

Possible Mission-Compatible Programs of Significant Scope and Impact in the Region

Introduction

This document includes a listing of programs with brief descriptions that are compatible with St. Catherine's (StC) mission as a Catholic parish and that could be robust enough to eventually have significant scope and impact in the region. The descriptions also present examples of activities; should a specific program be implemented some activities might be eliminated while others might be added.

The list of programs is presented in no particular order. Yet some of them are grouped together because they represent different types or levels of similar program (e.g., #1-3, #6-7, #8-9, #11-12 and #19-20)

When selecting the programs that would be among the highest priorities for the parish and represent your highest passion, please consider the following:

- Would the program impact a group of people that are beyond StC parishioners?
- Does the program support StC's vision, mission, overall strategic themes and strategic goals as shown in the next section?
- Could the program be a model for adoption by other parishes in Tompkins County, the Rochester Diocese and beyond?
- Would the program be sustainable over time with a substantial target market (e.g., elderly), a service or program it needs (e.g., day care), sufficient providers for the service (e.g., volunteers at StC or paid professionals) and the necessary resources (e.g., space and funding, if necessary)?

StC would start small with a few of the selected programs. The programs would grow over time, adding more services, volunteers and resources to the successful programs and eliminating or modifying those that are not as successful. In 25 years StC will have achieved its view of the future:

- A regional center of faith to the Catholic Church in this geographic area of Diocese
- One with mission-compatible programs that are locally and regionally significant in scope and impact
- A parish with strong support from parishioners (\$'s and deeds)
- A parish that is sustainable for the long term

StC's Vision, Mission, Strategic "Trinity" and Strategic Goals (from 2007)

Vision

We are a vibrant **Catholic community** where all are **welcomed, challenged, and supported** on their life journeys.

Mission

The mission of St. Catherine of Siena parish is to **inspire, engage, and nurture** our community through **worship, witness, and service**.

Strategy "Trinity"

Three overall strategic themes:

- Implement **activities** supporting St. Catherine's **vision and mission** statements within its **resource potential**.
- Grow **parishioners'** commitment and ability to **lead and perform** most activities and **staffs'** ability to **lead and guide** the parishioners as they do so.
- Develop on an ongoing basis the **resources** necessary to accomplish the parish's strategic goals.

Strategic Goals

Six strategic goals:

- Enhance the quality of our **liturgies**
- Grow and strengthen our **community**
- Enhance our service to the **needy**
- Improve the **faith formation** of all ages
- Improve the participation of **youth**
- Improve parish **finances and facilities**

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Possible Programs

1. Housing and Programs for Seniors

A collaborative ministry with Providence Housing of the Diocese of Rochester or other similar organization. The goal would be to provide affordable, barrier free housing units for senior citizens. The housing would attract senior parishioners who want to downsize their housing and live near the parish. This ministry could expand to offer other programs at the parish center, specifically designed for senior citizens, e.g., senior yoga, bible study or educational programs about the local area. This could be a magnet for faith-based activities, open to members of the community, providing programs to assist seniors. Pretty much the sky would be the limit. StC could offer (and run) some programs, and then only provide the space for other programs.

2. Day Care Programs for Seniors

There is an increasing need for senior care of different kinds, which could be based at a daytime activity center. This ministry would offer programs, social interaction, and other needs for a well-defined market segment of adults needing “day care”. There could be programs (e.g., crafts, physical exercise), meals, train-the-youth programs, and coffee. This could be done in collaboration with local college/university programs and operation.

3. Social Programs for Seniors

Our seniors in Tompkins County could benefit from an enhanced opportunity to meet and build community with each other in a facility that allows improved “table fellowship” open to all. These would be for adults seeking social and intellectual interaction instead of day care. The programs could include periodic dish-to-pass meals, seminars, meetings for coffee and sweets, a bowling night out, seeing a movie together, etc.

4. Housing (Rental or Purchase) for Adults Desiring Downsizing

Many adults want to downsize their housing as their life circumstances change (death of spouse, retirement, moving to Ithaca to be close to family). They are healthy and active. They would value being near the church and other faith based programs and would represent a source of talented volunteers.

