



ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI  
CATHOLIC CHURCH

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# Strategic Plan

2022 - 2027

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# Executive Summary



St. Francis of Assisi is a vibrant, diverse, and colossal Catholic Church founded originally as a missionary parish by approximately 12 Spanish-speaking families seeking to live their faith and to serve the local community. The original permanent facility was opened in 2001. Since its founding, St. Francis has grown to an estimated 14,000 families, which equates to approximately 47,000 parishioners representing multiple cultures. St. Francis supports the Frisco, Prosper, Celina, Little Elm, Princeton, and surrounding Collin County areas.

St. Francis is a dynamic parish with many passionate families and parishioners willing to serve and seeking to grow in their faith. It is also a diverse

community representing a vast number of different cultures and nationalities. This melting pot of a faith community is comprised of individuals with contrasting schools of thought, interests, and preferences of expressing their faith and worshipping.

The parish is blessed with an enormous size: it is one of the largest Catholic communities in the country let alone the diocese. With the parish's size and diversity – especially considering both English and Spanish languages prominently represented within the community – comes inherent opportunities, blessings, and challenges.

In 2013, St. Francis was very privileged to open a beautiful

Church and Chapel which truly established two preeminent sacred space landmarks in the region. The parish also benefited from enormous population growth in the Frisco and surrounding area that same decade. Per the U.S. Census, from 2010 – 2019, Frisco grew faster than any other “large city” (defined as any city larger than 50,000 people) in the country. At the start of 2010, 117,000 people resided in Frisco. By 2019, the city experienced a 71% increase to more than 200,000 people (outpacing the second largest city, Buckeye, Arizona by 15%). Thus far into the current decade and the growth trajectory continues.

While the Church and Chapel within St. Francis provide an excellent sacred space for the community to worship, the remaining facilities on the campus have proven to significantly lag in size and functionality and have started to show their age. Limited space continues to be a significant constraint for areas such as worship and liturgy, faith formation, youth, ministries, receptions, and conferences and retreats.

Another priority area for the parish must be evangelization. While St. Francis has been the beneficiary of organic growth through the population boom, there has not been a deliberate plan to reach out to potentially new parishioners in the area nor has there been a strategic effort to evangelize and bring people to Christ.

Another challenge that has bogged down the parish over the past few years has been a staff that was not aligned with the greatest needs of the parish community and not built with a winning culture.

However, over the past two years, Fr. Rudy Garcia, the Pastor, has instituted the Amazing Parish mindset beginning with the Parish Leadership Team which started with a restructuring of the staff and culture. Furthermore, parish leadership has taken great measure to overhaul the team culture and realign the staff to better serve the needs of the community. Better still, the staff is now firmly rooted in Christ with a heart of servant leadership. The parish is poised to take a quantum leap to better serve the existing community and bring in new members the likes of which have never been witnessed in Frisco. The purpose of this document is to give focus and direction to the efforts in an attempt to unleash the momentum.





# Introduction

## ***What is Strategic Planning and Why Do We Do It?***

St. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, describes the roles that were given to the Church for the purpose of Mission Statement: for service and building up and growing believers: “Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. He gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and others as teachers to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:7,11-13) In the spirit of St. Paul, we are a community equipped from Christ with an abundance of gifts. It is the purpose of the Strategic Plan to use these gifts to build the Church, the Kingdom of God, and to help each of us fulfill our baptismal call.

While there are many meritorious activities we can endeavor upon as a community, it is critical to be deliberate and focused. Thus, we have embarked upon a strategic planning process. Strategic planning is an organizational management activity that is used to:

*Set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees, volunteers, donors and other stake holders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, assess and adjust the organization’s direction in response to a changing environment, drive efficiency and productivity and bring clarity and focus to all*

**Vision Statement: To help one another  
get to Heaven by building God’s Kingdom.**

The Mission Statement of St. Francis of Assisi is the same Mission Statement that Jesus gave his eleven disciples (the Great Commissioning) found in the last chapter of Matthew.

# Mission Statement

The mission statement proclaims the core principles that guide and direct our parish and our culture. Our mission statement must be a moral compass for our staff, parishioners, volunteers, and ministries. The mission statement must guide our decision-making (both big and small) and establish a standard against which actions can be assessed.

**St. Francis of Assisi Mission Statement: Matthew 28: 16-20 (16) The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. (17) When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted. (18) Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) 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, (20) teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."**

The Mission Statement of St. Francis of Assisi is the same mission that Jesus gave his eleven disciples (the Great Commission) found in the last chapter of Matthew. In it we see how Jesus brings the disciples together to worship in verse 16 ("The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them."). Notice that the disciples worshiped Jesus. We too are called to worship Christ, and he calls us together each Sunday for Mass. Our faith stems from the act of adoration of Christ. There is a sentiment of unity, of community here as well. The 11 disciples worshiped as one, on the mountain, together. We too are called to be as one community – St. Francis of Assisi – to worship together and be united.

