

***Long-Range Plan for
St. Thomas More Parish***

2006 - 2010

**Report of the Long-Range Planning Committee
for St. Thomas More Parish
to the Pastoral Advisory Council and Parish Community**

Presented August 2006

Executive Summary of the Report of the St. Thomas More Long-Range Planning Committee

From February 2006 to May 2006, a long-range planning committee for St. Thomas More parish met at the request of the Pastoral Advisory Council and the Pastor, Msgr. Elmer Holtman. The goal of the Long-Range Planning Committee was set by the Pastoral Advisory Council to propose a set of goals to be achieved by the parish over the next five years, addressing concerns raised by a Parish Survey conducted in 2005. These concerns focused in the areas of communication, adult faith formation and family-related ministries.

Maintaining effective parish communication, both internally and externally, was revealed by the Survey to be a primary concern addressed by the Long-Range Planning Committee. The Committee recommends creation of a Communication Coordinator staff position who will be charged with managing all modes of parish communication. The Communication Coordinator will be responsible for simplifying and enhancing the parish website, newsletters and Bulletin, by unifying and coordinating their combined message. The Committee recommends mechanisms for improving inter-ministry communication and communication between ministries and the parish community, in order to improve cooperation between ministries and involvement of parishioners. The Committee further recommends increasing personal contact with parishioners initially through an improved Hospitality Ministry. Finally, the Committee suggests the use of small group communities as a mechanism for more effective communication.

Furthering the effectiveness of the parish's Adult Faith Formation programs was addressed by the Committee. The Committee suggests a mechanism for Adult Faith Formation program development to meet various needs of parishioners at various stages of their spiritual development. The Committee also suggests continued development of the Adult Faith Formation leadership and catechists through the creation of a central Faith Formation leadership group. The Committee recommends improving publicizing the various Adult Faith Formation programs so that parishioners are made aware of the availability of such programs well in advance of their scheduled time.

The Committee also reviewed the state of the parish's family-related ministries. Of initial concern is not that there are not enough such ministries, but that there may be too many that thereby take away from families being together as families. The parish should take steps to encourage families to spend time together focused on moving away from "doing" and moving toward reflection. To this end, the Committee recommends developing leadership in the various family-related ministries that is trained in encouraging such reflection by teaching parishioners how to reflect. Steps should also be taken to communicate the message of reflecting together as families, including the creation of a parish-wide "family night" once a week.

Finally, the Pastoral Advisory Council is charged with overseeing the implementation of the goals and objectives of this Report, thereby responding to the spoken desires of the parish, as interpreted by this Committee.

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To the Pastoral Advisory Council and the Parish of St. Thomas More Catholic Church:

From February 2006 to May 2006, a committee to map out a long range plan for the parish was formed and met at the request of the Pastoral Advisory Council and the Pastor, Msgr. Elmer Holtman. The goal of the Committee was set by the Council to propose a set of goals to be achieved by the parish over the next five years, addressing concerns raised by a Parish Survey conducted in 2005. These concerns focused in the areas of communication, adult faith formation and family-related ministries.

The Long Range Planning Committee was formed from a cross-section of parish leaders and staff. During formation of the Committee, potential members of the Committee were envisioned to be both those members of the parish who were thinking about the areas in which the parish could improve, as well as those who would be involved in implementing the plan. Members of the Committee included representatives from the Pastoral Advisory Council, the Finance Committee, the Stewardship Committee, the Liturgical Coordinator, the Adult Faith Formation Coordinator, the Nursery administrator, the Religious Education administrator, and the Parish Secretary, among others. The Appendix to this Report lists each member of the Committee.

In arriving at the goals and milestones of this Report, the Committee engaged in facilitated discussion aimed at exploring a range of solutions for parish concerns. The Committee categorized the solutions and formulated focused, achievable goals, as presented in this Report.

At all times, the Committee worked in a prayerful environment open to guidance from the Holy Spirit. The Committee also conducted its deliberations with the Parish Mission Statement as a foundation, in order to ensure that the resulting goals were in the spirit of the mission of St. Thomas More parish. Per the Mission Statement, the deliberations had a goal of advancing parish members on their paths to discipleship.

