

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri

Renovation and Beyond: A Plan for Ministries

Introduction

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Parish is the oldest worshipping congregation of Kansas City, dating back to a log cabin church (St. Regis) at 11th and Pennsylvania in 1834. Renamed the Immaculate Conception Church and relocated at its present site, the Parish later became the Cathedral of the newly formed Diocese of Kansas City in 1884. When the new Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph was formed in 1956, The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception was designated The Cathedral Church of the entire Diocese.

The Cathedral Parish serves an area bounded by 6th Street/the river to the north and 18th Street to the south, the state line on the west and Charlotte Street to the east. Almost 1200 households comprise its membership. Typical of urban cathedrals, however, members come from throughout the metro area. The Cathedral's environs are a diverse and vibrant mix of residences, businesses and religious and civic institutions. New business investment, the expansion of Bartle Hall, growing relationships with neighboring churches and community organizations, and plans for the development of the Broadway corridor highlight the Cathedral's unique position in the city and its evolving role. This reality, combined with the Cathedral's role as the Mother Church of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, creates ever-new opportunities for ministry, as well as implications for resources needed to support these ministries.

As the Cathedral began the renovation of its historic building in 2000, it became obvious that a vision for its future must include planning for the expansion of ministries and related staffing and space. This strategic plan is a result of that realization. It is, however, only the beginning of an ongoing process. As the Cathedral continues to listen to emerging needs and opportunities, it must also continue to plan to make the Gospel relevant to the moment. "Renovation and Beyond" will extend into an unlimited future.

The Planning Process

- In July 2000, the Cathedral contracted with nonprofit consultants, Joan R. DeMerchant and Michael LeCluyse to facilitate a planning process for ministry. A Strategic Planning Core Committee was formed, comprised of staff members and parish and diocesan representatives. The Committee reviewed the overall process, determined who should be involved in which phases—and how, developed a calendar, and determined how the process would be communicated to key stakeholders. This Committee drafted mission and values components for later review by others and helped to shape questions for a parish survey and a survey of the Downtown Council.
- An all-day Planning Event took place at Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral on November 4, 2000. More than 60 parish and community leaders were invited to give input on the Cathedral’s mission and core values, to describe their visions for the ministries of Spirituality and the Arts, Education and Service, and to identify resources needed to support these visions.
- Ideas for ministry from the Planning Event were then tested in surveys sent to 1400 households of registered parishioners and “Friends” of the Cathedral and to 21 members of the Downtown Council. 191 persons (14% of those surveyed) responded to the parish survey; 13 civic leaders (62% of those surveyed) responded to the Downtown Council survey. Parishioners were also given the opportunity to give any additional input to parish staff.
- At a second Planning Session on May 31, 2001, a smaller group of staff and parish leaders met to: a) develop vision statements for each ministry area, b) incorporate results from the two surveys in the identification of key initiatives to be undertaken in the next several years, c) identify actions needed in the next one-two years (through approximately 2002), and d) further discuss staffing and space needs. Responsibilities for completion of the plan and timelines were established. A Strategic Planning Implementation Committee (Susan Engel, staff; Barbara Olberding and JC Sanders, parishioners) was appointed to ensure the completion of the plan and its implementation until the establishment of a leadership structure to assume that responsibility.
- This document summarizes the decisions of this process and represents the input of more than 200 people. It presumes that planning will continue at the Cathedral on an annual basis to move forward the ministry visions articulated here.

The Mission of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

As the mother church of the Diocese, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception is the spiritual, prophetic and physical symbol of Catholic presence in the area. As a beacon of faith and hospitality, we are a center of worship, learning and service. Following the Gospel vision of Jesus, we promote and work for the common well being of all through our ministries in the religious, civic, cultural, poor and marginalized communities.

