.