The Pastoral Advisory Council has committed itself to receive this Report and to facilitate the implementation of the goals expressed herein over the next five years. The Council will periodically review the Report and formulate agendas to achieve both the short and long term goals. It is understood that the Council will have flexibility to modify either the timetable for achieving the goals or the goals themselves, as circumstances of the parish warrant. The Council, however, also acknowledges that the goals expressed in this report are highly desirable and will strive to implement them, if practically possible.

I. Communications

While the parish has several good modes of communication, the Parish Survey revealed a variety of areas in which parish communications were perceived to be wanting. Discussion within the Long Range Planning Committee ultimately focused on three primary areas of communications that were areas of particular concern in the Survey: Ministries, Website / Bulletin / Newsletter, and Hospitality / Small Faith Communities. The goals related to these areas are discussed in this section, as are goals associated with related areas.

The key to implementing many of the communication goals expressed herein is the creation of a paid staff position responsible for communication coordination. It may be desirable for this position to ultimately coordinate all of the communication modes of the parish, in addition to those specifically expressed herein. The Communication Coordinator should be consulted on all parish-wide communications, regardless of whether it is discussed herein, in order to ensure a consistent and effective message is transmitted to the parish community. The Committee considers creation of this position and hiring of a person to fill that position to be of the highest priority. Details regarding the responsibilities of this position appear throughout this Report. The distributed nature of these details further emphasizes the importance of this position as the parish moves to the future.

A. Website / Bulletin / Newsletter / Phone System

The website, Bulletin and newsletters from the parish represent different modes of communication from the parish to parishioners. Currently, these various modes of communication often lack coordination of message and can frequently overload parishioners with information. The Committee recommends coordinating the message provided through these modes of communication, as well as simplifying the approach taken with each mode.

These particular modes of communication are also among the primary mechanisms through which the parish touches people outside of the parish (e.g., people moving into town, people considering moving to a new parish, and people who have a need to be served by the various ministries of the parish). Having a consistent and approachable message from these communication modes will serve to enhance the parish's mission to these people outside the parish community.

1. Communication Coordinator (Staff)

Viewed as essential to the goal of coordinating communication messages and modes is the creation of the Communication Coordinator staff position. This position is envisioned as the focal point for facilitating all parish communications, including those between ministries and communication from staff/ministries to the parish community and vice versa. This position will play a role in at least advising groups throughout the parish on how to enhance and achieve their communication goals.

Further, the Communication Coordinator should be charged with re-visioning the principal modes of communication within the parish (e.g., website, Bulletin and newsletters) with the goal of presenting a common theme (“look and feel”), as well as simplifying access to information and clarifying the message. This position should be paid staff, as the required coordination and duties are not seen as possible (or fair) to be performed on a volunteer basis. It is suggested that the Communication Coordinator should have prior experience and/or a degree in communication. It is also desirable that the Communication Coordinator have an understanding of working in a parish environment.

2. Website Enhancement and Re-Visioning

One of the primary modes of communication within the parish should be the website. The current model for the website is viewed as not being as effective in providing communication as it could / should be, given the current state of web-based technology. Thus, the Committee strongly advises that the parish website be reworked.

Primary responsibility for seeing such reworking occur rests with the Communication Coordinator. This will enable themes presented in the website to be mirrored in other principal modes of communication. The Communication Coordinator is advised to form a website team to identify requirements for the website. Such a team could be comprised of parishioners or local businesses that specialize in web-based communications who can advise as to areas that could be modified to enhance the parish’s web-based communication.

One question that needs to be answered is “what, as a parish, do we want the website to be able to do?” Depending upon the level of sophistication desired and the perceived immediate need for a particular improvement, implementation could be phased in over a period of time in order to get higher priority improvements on-line as early as possible.