It's also important to notice two additional aspects in Matthew 28 verses 16 and 17. First, in verse 16, notice that the 11 disciples, not the 12 disciples, were called (note: by this point in Matthew's Gospel account, Judas had already hanged himself, see Matthew 27:5). Also, notice that when the disciples saw Jesus

in verse 17, they doubted. Why is this important? It serves as a reminder for us that it's okay to struggle with our faith and doubt and ask questions and grapple with our faith and the Lord at times. Faith is not easy and living the Catholic life is not without struggles.

Despite their brokenness and incompleteness (11 disciples and not 12) and even with their doubting, Jesus still loves his disciples just like he loves us. And notice after they doubted, in verse 18, Jesus then approaches them and tells them that "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me." And he proceeds to issue the commission to go and make disciples of all nations.

In verse 19, we see the emphasis on the action verb "Go" and "make disciples of all nations." This is a very proactive and bold directive given by Jesus. Jesus wants us to be courageous, to take decisive action, to step out of our comfort zones and be disciples. It is important that we consider our spheres of influence. Who can we bring Christ to? Everyone! Our immediate

families. Our neighbors. Our colleagues and coworkers. Our fellow parishioners. After Mass next week, ask the parishioner sitting next you how you can pray for them! And of course, beyond that. People we see in stores, restaurants, airplanes, anywhere.

Also in verse 19, we see the importance of baptism, the introduction of the sacraments and a tie back to the liturgy and the sacraments and the roots of the Church and doctrine by invoking the Holy Trinity ("The Father, Son and Holy Spirit").

The 20th verse underscores the importance of teaching and formation. It is important to note that the disciples spent a great deal of time, day after day, for the better part of three years with Jesus, learning from him and watching him. In fact, the word "disciple" means someone who is a "learner." We too must learn the faith and observe others who know it so we can absorb it and pass it on to others. To grow deeper in our own relationship and to be disciples of Christ, knowing our faith is imperative

# Matthew 28:16-20

## **“Worshiped”**

the disciples worship Jesus

## **“Doubted”**

the disciples grappled with their faith and struggled; but still obey and persevered

## **“Approached”**

Jesus approaches each of us and gives us the same message

## **“Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations”**

Jesus directs us to boldly go forward, to step out of our comfort zone

## **“Baptizing... Father, Son and Holy Spirit”**

there is an emphasis on bringing people into the Church, into our faith, and into the richness of the sacraments

## **“Teaching them”**

the disciples and apostles spent a great deal of time being taught and formed. We are all called to be formed and to never stop to learn and grown in our faith and spirituality and to pass that formation and wisdom on to others.

## **“I am with you always”**

Jesus leaves us with the promise and hope that he will always be alongside with us no matter how daunting the journey may seem



## Servant Leadership

The term “Servant Leadership” was originally coined in an essay in 1970 by Robert Greenleaf and it means ensuring that the growth and wellbeing of other people’s highest priority needs are being served first. While the term has been around for a little more than fifty years, the concept has been around for 2,000 years and was introduced by Jesus Christ.

Perhaps nowhere in Sacred Scripture is servant leadership better demonstrated than the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37). As servant leaders, we model our behavior after the Good Samaritan. Unlike the priest and Levite who passed by and ostensibly pondered what would happen to themselves if they helped the victim of the robbery, the Good Samaritan flipped the script and thought, if he doesn’t help the robbery victim, what will happen to the victim? The servant leader is

thoughtful, selfless, bold, takes courageous, swift action, plans ahead, is flexible and thinks fast on their feet and works hard and smart for Christ.

## Culture of Prayer and Discipleship

Throughout the Gospel, Jesus is seen praying dozens of times. He prays alone (Matthew 14:23), in public (John 11:41-42), before meals (Matthew 26:26), before important decisions (Luke 6:12-13), before and after healings (Mark 7:34-35), he prays teaching the importance of prayer (Matthew 21:22), he prays during difficult times (Matthew 26:36-56), and of course the Lord’s prayer (Luke 11:2-4), just to name a few of the times he prays in Scripture.