5. Intergenerational Partnering for Activities and Programs

Many individuals and families in the Ithaca area are transplanted here (either long- or short-term) and do not have relatives and extended family nearby. Also, there are many seniors in the area who are geographically far from their own children and/or grandchildren, or perhaps do not have any of their own. StC could provide programming that connects people in these groups, across generations, to develop relationships, share in each other’s lives, and foster a strong sense of community. Some examples:

- Adult care (senior care) and childcare integrated through intergenerational activities
- Parishioners of grandparent age “adopt” young people in parish who don’t have their grandparents in the local area. The adopted grandparents could provide support and interaction with the young person by playing games, teaching recreational skills, attending recitals, etc.

- Parishioners offer extended family like services to individuals with no family connection in the area such as, “Have Easter dinner with us!” “We can watch your son while you study.” “We will bring you soup if you are sick,” etc.

6. Program for Teens in Difficulty

This would provide learning programs (either after-school, or summer) centered on Life Skills Development:

- Program for kids who are becoming at risk for drug addiction: dealing with peer pressure, discovering your personality type and valuing of your individual capabilities, developing your personal healthy life style
- “Individuation” program (a Jungian term: the development of the self, achieved by resolving the conflicts arising at life's transitional stages, in particular the transition from adolescence to adulthood)
- Program to deal with and overcome computer games addiction, social websites addiction, texting addiction

7. Housing and Programs for Teens in Difficulty

This would offer housing to these teens and then provide the programs as described above in #6.

- Vera House is one model (for sexual and domestic violence in Syracuse, although Vera House is for more than teens)

8. Programs for Adults in Difficulty

This would provide Employment Re-entry Program (copied from Johnson Park Center in Utica):

- Career counseling, interview training and resume development
- Use of a computer, internet, phone, and fax for job searching and applications
- Referrals to education, job training, and supportive services
- A "Work Experience" transitional employment program
- Follow-up mentoring (after you get the job!)

9. Housing and Programs for Adults in Difficulty

This would offer housing to these adults and then provide the programs as described above in #8 and special needs housing where Second Chance Programs are offered for adults in preparation for return to independent adult living:

- Young single mother's facility
- 3-Month life skills program for people who come out of a drug detox program
- Housing and support, job skills program for people who are leaving prison
- Temporary housing for singles or families in a transitional stage: supportive, structured and safe environment that is free from survival-related anxiety, with programs to get back on track

10. Programs for Those in Need

StC could offer our own special programs such as:

- Free lunches and a food pantry provided during the summer to Northeast school kids
- Drop box that is open for community need
- List of donated items that can be posted on line

- Collaboration with other existing social service agencies and programs (e.g., Meals on Wheels, Gadabout) and offer the services of StC volunteers (this would be especially important, as governmental funding for these services will be declining)
- Collaboration with Catholic Charities to provide services that add value or supplement their work
- Creation of hands-on activities for youth so they become more active in helping our communities in need perhaps through voluntary activities like packing groceries for the poor or visiting the elderly or similar activities that help them experience how they can live the Gospel in everyday life

11. Programs for College (Undergraduate and Graduate) Students

This is a group of services such as:

- Suicide prevention connected to spirituality
- Pieces of campus ministries provided by StC
- Family experiences students might be missing (being away from home); extension of the Newman Center
- Connection with the local graduate student offices to take part in their annual welcome events (including international students) to strengthen outreach to a transient population

12. Catholic Center for College Students

This provides a larger sense of a Catholic community in Tomkins County for students at Cornell University and Ithaca College by having a Catholic Center for social, educational and spiritual based gatherings and activities (similar to Buddhist Center on south hill). This is larger in scope than the program as described above in #11.

13. Rental Housing for Graduate Students

Construct housing for single Catholic graduate students, possibly with some construction underground for parking. Parish would realize rental income.

14. Programs for Families with Youth

StC could provide valuable programs and services for families with youth in the area, such as affordable childcare, academic tutoring, social events and other programs for families and children to connect in a faith-based environment.

- Childcare options include:
 - Full-day day care
 - Morning nursery school program
 - Universal PreK
- After-school tutoring program:
 - Academic support for elementary and secondary school students through tutoring by parishioners who were former teachers or who are interested in helping youth in various areas of study
 - Services especially important for the international community, and include English as a Second Language (ESL) support
- After-school social and educational programs
 - Space for families and kids to gather on their own
 - Planned events, such as movie nights, group dinners, holiday events, game nights, etc.