The Committee provides the following as suggestions of desirable website content and functionality:

- Contact information: parish staff, ministries, parish directory (with appropriate protections)
- Schedule of events
- Registration for Parish and Ministry Events and Classes
- Room reservations (with appropriate controls in place)
- Enhanced scheduling for liturgical ministers
- Adding or updating parishioner records (with appropriate protections)
- Submitting changes to automatic contributions
- Email or Board groups with specific interest areas or issues

These suggestions are presented merely as examples and not as requirements or as an exhaustive list.

3. Phone System with Pre-Recorded Information

The Committee believes that a means for providing routine information to parishioners is desirable. Much like how the web site could be used, one suggestion is a phone system that includes a four-digit set of numbers by which a parishioner could access specific types of information (e.g., Mass times, contact information for help ministries, etc.). This is not envisioned to be used for cold calls or for very specific, one-time information or as a phone answering system but, instead, as a mechanism for parishioners to get access to routine information. Both the web site and the phone system can provide complementary information, thereby avoiding excluding people who do not have, or prefer not to use, one or the other, while at the same time utilizing the unique advantages of disseminating information and functionality of each.

The Communication Coordinator is advised to form a team to determine the types of information to be provided by such a system and to determine whether such a system is actually feasible, practically and financially, for St. Thomas More.

Once such a system is developed and implemented, the Committee recommends providing a method for parishioners to have easy access to the phone number and extensions. Suggestions include a refrigerator magnet, a bulletin insert, or a listing near the front of the parish directory.

4. Avoid Information Overload

As stated above, one of the primary responsibilities for the Communication Coordinator is to coordinate the message being presented through the various parish communication modes. The Committee believes that the current system of relatively independent modes of communication that are not centrally controlled or organized results in information overload that has the effect of parishioners missing or ignoring important information.

One suggestion for reducing such overload is to consolidate the Bulletin inserts, RE newsletter, Faith Formation newsletter, Stewardship newsletter, and Seasonal newsletters into one information source that can be communicated in a number of ways, but with the same information. Another suggestion is to continually monitor the information presented in the Bulletin and determine more effective ways of presenting that information.

B. Ministries

Of primary consideration in improving ministry-related communication is the desire to improve inter-ministry cooperation as well as communication from the various ministries to the parish community. Inter-ministry communication is addressed by re-visioning the Stewardship Committee into a Stewardship Commission, which will have a goal of building community between ministry leaders. The Stewardship Commission, as well as more intimate guidance of the various ministries, is envisioned to be under the purview of a Ministry Coordinator who may be a parish staff member (due to different areas of expertise and responsibility, this is not envisioned to be the Communication Coordinator). A logical offshoot of inter-ministry coordination is the dissemination of information to the parish community.

1. Ministry Leadership Formation

In order to improve parish communication, it is important to start with those who lead the various ministries. This will increase communication and sharing between the various ministries and will also permit a unified and simplified message from the ministries. By building community with the ministry leaders, we will reduce the generation of ministry “silos.” This will enable ministry leadership to be formed within the overall mission of the parish versus the mission of their particular ministry.

The Stewardship Commission should be charged to collaborate with the Ministry Coordinator in addressing development of ministry leaders. Training of ministry leaders should be based on a foundation that ministry leaders should be people of lived faith. Training for each ministry should include spiritual development, as well as practical tools for the ministry, and that all ministry helps to develop the mission of the Church. Ministry leaders should also be reminded that they are not only responsible for their own faith journey, but also are, in part, responsible for the path to discipleship of members of their ministry and should be accordingly trained to enhance the journey on that path.

2. Group Ministries in Common, Mission-Based Categories

In addition to ministry leadership formation, the Committee recommends that ministries be grouped into categories based, for example, upon the mission of the parish. The Mission Statement reflects three missions of the Church: liturgy, service and formation. We envision similar groupings of the parish ministries.