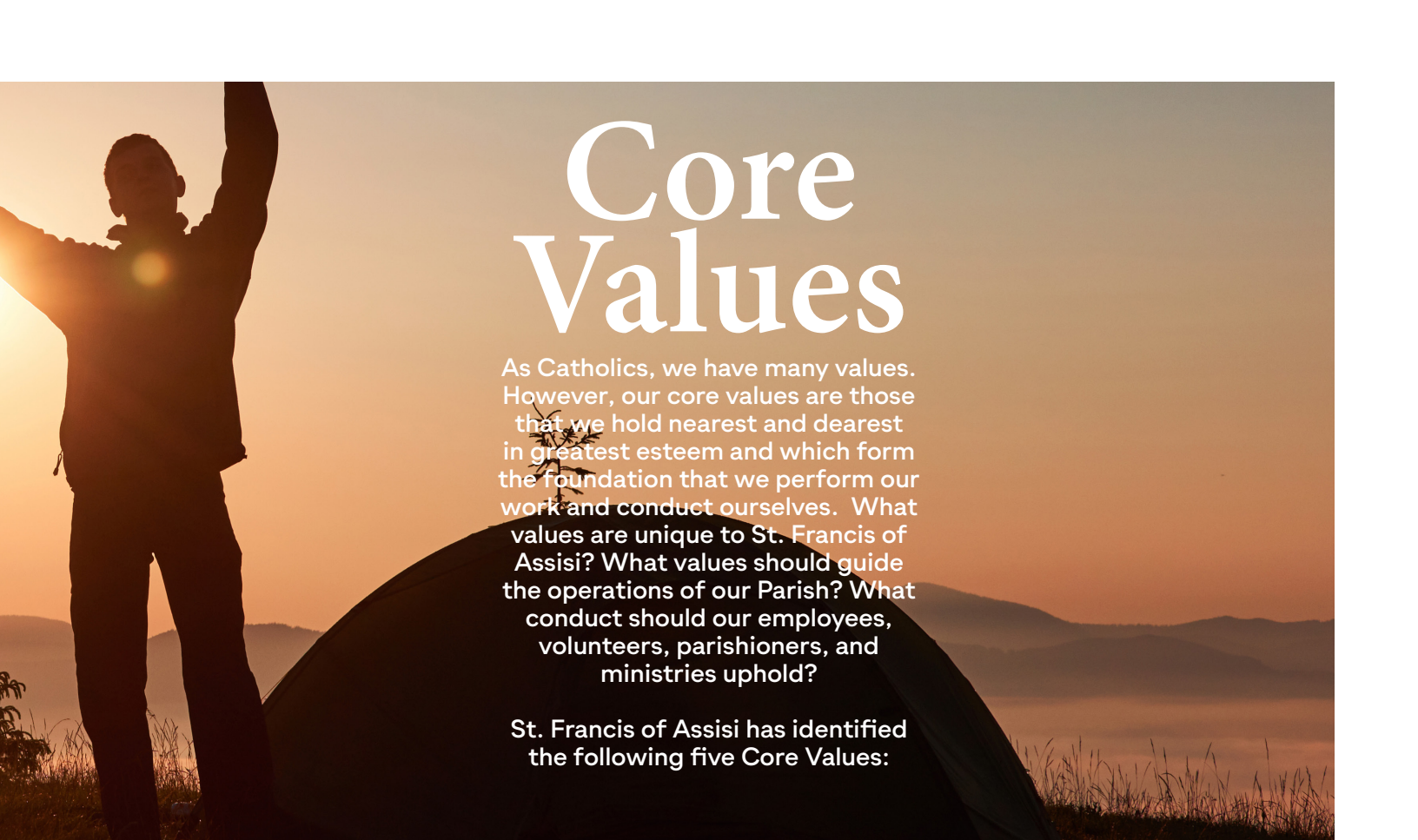
Just as Jesus used prayer as a major component of the culture and behavior of his public ministry and with his apostles and disciples which was handed down to the early church, we should too.

The culture that we build is one of the most important aspects of a successful parish outside of the Sacred Liturgy and Sacraments. We value a culture where prayer is held in highest priority and esteem. We value a culture where we work hard at pursuing a sincere, real relationship with Christ through prayer and dialogue with Him and with each other. We value a culture where we can become vulnerable and share what is on our hearts and minds and pray with each other.

We value a culture where Christ is truly at the center of our lives and at the center of each relationship.

## Many Parts One Body

As St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many are one body, so also Christ.” (1 Cor 12:12-14). Since our founding, St. Francis has blossomed to be a vibrant,



# Core Values

As Catholics, we have many values. However, our core values are those that we hold nearest and dearest in greatest esteem and which form the foundation that we perform our work and conduct ourselves. What values are unique to St. Francis of Assisi? What values should guide the operations of our Parish? What conduct should our employees, volunteers, parishioners, and ministries uphold?

