

# SETON PARISH



## VISION PLAN

2007



January 2007

Dear Members of Seton Parish,

The Seton Parish Vision Plan is meant to be a guide and road map for the parish as we move into the future. I hope that you will take the time to read it closely. A tremendous amount of time has gone into the creation of this document from the Seton Parish Vision Committee. There is no doubt in my mind that the vision outlined here will chart the direction of our parish for the foreseeable future.

Our Vision Plan has seven major headings, all of which are scripturally based. Under each caption, we consider the challenge of the gospel for our parish, and then propose some action steps to take.

With the publication of this document, it is handed over to the Pastoral Council who will continue to oversee it and be accountable for its implementation. This document is a “working document,” and as such, there may well be some pieces that you may find missing and indeed can be “inserted” as time goes on. It will take time to implement the “action steps,” and as a parish and as individuals, we will forever be challenged by the gospel passages in it.

I look forward to working with the parish on the implementation of our Vision Plan. As we put these pieces together, I am convinced that it will continue to unite us as a parish and enable us to proclaim the gospel as we are called.

Finally, I wish to thank everyone who had a part in putting all of this together. It was a labor of love that I know will continue to bear fruit in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Fr. Jim Klima

## INTRODUCTION

**T**he great image found in the scriptures used to speak of our faith as that of a “journey.” The father of our faith, of course, is Abraham, who obeyed the call to set out on a journey for a country that was promised to him, and he did not even know where he was going. On this journey he looked forward to a city that would be founded, designed, and built by God. And on this journey God said to him “Do not be afraid, I will be your shield.” (Gen. 15:1) So Abraham’s religion is one of surrender, trust, and letting go.

**O**n our faith journey, we follow the call of Jesus who invites us to leave all and follow Him. As followers of Jesus, we come to discover how deeply we are loved by God, and we are invited in turn to share in the mission and ministry of Jesus. We must do what Jesus himself did: feed the hungry, visit the sick and imprisoned, and comfort the grieving. These are the very ways that we become the Body of Christ to the world today. While there are many practical organizational matters in the day to day life of a parish, ***our basic mission is always to serve those in need and to bring Christ to others.***

**T**he local parish makes present the Body of Christ to the local community. And it is in the local parish that we experience the life of faith. As every community differs, the expression of every parish is going to have a little different appearance. We live in a time of great

change, and because of this it is easy to lose our bearings. This is also a time of tremendous growth in our community. We have many new families moving into our community. At this critical time, our faith, our Catholic religion, and indeed our parish can be a source of meaning, direction, and a path for our lives.

**H**aving spoken to a cross-section of parishioners including the parish staff and parish leaders, the Vision Committee now proposes that Seton Parish focus its efforts in the following areas to continue to be a viable parish and to fulfill its mandate and mission by Christ.

## **AREAS of FOCUS**

### **Hospitality**



*Whoever receives you receives me and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. Matt 10:40*

*Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels. Hebrews 13:1-2*

**The Challenge of the Gospel:** Seton Parish will endeavor to be a welcoming parish in every aspect of its life. When we read the gospels, Jesus invites his disciples to come and follow Him. He is forever reaching out to those who are in need. If we are going to follow the example of Jesus – we must do the same.

## Action Steps:

- \*All members of the parish staff will reflect this most important dimension of the vision plan in their day-to-day ministry.
  
- \*When the parish staff engages fellow parishioners in ministry training, this dimension of the parish vision will be at the front of all training.
  
- \*The various organizations and ministries of the parish will be asked to report to the pastoral council the efforts that they make toward hospitality in their ministry.
  
- \*The Ministry of Hospitality will be enhanced for all of our weekend liturgies. This will include being sure that there are greeters at every weekend liturgy.
  
- \*The Welcome Resource Center will continue to be utilized and developed. Volunteers will receive additional training with additional resources at hand.
  
- \*A new core of neighborhood ministers of hospitality will be recruited to welcome new parishioners when they move into local neighborhoods.
  
- \*A Welcome Reception for new parishioners will be held at least four times a year.
  
- \*As Catholics, we recognize that we hold an ancient and diverse history and spiritual tradition, and we will endeavor to respect one another always and accept our differences.

# Communication

*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. Matt 28:19*



The Challenge of the Gospel: The word “gospel” means “good news.” As a parish, we are already doing a great deal to proclaim the gospel. This call is never complete and everything we are about as a parish is to share the “good news” and through the sharing of this gospel to create God’s kingdom, God’s people here on this earth.

## Action Steps:

- \*As a parish, we will rededicate ourselves to become better communicators, improving communications between the staff and parishioners.
  
- \*We will take many steps to come to know one another better by:
  - hosting neighborhood gatherings.
  - creating an updated Parish Pictorial Directory.
  - creating a new parish handbook.
  
- \*A Quarterly Newsletter will be created.
  
- \*An environmentally friendly outdoor sign will be constructed.
  
- \*Someone will be responsible for consistently providing information to local newspapers about the life of Seton parish and its parishioners.