The actual groupings should be determined by the Stewardship Commission with a goal of enhancing the missions of the ministries themselves, communication between the ministries, and administration of the ministries. Common ministries can work together on functions that cross their ministry boundaries. Such cooperation can begin with getting the ministry leaders together a few times a year to share ideas. Ministry leaders can then disseminate the cooperation message to members of their ministries. Members of ministries may then learn more about complementary missions of other ministries and thereby make ministry members more informative to other parishioners (e.g., which ministries are doing what).

Among the benefits of organizing ministries into common groups is that together ministries within these groups can coordinate, plan and execute their mission and informational activities (see below). Another benefit is that ministries with common missions would no longer operate in silos, but would develop cooperative and supportive relationships, thereby strengthening all the ministries.

3. Coordinate Information Regarding Ministry Activities

An outgrowth of the above recommendations can be a focus on a common message and a core set of events. One suggestion is that a large sign or board in front of the church can be used to highlight a few upcoming parish events (similar to a restaurant’s “Today’s Specials” board). Another suggestion is for categorically similar ministries discussed above to coordinate an information booth related to that category after each Mass for one or more weeks. Parishioners could immediately indicate their

interest in one or more of the featured ministries and could be welcomed into the ministry almost immediately. Such activities can be used to supplement current ministry registration activities, such as the Ministry Fair.

The Stewardship Commission and/or the Ministry Coordinator should work closely with the Communications Coordinator in developing communications modes that will effectively enhance these types of communications between the various ministries and the parish community.

C. Hospitality / Small Groups

The Committee believes that communication is best started with a personal touch. This personal touch can begin within the Mass and expand from that. The suggestions presented here may be implemented by modifying how Hospitality Ministers are trained to greet people coming into Mass or could be performed by a new ministry. The details of implementing this are left to the Pastoral Advisory Council.

1. Hospitality Ministers

The Committee believes that we as a parish community need to be more proactive in identifying, welcoming and helping newcomers get information and be introduced to the community. By doing so, we are showing these people that we care that they are here. Often new (or long-time members) have questions that they don't know who to ask for the answers. The Committee suggests that certain hospitality ministers be specially trained to answer questions or direct questioners to a person who may have the answer. These ministers would be identifiable by a badge or button (e.g., imprinted with "Ask Me"). To be effective, these ministers should be conspicuous and available both before and after Mass, both inside and outside of the church.

The presider can tell the congregation to go to these ministers if they need any type of help or information. These ministers could also go to coffee and doughnuts after Mass to help introduce newcomers to parishioners to make them feel more welcome.

2. A Welcome from the Pulpit

Often it is difficult to know who is a new member within the parish and who is not. We suggest that during an appropriate time within the Mass, the presider invite new people to stand and be welcomed. This would allow people around them to identify the new folks and to encourage them to introduce themselves. This would go beyond the shaking of hands that we have done in the past. There could also be a personal invitation from the pulpit to coffee and doughnuts after Mass.

3. Be Open to the Needs of Hispanic Members

Due to the growing number of Hispanic members of the parish community, the Committee believes that we need to ensure that they feel integrated into the St. Thomas More community and not isolated. Active Hispanic members of the community should be approached and asked if they can identify any specific needs that are not currently being met. The Committee does not believe that it is a good idea, at this time, to have a

separate service (e.g., a Spanish Mass), as a separate service would serve to separate the community rather than integrate. But as a community we should be aware of the growing Hispanic presence within the parish and be responsive to their needs on an ongoing basis.

4. Small Group Communities

The size of the parish community, while a blessing, can be a hindrance to effectively bring new members of the parish into the community. The Committee believes that we can help to alleviate this issue by dividing the parish into small group communities that can meet in the homes of parishioners. One way of dividing is by geography, and another is by interest. Already, the Young Families ministry has provided one such small group community mechanism. Implementation details, such as choosing small group coordinators, is left to the Pastoral Council.

A geographic dividing can be accomplished by having a family in each neighborhood open their home to socialize with other local parishioners, and perhaps have ministry leaders come to speak about their ministry. Bible study and discussion groups could also be started, if there was a demand. Each local group could develop according to the needs of the people attending.

