

# Annunciation of the Lord Parish

## October Newsletter

For some time now, you have heard about efforts to develop a vision plan for Annunciation of the Lord Parish (AoLP). A short presentation on the plan was made at the 2017 Annual General Meeting held in May. Given the importance of the plan to the future of the parish, the details of the plan need to be communicated to all parishioners. This is how the idea of a parish newsletter came to be. This newsletter is one of many that you will receive in the coming year. In addition to the newsletters, there will be information about the vision plan included on the website, at parish information meetings and in upcoming stewardship reports.

### What is the Vision Plan?

The purpose of a vision plan is to help focus our efforts to become the engaged parish, God desires us to be. The plan sets out goals and offers activities or actions that will move the parish forward and make the vision a reality. It is a valuable road map that can help us make important decisions about how best to use our time, talents and treasure.

This is what we as a parish desire to be. Some would argue we are already a great parish; while true, the question is

#### how do we become an amazing parish?

Finding the answer to that question has been the subject of a year-long undertaking by the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC). The PPC looked at eight critical areas it considered necessary to realizing the parish vision.

1. Sunday Experience
2. Evangelization
3. Communications
4. Finance
5. Effective Structures
6. Parish Infrastructure
7. Church Survey
8. Stewardship

The recommendations that were put forward formed the basis for the Parish Vision Plan. The heart of the plan focuses on three main areas, Sunday Experience/Worship; Evangelization; Discipleship and Stewardship. The plan also emphasizes the need to put effective structures and processes in place to support these three critical components of the vision plan.

**The vision for AoLP is to become a parish which is known as:**

<div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">1</div> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Welcoming</p> <p style="font-style: italic; font-size: 0.9em; margin-top: 5px;">a community of missionary disciples</p>	<div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">2</div> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Growing</p> <p style="font-style: italic; font-size: 0.9em; margin-top: 5px;">growing in the love and knowledge of God</p>	<div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; border: 1px solid white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">3</div> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Caring</p> <p style="font-style: italic; font-size: 0.9em; margin-top: 5px;">while joyfully caring for all in need</p>
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For a more detailed outline, visit - [www.annunciation-ottawa.com/](http://www.annunciation-ottawa.com/)



Focuses efforts to become the engaged parish, God desires us to be.



Sets goals and activities or actions to help move the parish forward.



Provides a road map to make important decisions on how best to use our time, talents and treasure.

## Parish Vision Plan Components

1. **Sunday Experience/Worship** - *participating fully, actively and consciously in an inspiring Sunday experience, growing each individual Mass congregation to its full potential*
2. **Evangelism** - *creating a culture of Missionary Disciples that makes Disciples*
3. **Discipleship-Stewardship** - *growing our Discipleship culture by following the Stewardship Principles of Time, Talent and Treasure*
4. **Effective Structures** - *creating an optimum organizational structure for effective leadership, planning, decision-making and communication*

### Goal No. 1

**Participating fully, actively and consciously in an inspiring Sunday experience, growing each individual Mass congregation to its full potential.**

An inspiring Sunday experience draws Catholics into the life-giving celebration of the Eucharist, where they will receive spiritual nourishment which is enriched by inspiring homilies, uplifting music and welcoming hospitality. It defines us and because it defines us, it needs to be an inspiring experience for all who attend.

#### Achieving this goal involves:

- engaging individual mass groups to celebrate success, to understand the Church Survey results, to build an agreement and commitment to excellence;
- forming a welcoming committee that will oversee all aspects of creating a welcoming environment at the Sunday Liturgies;
- building an acceptance of a culture of excellence as the goal for all masses that invites participation;
- hosting a hospitality workshop for all volunteers in Liturgical ministries.

**“To see ourselves merely as spectators at Mass is to miss the opportunity to take our part in the highest action done upon earth”. F.J. Sheed**

### Goal No. 2

**Creating a culture of Missionary Disciples that makes Disciples**

This goal is central to achieving the vision. Creating a culture of missionary disciples requires a commitment to establish a focused evangelization capability at AoLP that provides opportunities for people to achieve a personal relationship with God through an ongoing quest to learn about their faith and to go out into the community of Beacon Hill to build the body of Christ.

