

# Parish Plan Review - Better Together

## St. John Henry Newman Church

In 2020 The St. John Henry Newman Church underwent its original effort to develop Better Together goals and mission for our parish to help create a transparent and supportive living faith community where the actions of the church are responsive to our faith and the community needs. The missions selected were done so through community input and provided to the Jefferson City Dioceses. Over the past four years we have worked to meet our mission goals and over the past 12 months our parish council has worked to gather data to determine our effectiveness in reaching these goals as well as to identify any unmet needs that exist in our parish community. The four missions selected in 2020 are below:

1. **Christian Stewardship**
  - a. Small groups (college, young married, families, etc.)
  - b. System to promote revolving / evolving leadership
  - c. Highlight existing and promote new opportunities to learn how to pray, adoration and confession
2. **Co-Responsibility**
  - a. Educational opportunities
3. **Center of Charity**
  - a. Ministry for hand-on help for parishioners (helping each other)
  - b. Improve Communication on what the parish already does
  - c. Promote EASY ways to get others involved
4. **Center of Mercy**
  - a. Outreach to "fallen away" (for whatever reason) Catholics, to grieving and isolated Catholics as well as unreached or unchurched

Over the past four years, our parish has worked to improve within these four pillars. The Newman Parish will continue to work on these four pillars.

## In the Pillar of Christian Stewardship

**Goal:** Make resident small groups a top ministerial priority of the parish (small groups among our college students are already a priority for the parish).

**How:** To provide a process and opportunity for leadership transition and provide shorter and more consistent education opportunities for existing and new parishioners.

**Results:**

**Small Groups:** 2024 data showed an increase to a number of small groups, to a total of 91 different small groups in both college and parishioner groups.

**Stewardship:** Newman identified and tracked each of our 12 different stewardship efforts to identify current leaders and develop a plan to create a transition plan for each group to ensure longer sustainability. Goals are set to create a tool to match parishioners with desired stewardship opportunities. And finally, we hope to add an annual service fair to demonstrate to parishioners the many opportunities to engage.

**Future Goals:**

- Increase of number of participants in small groups 5% year over year, until 20% of parish are in small groups.
- 75% of existing standing groups stay together year over year.
- Work so all (100%) standing groups/committees/programs have an incoming chair, chair and outgoing chair system that allows for rolling leadership.

## In Pillar of Co-Responsibility

**Goal:** To support the connection between laity and clergy, while encouraging laity to evangelize and provide active leadership and provide hospitality for newcomers.

**How:** Promote faith, bonding to the parish, and unity between resident and student parishioners, allowing people to be formed and fed through small groups – second only to the Mass.

**Results:** Survey results showed that parents felt there was a limited opportunity for connection due to parental conflicts. Some parishioners had feelings of intimidation when trying to engage.

**Future Goals:**

- Create a Sunday School for parents
- Create standing sessions (twice a year for whole parish) on 1) learning how to pray; 2) Adoration; and 3) the Sacraments.
- Work so all (100%) standing groups/committees/programs have an incoming chair, chair and outgoing chair system that allows for rolling leadership.

## Center of Charity

**Goal:** To create a ministry for hands-on help for our own parishioners and to improve communication with what the parish already does, and promote ways to get involved.

**How:** By identifying parishioner needs and creating a system to connect parishioners to opportunities, services needed and each other.

**Results:** Survey results showed committee membership and leadership was not full and held longer than sustainable. Additionally, the parish was not clear about members or the role the committees play in the parish. Nearly 60% of respondents were aware of all the volunteer opportunities organized by the church and 43% of respondents say they volunteered in these and the extensive list of non-parish sponsored volunteering activities because of their faith.

**Future Goals:**

1. Ministry for hands-on help for parishioners (helping each other)
2. Improve Communication on what the parish is already doing
3. Promote EASY ways to get others involved
4. Create a tool to pair parishioners with activities that match their interests

# Center of Mercy

**Goal:** Here we seek to find and refer others to appropriate ministries for spiritual healing, spiritual direction, spiritual growth, mentoring, coaching, and training in evangelization.

**How:**

Survey results revealed 9 different programs with 76 volunteers working to support our Center of Mercy work.

**Future Goals:**

1. Outreach to “fallen away” (for whatever reason), grieving and isolated Catholics, as well as unreached and unchurched by organizing sessions on how to listen and engage to these individuals.
  - a. A quarterly program of praying for them...a prayer team, mass dedication.
  - b. Annual social event and special inclusion for Mass, Ephesian Three or Bible Study lead by specially trained leaders
  - c. Specific student related programming with materials and messaging through Summer Welcome, tabling on campus, being involved and active on campus, many ministries and retreats to invite someone to.
2. Increase opportunities for spiritual counseling and coaching.
3. Hold quarterly healing activities each year.
4. Survey users of these services and obtain more than 30% response rate.

As you can see from above, St. John Henry Newman Church has taken our Better Together Goals seriously and have found the process beneficial to the Pastoral Council and the parish. We look to continue on this effort, which will be the Council's main priority to work with staff and parishioners to move our parish forward.