II. Adult Faith Formation

The second area of need addressed by the Long Range Planning Committee was Adult Faith Formation. At the outset, it should be noted that between the time of the 2005 Parish Survey and the convening of the Committee in 2006, the parish adult faith formation program advanced through the efforts of John Osman, the parish's volunteer coordinator for adult faith formation. To date, Mr. Osman's program has focused on training a core group of catechists in the art of facilitating various faith formation activities and programs. In addition, Mr. Osman and this core group have been involved in the development of programs for the parish community. Several adult faith formation programs have also been offered in this time span.

Given this progress to date, the Committee concentrated its review on program development and how to attract parishioners to the various programs that may be offered. The Committee focused on what we as a parish are called on to provide in the area of adult faith formation, the types of programs and why those programs are important, and finally, and perhaps most importantly for the Pastoral Advisory Council, how these ends might be reached.

A. What We Are Called To Do

Two basic situations relate to when a person is ready to explore adult faith formation opportunities: (1) when some aspect of a person's faith is being challenged in some way, and (2) when that person feels a need to know or explore some aspect of their faith or the Church. The Adult Faith Formation program should be capable of addressing both of these stages in people's lives. The program should also be structured to recognize that not everyone enters a particular stage at the same time in their life. The program should also be sufficiently flexible to recognize current events-type issues (spiritual, clerical or secular) of interest or concern to parishioners who want to learn more about the Church's teachings related to that area. In short, an ideal curriculum should be in place that is capable of "feeding parishioners when they are ready to be fed." This requires both a broad range of topics targeted at many levels of spiritual development and a trained group of people ready to teach those programs.

We should also be ready to actively convince parishioners that adult faith formation can fill a need that they are experiencing when they are at a particular stage in their lives or faith journey. To this end, publicity of available curriculum choices should be included in various public communications modes presented within the parish, including homilies, the website, the Bulletin, and the information board introduced above. Such publicity should be accomplished with the counsel of the Communication Coordinator.

Topical development is a key in aiding parishioners in their decision to take part in faith formation activities. One suggestion is development of basic or fundamental programs that allows parishioners to explore basic "Whys, Hows and Whats" of the Church and scripture, and which ultimately act as a stepping stones for parishioners to seek out other presented topics. Those other topics could include current events-related programs (e.g., what the Church is saying about cloning, AIDS, or various books or

movies of controversy), ethical training to aid parishioners in making informed decisions about various real-life issues presented in their lives, and aiding Catholic Christians in maintaining their faith life in today's secular world. Development of these topics and programs can be centered around various aspects of the Church that an average parishioner interacts with, as discussed in the following section. The fundamental offerings should also be repeated on a regular basis in order to provide continuing opportunities for people to begin exploring adult faith formation opportunities.

B. A Mechanism for Development and Publicizing

As discussed above, topical development is of great importance in encouraging parishioners to explore and participate in faith formation opportunities. Parishioners will most likely be interested in topics related to their primary interactions with the Church and the parish, and therefore would most likely to attend programs linked with those topics. Using this assumption, topics related to the Mass or Eucharist are of primary interest. Other programs could include liturgies, or "liturgy-like" programs (e.g., novenas, missions, feast day celebrations, and the like), taking place during the week and overarching year-long programs.

Most parishioners come to Mass on a weekly basis. Therefore, developing faith formation opportunities that take advantage of people being in Mass is an obvious first step in encouraging parishioners to delve deeper into faith formation. Programs could include a variety of types of teaching within the context of the Mass itself, such as through specifically-targeted homilies. In addition, lectionary-based programs for small groups could be formed outside of the context of Mass, but could be "advertised" within the weekend Masses and using other parish modes of communication in coordination with the Communications Coordinator.

Faith formation need not be based on a formalized "teaching" program. Other faith formation opportunities can be provided for parishioners to come together during the week to experience faith through communal prayer. These opportunities can include faith formation through weekday liturgies and other types of prayer gatherings, including devotional prayer and bible study.