St. Francis of Assisi has identified the following five Core Values:

vast community with many cultures, schools of thoughts, interests, and ways of expressing our faith. We seek to honor, respect, and welcome our entire faith community and cast a broad net to those seeking Christ and the Catholic faith today.

Being part of one body also means that we are often asked to sacrifice our own needs and wants – the particular good – for the needs and wants of the greater community – the common good.

## Family Focused:

Families are the lifeblood of our parish community. As Pope St. John Paul II once wrote, “Christian families build up the Church; for in the family the human person...is introduced into God’s family, which is the Church.” The Church finds in families the setting in which she can enter the human generations and where these in their turn can enter the Church. St. Francis

honors and respects our families and believes nurturing and serving all of them is essential.

St. Francis realizes that a “family” can mean a family with a mom and a dad and one child or 10 children or it can mean someone living alone such as a young adult or divorced man or woman or a widow, or married couple without children or empty nesters, or single parents or a family with multiple generations.

Regardless of the composition or size of the family, St. Francis prioritizes their needs.

## Walking in stride with the Church

St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), coined the Latin phrase: *sentire cum ecclesia*, which means “to think and feel with the Church”. This is an important core value for us as

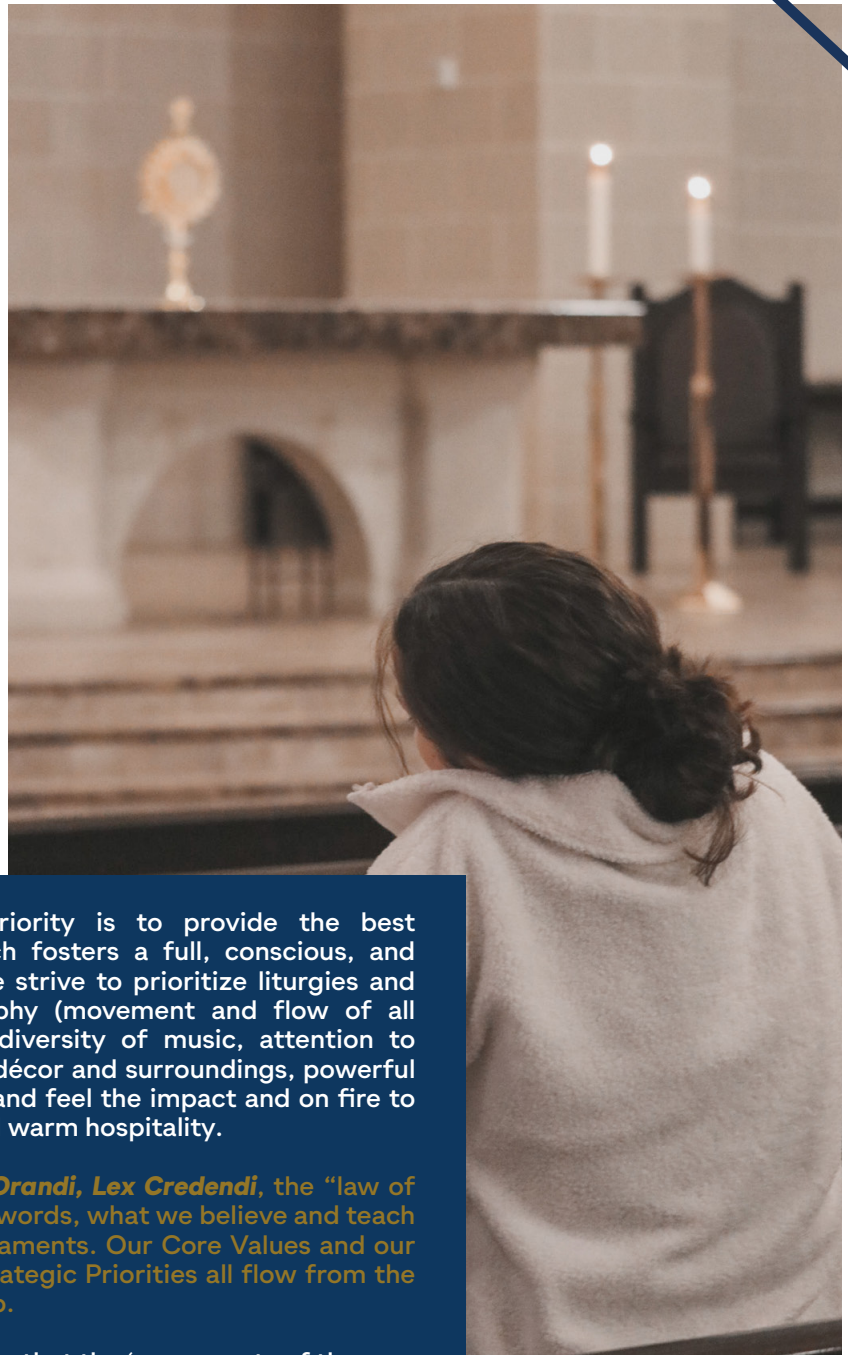
a parish to follow today. We are a community that seeks to unite legitimate expression of theology, liturgy, and social justice. We seek to be walking in step with the Church. We want to embrace the Church: never walking behind the Church; never ahead. We do not take extremes but seek to find a balance and to be in step with the Church and Magisterium.