Our Core Values

We affirm that we are called to:

- ◆ ***Welcome**—embrace the diversity that enriches our community*
- ◆ ***Model**—live the Gospel message through worship, learning, teaching and service*
- ◆ ***Be prophetic**—envision the future to the full extent of the Gospel ideal*
- ◆ ***Be compassionate**—demonstrate care and concern for all*
- ◆ ***Be an urban presence**—promote religious, civic and cultural dialogue*

Our Vision for the Ministry of Prayer/Spirituality and the Arts

We affirm that the ministry of prayer and spirituality is the essence of this intentional community. Our liturgies and celebrations will make a connection to our everyday life. We will always recognize the importance of praising and thanking God through inspiring worship, music and the arts.

Initiatives to realize this vision:

Ensure that the ministries of Eucharist, word, hospitality and music enrich the Cathedral

Maintain the quality of liturgical services and experiences during the renovation period

Encourage the entire parish community, the Diocese, civic and cultural organizations of Kansas City to join together in celebrating the rededication of the worship, meeting and celebration space

In 2001:

Convene a Liturgical Advisory Group that will provide leadership, training, recruitment and scheduling for each of the liturgical ministries

In 2001 and 2002:

- Develop a Transition Liturgy for our movement to Donnelly Hall
- Develop a Liturgy/social event to present the Strategic Plan to the Parish
- Communicate through the parish bulletin all liturgical events

In 2002:

Utilize the Liturgical Advisory Group to:

- Develop a rededication plan that includes involvement from parish, Diocese, downtown and arts communities
- Develop a communications plan that creates awareness of and excitement for the new Cathedral spaces

The Ministry of Prayer/Spirituality and the Arts (continued)

Initiatives to realize this vision:

Reaffirm the Cathedral's role as a center of worship and the arts in the post-renovation era

In 2002:

Expand the role of the Liturgical Advisory Group to include planning for:

- Utilization of new organ for recital series between Downtown Cathedrals
- Capitalizing on each Cathedral's acoustic environment, e.g., CIC for Renaissance and Medieval music, GHT for Baroque
- Creating a structure for joint concert series and performance venues
- Cathedral spaces as a host for art and gallery showings
- Cathedral links to new Downtown Performing Arts Center

Our Vision for the Ministry of Education

The educational ministry will be a source of support to the parishioners and friends of the Cathedral. We will strive to provide nourishment to the Diocesan Church and inspiration to the civic society, through our prophetic witness, formative environment, and welcoming presence.

Initiatives to realize this vision:

Enable our community to reflect on and respond to present and future spiritual needs of persons in the 21st century

Create a structure to ensure that the Cathedral's integrative vision for formation at all levels becomes a reality

In 2001:

Form a committee to study and write a plan to:

- Increase an awareness of spiritual trends and needs among the diverse membership populations
- Share relationships of Catholic beliefs to current issues
- Consider current technology and information systems as learning processes
- Seek out the arts and media as learning experiences

- Convene an Adult Formation Advisory Circle consisting of members of the Cathedral Parish, the Diocese, and the larger community that will:
- Focus on the mission and values of the Parish and its educational plan
- Integrate and communicate among the various expressions of formation and programs offered
- Strengthen planning committees for each program

The Ministry of Education (continued)

Encourage learning experiences of dialogue with civic, interfaith and cultural communities

Highlight the re-opening of the Cathedral worship space as a key learning opportunity

Nurture collaborative endeavors in educational programming

In 2002:

- Study city planning documents (Focus 2000) connected with educational opportunities for adults
- Work with Cathedral Social Services and the Learning and Living Justice Education Program
- Offer Cathedral learning spaces for hosting cultural and civic events

- Design Open House learning experiences for parishioners using historical, liturgical and architectural information (using the Calvin Institute Grant)
- Host learning experiences for Diocesan, ecumenical and civic groups in the new environment
- Develop a reflective booklet for participants for prayer and education

- Continue programming with Grace and Holy Trinity Episcopal Cathedral through expansion of the Lenten Academy
- Welcome and host Diocesan educational events
- Co-sponsor events (especially through the Cathedral Center for Faith and Work) with higher education institutions and businesses

Our Vision for the Ministry of Service

Cathedral Social Services will be a compassionate, helping presence and will promote the common well being of all members of our community. We are particularly concerned for the poor and marginalized. Their needs will receive our greatest attention. We will raise up the concerns of our community, reflect on our Christian values and Catholic teachings, and then act to achieve the common good.