In recent years, the parish has developed both liturgical and non-liturgical programs around diocesan, national, and Vatican-based annual themes (e.g., Year of the Eucharist and Year of Forgiveness and Healing). The programs provide an opportunity for parishioners to hear several subtopics within the context of the annual theme, thus encouraging growth of both the mind and spirit. A similar approach can be taken to faith formation. An overarching seasonal or annual theme can be chosen around which a variety of programs could be designed. This theme should be advertised to the parish, and notification of the related programs should also be well distributed using appropriate modes of communication. Depending upon the liturgical theme, tying the faith formation theme to the liturgical theme could serve to address many of the issues raised above, in that parishioners may be more likely to explore faith formation opportunities that are related to the theme-related liturgical presentations.

C. A Structure to Provide Faith Formation Opportunities

A multitude of different types of programs are discussed above. Within each category there may be many topically specific categories, as well. Catechists will need to be trained to provide these programs. In order to accomplish these goals, a central Faith Formation leadership group should be formed within the next twelve months that will be tasked with program development and catechist development. It is suggested that John Osman and his existing catechist development committee should be tasked by the Pastor and the Pastoral Advisory Council to form this central Faith Formation leadership group, to the extent that this group is not already formed within the context of the current committee.

Program development should include materials to facilitate any catechist presenting those materials. Such flexibility is highly desirable. Program development should also include a mechanism for evaluation of feedback from program participants.

The central Faith Formation group should collaborate with the Communications Coordinator in presenting timely and accurate information about programs in the parish. Implementation is contingent upon the hiring of the Communications Coordinator.

As the responsibilities for the Faith Formation coordinator grow, the position may evolve beyond the reasonable capacity for a volunteer. The Pastor, Finance Committee and Pastoral Council should monitor this situation and consider the creation of a full-time pastoral staff position tasked with development and coordination of adult faith formation programs, collaboration with existing offices and programs in the parish.

III. Family-Related Ministries

St. Thomas More currently offers many family-related ministries. These ministries are targeted at parents (e.g., Mothers of Young Children, Single Parents, and Parents for Life), couples (e.g., Families of Faith, Couples of Faith), children (e.g., Religious Education, Vacation Bible School, the Nursery), and family togetherness (e.g., FunFest, Hospitality, Coffee & Donuts). Indeed, a concern is not that the parish doesn't offer enough family-related ministries, but that we may offer so many family-related ministry opportunities that time for families to be together as families is being sacrificed.

Family-related ministries should be provided to strengthen families and relationships within families. Ministries in this area should emphasize that the activity is being done as a family and the effect that this activity has upon relationships within the family and the parish community. But of primary importance is that participants should be encouraged to and taught how to reflect on what they have accomplished, not only within the context of the ministry activity, but also what they do outside of the ministry as a family.

A. Building and Strengthening Families

The parish should encourage a “less is more” message with regard to the busyness of today’s families. Family members should focus on spending more time together as a family. Suggestions include a family hour, a meal a week where every family member is present, and catechism on how to be reflective as a family.

The parish should foster an environment conducive to family time by scheduling a “family night” once a week. It is suggested that the Pastor encourage the staff to schedule activities and programs so that one night a week is free to families to spend time together and no activities are scheduled to take place on campus that evening. This effort should be planned and promoted so that the parish is aware of the importance of family togetherness. This effort will take considerable effort in planning, cooperation and publicity and will likely take three to five years to fully implement. The Communication Coordinator should be involved in ensuring that the presence of these programs is effectively introduced to the parish.

The Pastoral Advisory Council should foster an environment in which organization of other activities targeted at family togetherness and reflection, beyond those already offered at the parish is encouraged. Family retreats should be considered a high priority for staff and ministries, and should be included in programs whenever possible. Development of family retreats will take great energy and skill in planning and will be dependent, at least in part, upon development of the parish’s faith formation program. The importance of such programs should be considered during planning of financial budgets. It is expected that it may take as long as five years to fully develop such a program. As discussed below, planning for these programs can be performed by a central organizer or group.