# Goals: Five Strategic Priorities



## Goal #1: Excellence in Worship

“When they saw Him, they worshiped”  
(verse 17)



Our most important strategic priority is to provide the best possible liturgical experience which fosters a full, conscious, and active participation in liturgies. We strive to prioritize liturgies and sacraments with great choreography (movement and flow of all clergy, volunteers, servers, etc.), diversity of music, attention to detail, beautiful and proportionate décor and surroundings, powerful messages (parishioners are moved and feel the impact and on fire to seek Christ more) and delightful and warm hospitality.

We also believe in the idea of *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi*, the “law of prayer is the law of belief.” In other words, what we believe and teach is derived from our liturgy and sacraments. Our Core Values and our Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Strategic Priorities all flow from the importance of Excellence in Worship.

As Catholics, we believe and “profess that the ‘sacraments of the new law were...all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord.’” We also believe the sacraments are “of the Church” and “by the Church.” What’s more, “The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify...to build up the Body of Christ, and...to give worship to God. Because they are signs, they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen and express it (faith). (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nos 1113-1126).

Given the importance of the Sacraments and other vital liturgies (i.e., funerals), we also make this part of the top priority of St. Francis of Assisi. From the moment of initial contact from a family for a baptism, wedding, funeral, or Quinceañera, our aim is to journey with each individual and family and not only to successfully complete their sacrament or liturgy, but to provide them an opportunity for continued worship and community within St. Francis of Assisi.



**Goal #2:**  
**Transformation**  
**Through Formation**  
**“Teaching them to**  
**observe all that I**  
**have commanded”**  
**(verse 17)**



It is important to realize that Jesus spent the better part of three years with his Apostles teaching them. And they watched, listened, and observed him day in and day out. Much like children learning from their parents and students learning from their teachers, formation – passing on the faith – is an essential part of being a Catholic and being a disciple of Jesus Christ. In fact, the Latin meaning of the word “disciple” is “student.”

We also see in Act 2:42 that in the early church a big emphasis was placed on the teaching of the Apostles, on fellowship, and practicing the sacraments (especially breaking of the bread – Eucharist). St. Francis seeks to follow the same model that Christ and the Apostles did. That is why our second strategic priority is to pass on the faith in a clear, relatable, intelligent way so people can know the true, good and beautiful of their faith and live our faith to be their best self as God intends.