#### Achieving this goal involves:

- creating and growing in evangelization and adult faith formation opportunities that are welcoming, engaging, educational and spiritually enriching.

### Goal No. 3

#### Growing our Discipleship culture by following the Stewardship Principles of Time, Talent and Treasure

The natural fruit of discipleship is involvement in the life of the parish. Stewardship plays an important role in discipleship. The aim of stewardship at AoLP is to open doors to all parishioners to participate in contributing their time, talents and a just share of their financial resources to the advancement of the parish, out of gratitude for all that God has given each of us.

#### Achieving this goal involves:

- implementing a proactive process of Adult Faith Formation;
- developing and delivering a dynamic leadership formation program;
- issuing semi-annual Stewardship Report to the parish membership highlighting major achievements of ministries, volunteers and celebrating spiritual principles of giving of time, talent and treasure.

### Goal No. 4

#### Creating an optimum organizational structure for effective leadership, planning, decision-making and communication

To achieve the vision, it is important to have a structure that supports the vision. A new organizational chart for the parish has been adopted that reflects the priorities of the parish (Sunday Experience/Worship, Evangelization, Discipleship and Stewardship) and streamlines decision-making and improves communication.

#### Highlights of this goal include:

- restructuring parish leadership to include a Pastor's Leadership Team to assist the pastor and PPC in planning, policy development and champion key components of the parish vision plan and its implementation;
- streamlining decision-making to ensure more timely and informed decisions;
- hiring on contract a communications officer to increase our capacity to communicate within our parish community and reach out to the broader community, creating an open door to the parish;
- reinstating the parish building committee with responsibility to develop a process for managing the maintenance of parish facilities.

## Why Change?

On any given weekend, the parish has the capacity to welcome 1,500 people. Throughout November 2016, staff were asked to determine the number of people attending weekend masses. The results of that research identified several key facts:

- our weekend attendance for all 4 masses averaged 827 people per week
- the 2011 Census indicates that for AoLP's area, 3,000 households self-declared as Catholic

In addition, the urban development plans for the former Rockcliffe Airbase project an additional 10,000 people moving into our area.

These and other considerations point to the need to grow. A healthy parish is a growing parish and based on these numbers, AoLP has room to grow!

Against this backdrop, it is conceivable that Annunciation has significant potential to grow its membership in the next 10 years. What a tremendous opportunity to put the "Great Commission" into practice!

Parishioners know the strengths of our parish and recognize that we have a tremendous foundation for making it even better. If we want to improve attendance at Sunday masses, we need a deep understanding of what works and why. The church surveys of 2014 and 2017 provide a great deal of insight on how things at Annunciation might be improved and provide clarity on where we need to focus our efforts.

Ministry leaders and parishioners in volunteer roles should be supported and empowered through training and on-going encouragement. Leadership training is a critical element in the vision plan. Consequently, work is currently underway to create leadership development opportunities for all parishioners involved in ministry.

We need to strengthen our communications within our parish community and with the broader Beacon Hill community. Effective communication happens when information is clearly presented and shared in a timely fashion. The vision plan lays out a number of strategies to improve communications.

## What Will Success Look Like?

AoLP will be a place where a growing number of people will fully and actively find spiritual nourishment through a life-giving Sunday experience. It will be a place where opportunities exist for parishioners to learn more about their faith, to walk with others seeking answers to the fundamental questions of life. It will be a place where parishioners find peace and contemplation, fellowship, acceptance and love. AoLP will be a place where there is a high-level of parishioner engagement, and most importantly, a growing community of missionary disciples growing in the love and knowledge of God.

**Let us continue to fervently pray, as we seek to do God's will and become the engaged parish He desires us to be.**

## Parish Leadership Structure