- Programs that emphasize spiritual and faith based activities

15. Church Based Leadership Programs for Youth

Our local connections and resources could be utilized in various ways to train teenagers to be leaders:

- Usage of Local teachers, students and natural resources (local parks and gorges) to offer outward-bound camps to develop leadership in youth
- Youth leadership development with service programs
- Teen Center/Outward Bound (8-18 year olds) with volunteering opportunities in existing programs, with access to GED programs

16. International Catholic Youth Movements

International Catholic Youth movements will resonate with a lot of the international community in Ithaca and the surrounding area. Two such examples are:

- Mouvement Eucharistic des Jeunes (in French - the literal translation is “Youth Eucharistic Movement”): This is a very active group that enables youth to nurture their faith and humanity. Inspired by Jesuits, MEJ focuses on personal prayer, friendship, reflection on youth life, Eucharist but also singing, camps, etc.
- Legion of Mary: This youth group focuses on prayers to the Virgin Mary and charity

17. Catholic School Community

This would be to replace or supplement the Immaculate Conception school.

18. Programs and Space for Local Home Based Businesses

This would include programs on how to run home based businesses and provide space for those businesses to market their products periodically (a business fair).

19. E-Educational Programs

- Utilize tele-video conferencing to have Catholic school and other learning opportunities available at StC
- Utilize videos of homilies for webcast of homily for posting to website and Facebook
- Tweet “twitter” words of wisdom from the Father’s sermon daily/weekly

20. Regional Center for Retreats for All Ages

This would encompass many programs that would serve multiple age levels and types of groups (youth, teens, young adults, couples, seniors, women, men, etc); wide range of topics; would draw people and groups from around the region; varying length of time (day vs. overnight). StC could run some retreats, and allow other groups to come in and run others. The Rochester Diocese has excellent youth retreats. Unfortunately young people in our region very seldom attend, due to traveling distance. Ithaca College, Cornell and other parishes might also be looking for some place to hold weekend or overnight retreats. Day retreats, couple retreats, women retreats occurring in this area would also be great. Perhaps different priests in the area could take turns doing masses for the retreats. There could be a charge for attending so food and rental of the facility would be covered.

21. Center for Community Programs for All Ages

This would encompass programs on a wide-range of topics, geared toward various audiences, for shorter time frames (within one day) than offered by a Regional Retreat Center as described above in #20. This could also include educational, social, cultural events and fund-raising activities conducted by StC, by Catholic parishes (and perhaps by the Diocese itself) in the southern Rochester Diocese, and by other religious institutions and non-profit organizations in the Ithaca and surrounding area. This could also include hosting a mayoral candidate panel or annual town hall meeting with local and state representatives.

22. Center for Community Programs for Youth

This center would be an attractive place for youth and a center for fun on the weekend. Consider the “Solid Grounds” example from Denver. This would include programs such as:

- Pre K
- Establishment of a Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) chapter which could organize dances, sports, sporting events, and shows
- Music ministry ESL
- ESL program support
- Support groups for youth to connect and talk about difficult experiences and current issues
- Programs that aim to strengthen youth Catholic faith

23. Music Ministry Within and Outside

The liturgical reforms of Vatican Two emphasized the active participation of the entire assembly in singing the liturgy. This wonderful resource could be expanded to include special performances for the region.

24. Music Programs and Performance

StC could be a center for choirs, making CDs, youth programs, summer camps, and community performances, all focused on music. Area churches and communities could be invited to participate and/or attend.

25. Guest Speaker Programs

Invite guest speakers on a range of topics to come and present to the region. Area churches and communities could be invited to participate and/or attend.

26. Regional Center for Faith Formation Programs for Young and Old

The overall purpose would be to train the next generation of faith leaders, including the lay leaders, Deacons and pastoral administrators who will lead the parishes in the future. This would be done by providing training in appropriate settings and become recognized in the Diocese as a center for this type of activity through some select Parish staff development, promotion within the Diocese, and facilities that both presenters and students find conducive to learning (more than having enough tables and chairs). This would provide seminars, continuing education and distance learning opportunities.