The parish should also continue to emphasize the school-related opportunities that St. Thomas More offers: the Pre-School and Holy Family Catholic School. Holy Family

is the Catholic school of St. Thomas More. We should continue to communicate this message. For example, when activities occur that benefit Holy Family (e.g., FunFest), that fact should be provided to the parish.

B. Leadership

Ministry leaders and facilitators in the family-related ministries should be developed through programs that emphasize the parish's message related to families. One possibility is for a development program for family-related ministry leaders to be developed along similar lines to those used by the faith formation catechist training group.

Necessary to proper development of programs is a central organizer. The Pastor, Pastoral Council and Finance Committee should consider forming a staff position or filling a volunteer position with a responsibility of developing family-related ministries and organizing leadership development within family-related ministries. The scope of responsibilities for such leadership development could be included within the ministry coordinator position discussed in Section I.B.

It is desirable that leaders and facilitators of family-related ministries have an ongoing opportunity to learn how to catechize all the suggested ideas above. Examples of topics and skills to be addressed include:

- establish a structure for family-related ministries that includes prayer, scripture, reflection and sharing;
- emphasize prayer and reflection within the context of the various family-related ministries;
- discuss how to get people to slow down and adopt a “less is more” philosophy; and
- teach family-related ministry leaders how to discern the next generation of leaders in those ministries.

The family-related ministries coordinator should also consider effective mechanisms for spreading the message to the parish. A thematic approach to catechizing family-related issues could be adopted (as discussed above with regard to faith formation). One possible theme that could be chosen is a “Year of Reflection and Direction.” The family-related ministries coordinator should work with the Communications Coordinator on evaluating mechanisms for spreading the message

C. Communication

The parish should seek to communicate a message of moving from “doing” to “reflection.” The family-related ministries coordinator should consider having the various family-related ministries sponsor Evenings of Reflection. Again, the parish could choose to have a weekly “family night” in which no events are scheduled and families are encouraged through various communications modes to spend that time together.

The various family-related ministries should be encouraged to spread the word about what they are about. Again, the Communications Coordinator could counsel these

ministries on effective use of the various communications modes within the parish. Only by disseminating information in an effective manner will parishioners be encouraged to participate in the many strong family-related ministries we have to offer.

IV. Conclusion

The Long-Range Planning Committee has formed these goals and objectives for the parish after several nights of spirited and Spirit-filled discussion. The Pastoral Advisory Council and all ministries and committees implicated by this Report are encouraged to cooperate and coordinate in the implementation of these suggestions.

The Pastoral Advisory Council is further encouraged to review the status of the implementation of these goals on a periodic basis, not to exceed annually. The Pastoral Advisory Council should develop criteria by which to evaluate the success and status of the implementation of the goals and abide by those criteria once set. Those criteria should be guided by the recommendations of this Report.

The Committee believes that these goals and objectives are fully-implementable within the next five years. The Committee further suggests that a new Long-Range Planning Committee be formed in or about 2011 to undertake an appropriate process to develop a new set of long-range goals and objectives for the parish.

Finally, the Committee expresses special thanks to Msgr. Elmer for his vision and his determination to not only adopt a listening posture to hear the needs of the parish, but to also take action in addressing those needs. We, as a parish, are truly blessed.

APPENDIX: Members of the Long Range Planning Committee

Listed below are the members of St. Thomas More who dedicated their time, talent, and spirit to the discussions that resulted in this Report. The parish gratefully acknowledges their efforts both within the context of the Long Range Planning Committee and their other ministries.

- Pat Aldridge
- Jim Casey
- Q Johnson
- Frank Kelly
- Cynthia Klaer-Jordan
- Steve Kliman
- Carolyn Kostelecky
- Beth Kuhn
- Debra Lohrsdorfer
- Cheryl “Max” Maxwell
- Kelli Merchant
- John Osman
- Alex Rodriguez
- Don Rosenberg
- Gene Saienga
- Mary Wilkie
- Jon Geld (Organizer)
- Pat Stankus (Facilitator and Organizer)
- Msgr. Elmer Holtman (Pastor and Organizer)