

## **Five Year Strategic Plan for St Francis Xavier Catholic Church**

Before ascending into heaven, Jesus approached His disciples and said to them, *“All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”*

### **Our Mission**

*In response to our Gospel call, we seek to be a vibrant, loving, and welcoming parish that ministers to the People of God in our parish and in our community through responsible stewardship of our time, talent, and treasure.*

### **Our Vision**

Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church is a vibrant, nurturing and inclusive community dedicated to proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ and nourishing the spiritual growth of its members as we serve Christ in the task of helping to build the Kingdom of God in Birmingham, Alabama. St Francis Xavier is a parish that welcomes people of all backgrounds and appreciates the benefits of diversity in the Human Family. In the years ahead, we will build on our strong foundation by offering vibrant and meaningful opportunities for worship, fellowship, faith formation, education and community outreach, as we seek to serve the spiritual needs of our community. We will cultivate innovative ways to respond to the evolving needs of our children, our Youth, our Adult members of all ages and backgrounds, and to serve our community. Committed to truly living the Social Gospel of the Catholic Church, we will help to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and the homebound, and to assist the least of our brothers and sisters.

We will dedicate ourselves to nurturing and welcoming longtime members, new members, and visitors of all ages, backgrounds, and experiences.

### **Introduction**

To better understand where God is leading us as a faith community and to respond with a plan to accomplish our goals, the Pastoral Council at Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church has prayerfully discerned the anticipated needs and goals of our parish over the next five years. During four Listening Sessions, our parishioners were invited to express how they would like our parish to grow, mature, and expand its programs that support both our own parishioners as well as others in our community. Supported by prayer and surrounded by a spirit of discernment, a Strategic Planning team that incorporates many voices from our parish and the wider community developed a framework and, ultimately, a vision for our future.

### **Strategic Framework**

Over the course of 2023, the Strategic Planning team conducted an internal and external assessment that gathered information about Saint Francis Xavier’s community, programs, and surrounding environment. The group identified the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth in our parish. After reviewing the information collected and listening to our parishioners, the team discerned the following distinct priorities to be addressed in the next five years:

- 1) Stewardship and Welcoming
- 2) Campus Facilities
- 3) Communication
- 4) Parish Life and Youth Ministry
- 5) Hispanic Ministry
- 6) SFX School
- 7) Adult Education, Outreach, and Justice
- 8) Worship

An important part of this Strategic Plan is our concern for Youth Ministry. Accordingly, each of these eight categories includes a focus on Youth Ministry as an essential element. In addition, each of these areas will require the identification of parishioners who possess the skills necessary to implement these initiatives. Importantly, we cannot begin to implement all of these components of the Strategic Plan simultaneously. Several of these components of the Strategic Plan are already in progress, moving forward in an organic manner. As these progress, we will also begin implementing the Stewardship and Welcoming plan and progressively introduce each of the following components.

## **Components of the Strategic Plan**

### **I. Stewardship and Welcoming**

Establish a committee to facilitate the involvement of all parishioners in the contribution of their time, talent and treasure to SFX.

Develop processes and methods for new members to become involved in the life of the parish including establishing new programs.

Cultivate an environment where all parishioners are invited to participate in the life of the parish.

### **II. Campus Facilities**

Create a Committee that will work with the Staff, other committees, and all stake holders to develop a Master Plan to improve and enhance the facilities of our campus over the next 5-10 years.

This will require addressing projects that have been identified as needed but so far deferred.

This will require close cooperation with the Facilities Management Committee and the Finance Council.

### **III. Communication**

Create a communication committee that will focus on improving all facets of internal and external communication from the parish to our parishioners, staff, and our community.

Research and implement a communication plan that utilizes the best practices of technology to streamline the efficient use of all relevant modes of communication.

This will require recruitment of parishioners with technical expertise to help implement these changes.

### **IV. Parish Life**

Create a Committee that will work with the Staff, other committees, and all stake holders to enhance living the Christian life through activities of our parishioners.

Enhance activities that promote fellowship and growth in the Christian Faith and service among Children, Youth and Adults.

This will require recruiting parishioners with skills and talents in each of these areas.

## **V. Hispanic Ministry**

Supporting and expanding our ministry to our Spanish speaking parishioners is essential to our parish.

The Strategic Plan must consider the needs of our Hispanic parishioners by soliciting their input on parish activities and ministries.

The integration of Spanish-speaking and English-speaking parishioners into the life of the parish should be supported and nurtured.

This will require recruiting both Spanish-speaking and English-speaking parishioners to support the integration of these communities.

## **VI. SFX Parish School**

We recognize and value the fact that the St Francis Xavier School is a part of the parish not a separate entity.

We will seek to address the future needs of our school, including its facilities and its staff.

We will seek to increase enrollment in the school.

We seek to increase the sense of community between children who attend the SFX school and those who are parishioners attending other schools.

We will foster closer unity between Spanish and English-speaking families.

## **VII. Adult Education, Outreach, and Justice**

This will address living the social gospel in parish and support for our community.

This will build on our present Adult Ed program with greater opportunities to learn the Catholic Faith.

Promoting and expanding the OCIA program to increase the number of individuals entering the Catholic Church through our parish.

Developing programs that reach out to fallen-away Catholics.

Improving our ministry to those who are imprisoned, homebound, and hospitalized.

Expand Bible study groups for all age groups.

## **VIII. Worship**

Establish a Liturgy Committee that will recommend liturgical procedures and practices to enhance the worship experience of all parishioners. An essential part of enhancing the worship experience will be to recruit and train Lectors, Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, Altar Servers, and members of the Flower Guild. In addition, we will work to:

- Nurture Children's liturgy.

- Optimize the Nursery.

- Assess ways to support and optimize audio experiences including our music program.

- Optimize the on-line experience for those who live-stream the Mass.