- Provide Distance Learning Opportunities offered by St Bernard's as one of its satellites:
"Thanks to our Distance Learning Program, St. Bernard's is able to bring learning opportunities to various locations throughout the Diocese of Rochester via video

conferencing hook-up and Moodle. Currently, video conferencing is available for students at sites in Auburn, Watkins Glen, Hornell, and Appalachin, NY."

- Team with St. John's Episcopal church in Ithaca to offer an Education for Ministry (EFM) program to train young and old in preparation for active service. The EFM program is a 4-year course developed by the Episcopal Church that covers Old and New Testaments, theology, and church history.
- Offer programs on specific Catholic religious views or teachings such as Opus Dei.

27. Programs on Non-violent Conflict Resolution for All Ages

This could work as a stand-alone ministry or in collaboration with the other ministries offered at StC (such as the proposed "Work Program with Catholic Charities", below). Generally, this is a program that teaches creative problem solving with an emphasis on non-violent conflict resolution. This could be a program directed toward young children (a preventive remedy); or as an after-school program for Teens and/or Young Adults. This can also be offered for adults.

28. Work Program with Catholic Charities to Make Bread

This is a program (that can be federally funded) to engage those in our community who may be, for one reason or another, unemployable. Generally, these programs teach basic job skills (showing up, sales, production of some product, inventory skills, basic math skills, literacy skills, etc.). This program would produce a product (bread) that would be given to Catholic Charities for distribution to those in need while teaching the participant the job skills and paying them a wage.

29. Rectory as Shared Home for Active Priests

This is for active priests who work in local parishes. Their living together would enhance collaboration among parishes and provide them with "private" fellowship and community.

30. Center for Retired Priests and Pastors

The number of retired priests/pastors is rising, and they need places to stay. Ithaca is an attractive location because of its academic resources. Retirees could be asked to develop mentoring and training programs for the lay leaders who will become more important as time goes on.

31. Partnerships with Local Businesses

This would be youth development, job skills, profit center for parish, offering access to our space for offering services. This could be a parish-owned business such as a coffee shop with bagels, etc. where youth would gain experience working in a real business and the profits flow to StC.

32. Partnerships with Local Agencies

This would be collaborating with existing agencies (non-profits) both because many of the 400 service agencies in Tompkins County need assistance and this would provide a greater reach for StC specific programs.

33. "Faith in the Marketplace" Programs

This combines talks on applying our faith in everyday life with some faith sharing. Issues: law and forgiveness, charity and competition, faith in a business setting. There is a program like this in Cleveland (at least).

34. Programs of Interfaith Action

Bringing people together for faith sharing and mutual understanding (one example is "Daughters of Abraham" which brings together Christians, Jews, and Muslims for faith sharing and mutual understanding).

35. Enhanced Liturgy

Infusing more cultural aspects into the liturgy – church décor, choir songs, robes worn by the priest, sisters, and altar servers. The parish should reflect the diversity of the community we have and want to have.

36. Programs (Existing and New) Extended to Parishes in the Regional

Activities and programs for groups could be extended to a broader community by inviting other parishes in the region. This would foster friendships and strengthen community.

- Young single Catholics
- Catholic teens
- Seniors
- Mom's group
- Book group
- Ithaca-wide Catholic festival or picnic
- Social justice

37. Programs for "Lost Sheep" Catholics

These would be programs for people coming back to the church (amnesty) and programs that attract people back to the church (evangelization and feeding people in faith).

38. Programs for International Community

This would focus on events and activities desired or needed by those in Ithaca with an international background or interest.

- International dinners each month
- ESL tutoring
- Dinner invitations to our homes offered to international graduate students
- Travel programs to places all over the world that are important in Catholic history (e.g., Vatican, Bethlehem)

39. Programs for Asylum Seekers

This would include a wide range of need or desired services that support the asylum seekers who live in the region.

40. Programs Spearheaded by StC

This would include those service and programs that serve the region that could be improved through being spearheaded by StC. An example would be a drive for all local churches to help the United Way exceed its annual goal. It would be a lot of organizational work with a large number of parishioners representing StC going to all the churches, being sure the idea is in the church bulletin, announcing goals, following up, etc. Its name: *United Churches for United Way by StC*.