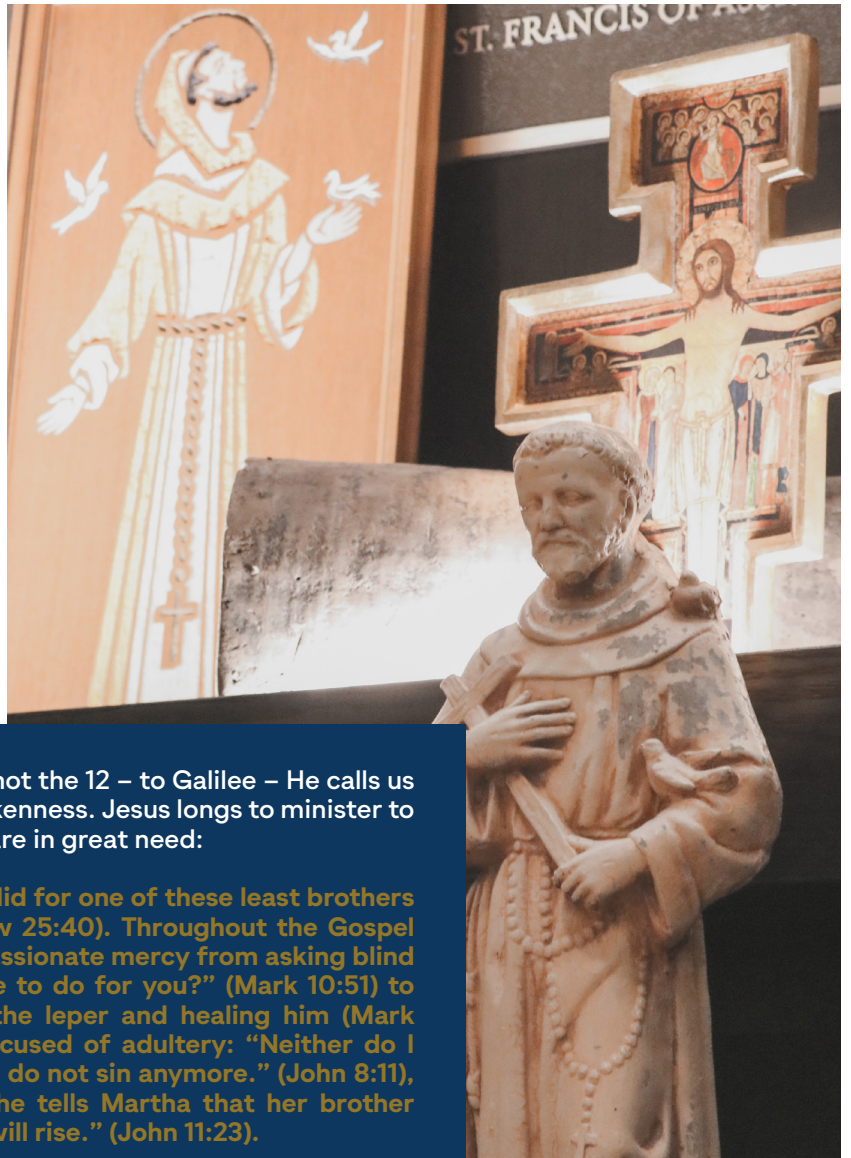
St. Francis will establish a variety of opportunities for passing on the faith and for forming our faith in ways that are convenient and that meet our parishioners where they are in life including managing busy schedules and taking into consideration that everyone is on their own faith journey. This can mean providing more resources online through our website and other digital resources. This may also mean more in person opportunities such as classes, lector/speaker series, forums, teaching Masses, etc. This can also mean smaller settings such as more scripture studies, community groups, prayer groups, conversation corners, theology on tap, etc.

These formation experiences and events not only strengthen our faith and increase our understanding of who Christ is, but they provide opportunities for our entire community to come together in fellowship and friendship. They also offer chances for each of us to invite newcomers to engage with our great St. Francis of Assisi community. These events can serve as wonderful settings for fallen away Catholics or as opportunities for parishioners to invite non-Catholic friends, family members, neighbors, co-workers, or strangers that our community courageously takes the chance to open up to in an act of faith and share our mission of Matthew 28.



### Goal #3: Compassionate Outreach

**“The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them.” (verse 16)**



Just as Jesus calls the 11 Apostles – not the 12 – to Galilee – He calls us in our messiness, sinfulness and brokenness. Jesus longs to minister to us, to heal and to cure us, when we are in great need:

**“Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40).** Throughout the Gospel accounts, he displays acts of compassionate mercy from asking blind Bartimaeus **“What do you want me to do for you?” (Mark 10:51)** to stretching out his hand to touch the leper and healing him (Mark 8:3), to exonerating the woman accused of adultery: **“Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore.” (John 8:11),** to comforting to sorrowful when he tells Martha that her brother Lazarus is not dead: **“Your brother will rise.” (John 11:23).**

Jesus gives us the foundation for what the Church refers to as the Corporal Works of Mercy and the Spiritual Works of Mercy. Together these form the basic premise for our compassionate outreach efforts at St. Francis of Assisi.