Initiatives to realize this vision:

Increase our involvement in assisting the homeless in Kansas City by working collaboratively with other community groups to address root causes

Achieve a fuller understanding of Catholic Social Teachings and begin to apply these teachings in the public arena

In 2001:

Form a Homeless Services Coalition Team who will:

- Increase awareness of the Homeless Services Coalition by attending monthly membership meetings
- Involve Cathedral parishioners in two efforts of the Homeless Services Coalition

Cathedral Social Services Staff will hold one leadership position within the Kansas City Homeless Services Coalition

In 2001 and 2002:

Offer a Learning and Living and Learning Justice Education Series and have 10-15 parishioners complete the series

The Ministry of Service (continued)

Learn how to address the justice concerns of our community (e.g., affordable housing, gentrification of the downtown community, displacement of people)

Assist those who need Legal Services

In 2001 and 2002:

Work with the Kansas City Church/Community Organization (CCO) to begin the feasibility/organization process which will:

- Conduct 100 one-on-one interviews
- Form an inviting committee
- Conduct three leadership training sessions
- Convene a Cathedral Organizing Committee
- Identify one issue for advocacy

In 2002:

- Establish a Cathedral Justice Center that includes the services of six attorneys
- Provide legal advice and representation for ten people

Our Vision for the Ministry of Administration and Leadership

The Cathedral's leadership and administration is the overall ministry that is the most sensitive to the variety of charisms in the local Church and responsible for their proper, enlightened ordering in charity. The vision for leadership and administration ministry over the next five years is to continue to provide support, organization, coordination, direction, communication and funding for the various individual ministries.

Initiatives to realize this vision:

Stimulate and inspire the thinking of:

- **The Cathedral staff**
- **The Cathedral community**
- **The Diocese**

Encourage increased parishioner participation in decision making and leadership

Facilitate understanding of The Church in the Modern World (document of the Second Vatican Council)

Begin in 2001 and continue into the future:

- Seek the engagement of a carefully chosen visionary who is a prophetic theological scholar in ecclesiology (the “theology of the Church”)
- Organize a public forum for presentation to a wider audience while the scholar is in the area (a collaborative effort with the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph)
- Develop a plan for this
- Create an entity similar to a Pastoral Council

Plan and implement a parish-wide program to study the vision and application of this document

Administration and Leadership (continued)

Provide ongoing opportunities for professional development of the staff

Ensure that the Cathedral community has a voice in the selection of the next Rector/Pastor

Underscore the Cathedral's presence and participation in Kansas City's urban development

Ongoing:

- Develop plans for ongoing targeted staff education/training in their areas of competence
- Provide an adequate budget to support it
- Continue exploration of a potential Administrative/Ministerial support person

Make respectful plans for a process to recommend to the Bishop nominations toward the choice of the next Rector of the Cathedral

- Continue Cathedral representation and participation in the Broadway Corridor Project
- Continue Cathedral representation and participation in the Downtown Council
- Continue Cathedral representation and participation in the Civic Council

Draft Addendum

Our Vision for the Resource of Space

We will plan and provide post-renovation space that will advance the mission of the Cathedral and enhance all of its the ministries.

Initiatives to realize this vision:

Develop a plan to address space requirements.

Begin in 2001 and continue into the future:

Form a steering committee who will:

- Confirm space needs of Cathedral ministries and diocese
- Determine options available to meeting space needs
- Develop an overall configuration for the Cathedral Campus
- Delineate process needed to acquire additional space
- Provide leadership/oversight for continuing space plan endeavors