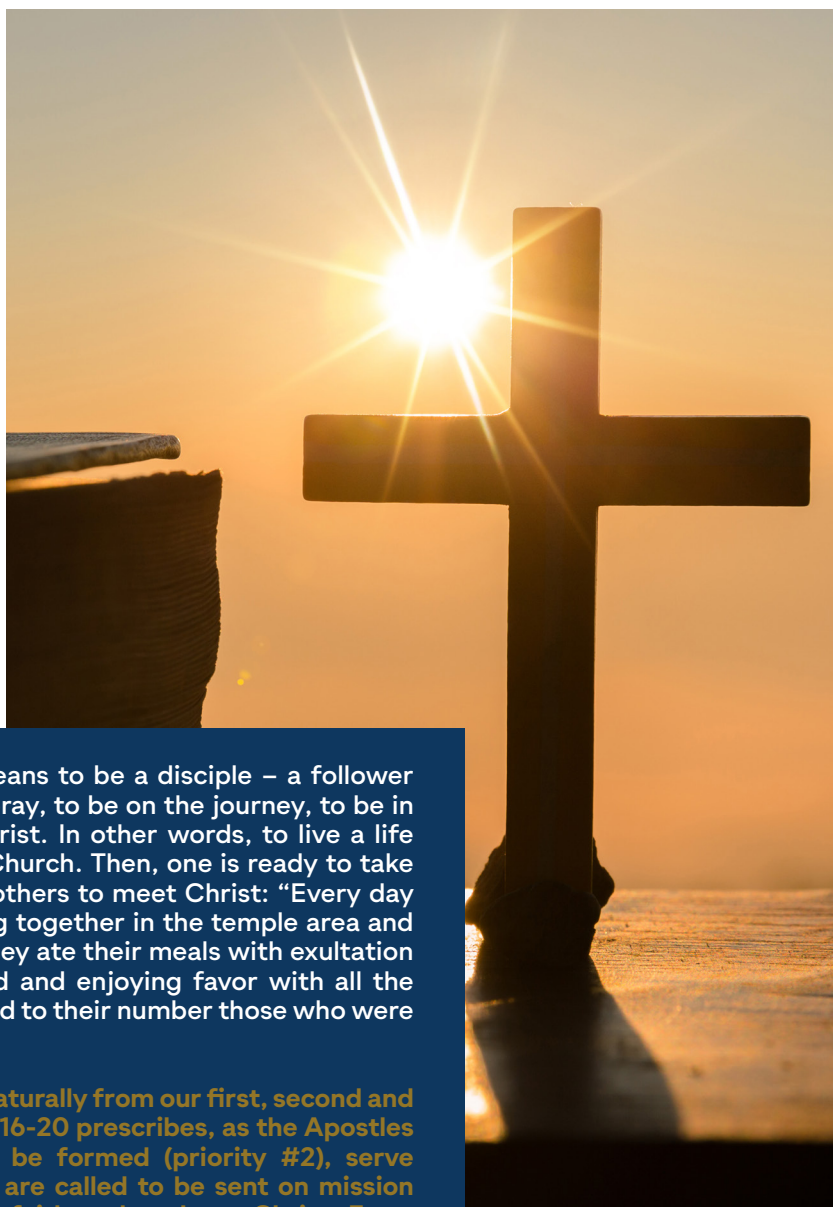
Prioritizing Outreach efforts means a little more to us because we wish to embrace the spirit and charism of our namesake: St. Francis of Assisi; the patron saint of the poor. St. Francis, once a wealthy man, gave up all of his material possessions to serve Christ. He once received in prayer a message that he should embrace a leper...and he did.

Providing strategic outreach opportunities not only serves Christ and builds the Kingdom of God; it also provides outstanding opportunities for community, fellowship, and friendship. Outreach and service opportunities allow all of us to encounter Christ in others and to grow deeper in our faith and deeper in friendship with one another and with Christ.



#### **Goal #4: Missionary Discipleship**

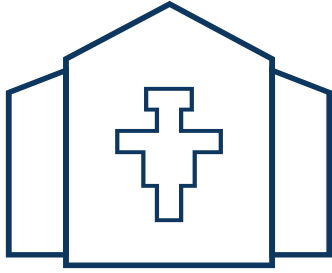
**“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations” (verse 19)**



We learn from Scripture what it means to be a disciple – a follower – of Jesus: to worship, to learn, to pray, to be on the journey, to be in relationship and friendship with Christ. In other words, to live a life seeking devotion to Christ and his Church. Then, one is ready to take the leap to be a disciple and invite others to meet Christ: “Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved” (Acts 2:46-47).

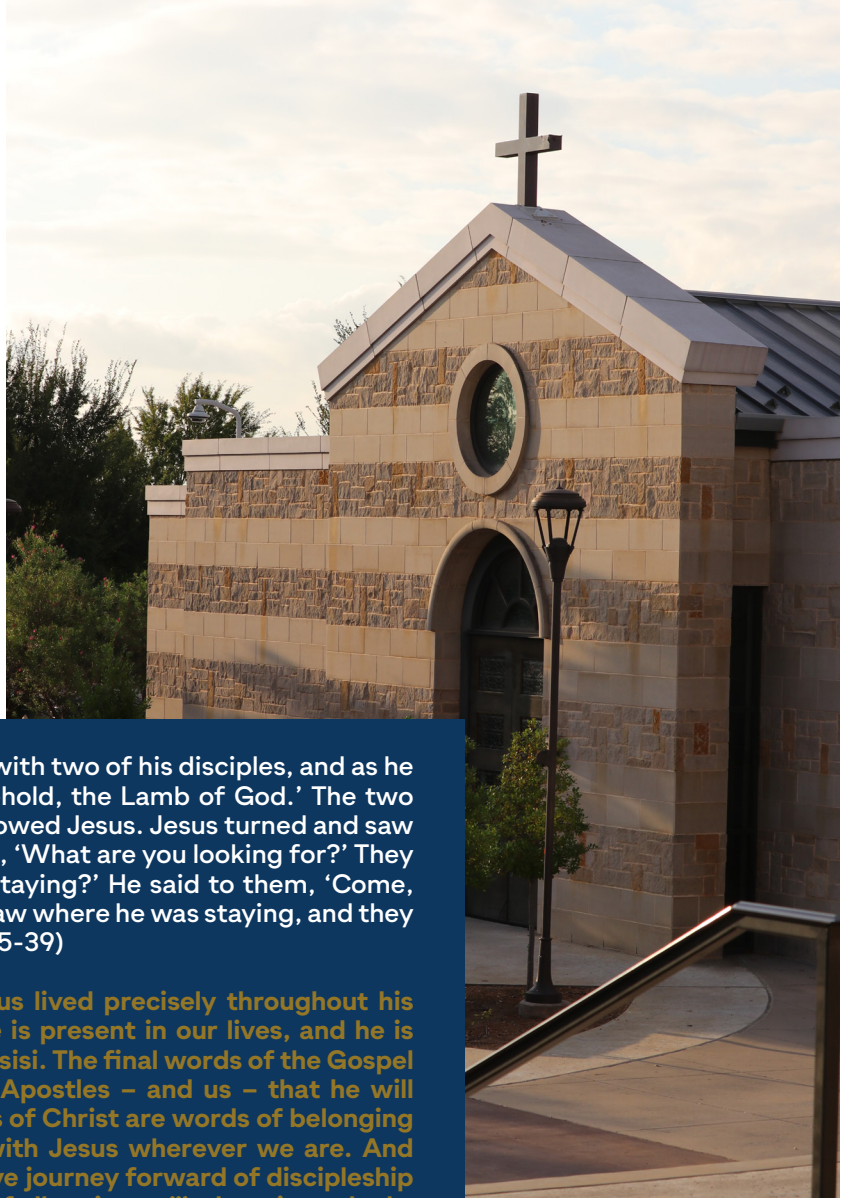
**Our fourth strategic priority flows naturally from our first, second and third priorities. Just as Matthew 28:16-20 prescribes, as the Apostles gathered to worship (priority #1), be formed (priority #2), serve those in need (priority #3), we too are called to be sent on mission to introduce others to the Catholic faith and to Jesus Christ. From our loved ones, family, closest friends, neighbors, co-workers, clients, complete strangers. All of us, through our baptism, have a calling and commitment to Christ to be part of the same Great Commissioning that Jesus calls his Apostles to in Matthew 28:16-20.**

St. Francis’ priority is to teach what discipleship truly means; how to live it and reap the joy and blessings that comes with living a life where Christ is at the center of one’s life.



## Goal #5: Campus Improvement Plan

**“And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”  
(verse 20)**



“The next day John was there again with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God.’ The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, ‘What are you looking for?’ They said to him, ‘Rabbi, where are you staying?’ He said to them, ‘Come, and you will see,’ So they went and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day.” (John: 1:35-39)

No one knows precisely where Jesus lived precisely throughout his public ministry. But we do know he is present in our lives, and he is certainly present at St. Francis of Assisi. The final words of the Gospel of Matthew are his promise to his Apostles – and us – that he will always be with us. These final words of Christ are words of belonging and togetherness. We are united with Jesus wherever we are. And while our mission entails a very active journey forward of discipleship (“Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations...”), there is no doubt that much of the work outlined in Strategic Priorities #1 - #4 will take place on the St. Francis of Assisi premises. Therefore, we have made one of our Strategic Priorities to provide the improved facilities, resources, and the best on-campus experience possible for all who Jesus calls to St. Francis of Assisi.

We are blessed to have one of the premier and largest Church and chapel in the country let alone diocese of Dallas. However, to truly accomplish the work to fulfill our Mission Statement the Strategic Priorities outlined above we must address the entire campus which will include a new Master Site Plan. This new Master Site Plan will need to address a variety of priorities, including the shortage of gathering space we have for faith formation, youth, ministries, staff work areas parish-wide events, and many other vital needs.

**Our goal is to provide the best-in-class facilities and resources with care and attention to the financial health of our parish.**

# Strategic Plan

2022 - 2027