**\*We will employ new technology to improve communications within the parish as follows:**

- two flat screen monitors will be erected in the gathering space to keep parishioners informed of upcoming events and to view first-hand the important events of recent days.
- for those registered members of the parish who wish, we will communicate in a timely manner with them electronically.
- the parish web site will continue to be developed.

**\*We will elicit feedback from parishioners to get the pulse of the parish by phone as well as do exit surveys when parishioners leave the parish.**

**\*We will endeavor to fill the Parish Bulletin with timely information about the parish as we carry out action steps of this Vision Plan, and to provide an instructive section in it such as “Did you know....”**

## **Spiritual Growth**



*Blessed are your eyes because they see and your ears because they hear. Amen I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it. Matt 13: 16-17*

**The Challenge of the Gospel:** St. Augustine said: “You have made us for yourself Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” Within all of us is a deep longing for something or someone greater. It is our deepest conviction and faith that Jesus gives this longing both meaning and direction and this continues to be realized in the setting of our local parish. We

both bring the presence of Christ to our parish, and our spirits are fed in the setting of the parish as well. Step three of the Vision Plan is to deepen the spiritual growth of Seton Parish.

### Action Steps:

\*To continue to enhance the celebration of the Eucharist in the parish, which is the very center of the spiritual life of our parish by:

- finding ways for all who come to Mass to totally participate when they attend.
- making a genuine effort to encourage all parishioners to become practicing Catholics.
- continuing our efforts of joining together in prayerful and reverent celebrations of the Eucharist.
- rededicating our efforts to educating our parishioners about the centrality of the Eucharist, especially the youth, and providing opportunities for them to fully participate.
- continuing to support Perpetual Adoration of the Eucharist and to make clear its connection to the Mass and to our living the Eucharist outside the Mass.

\*To provide opportunities for parishioners to deepen their understanding of their Catholic Faith by offering a broad range of programs and topics.

\*To offer occasions for parishioners to enrich their faith through missions and a variety of retreat experiences.

\*To further develop small faith communities to provide the opportunities to share our faith.

\*To provide enrichment programs for marriage, family life, and singles.

\*To create a task force to set up a ministry for those who are going through divorce and difficult times.

\*To revisit the catechesis that is conducted around the celebration of the sacraments of Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation and Marriage and to capture these moments of evangelization when the hearts of many are receptive in new ways to the voice of God.

\*To continue to offer programs that open dialogue with those who have left the church.



## ***P*arish Outreach**

*Come you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepare for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me. Matt 25:35-36*

The Challenge of the Gospel: In his papal encyclical, “God is Love”, Benedict XVI states that love of neighbor grounded in the love of God is first and foremost a responsibility for each individual member of the faithful, but also a responsibility for the entire ecclesial community. And then he goes on to state that the church cannot neglect the service of charity any more than she can neglect the Sacraments and the Word. Here at Seton Parish we have a long history of outreach, and we must continue to strongly support it. As individuals become more and more aware of the importance of this responsibility, we as a parish will continue to grow in our awareness of outreach as well.

## Action Steps

\*We will continue our Outreach Programs as a means of answering God's call for each other. For example, we will continue to:

- Support the Interfaith Hospitality Network.
- Develop our outreach with Catholic Social Services in Scioto County.
- Continue the Shoe Drive in Cranks Creek, Kentucky.
- Continue our support for the military and needy in war zones.
- Collect school supplies for needy children in our area.
- Support groups that aid those who choose life in a difficult pregnancy.
- Sponsor furniture drives to benefit MAP, Saint Vincent DePaul, or building supplies for Habitat for Humanity.

\*We propose to offer an "Elizabeth's List" of parishioners who have the means and desire to charitably offer their services to others (e.g. tax accountant who could help a struggling family file their taxes; a handy person who will help out an elderly person; a hairdresser who will visit a shut-in).

\*A percentage of our parish offerings will be designated for charities that are to be determined by the parishioners themselves.

\*To continue to respond to human needs and to develop resources to respond to those needs as we become aware of them on an ongoing basis both within the parish and outside the parish.

\*To continue developing the parish's connection with the civic, ecumenical, and global communities.

## ***P*arish Community**

*God is love and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him. 1 John 4: 16*



The Challenge of the Gospel: Seton Parish is a large parish situated in the midst of ever-expanding urban sprawl. The parish will only get larger in the foreseeable future. As it grows, we must continue to find ways for people to truly feel connected to one another and to the parish. We propose to continue to enhance the community life of Seton Parish.

### Action Steps:

- \*To offer ongoing social activities to our parishioners considering age, interest and multi-cultural needs.
  
- \*To continue activities that bring the parish together such as Donut Sunday, Lenten Fish Dinners, Pancake Breakfasts and other gatherings.
  
- \*Through the Parish Life Committee, to continue to explore new ways to enhance sense of community life in the parish.
  
- \*To provide opportunities for parishioners to gather within neighborhoods and build neighborhood connections.

## ***P*arish Facilities**



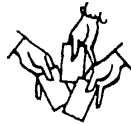
*My dwelling shall be with them; I will be their God and they shall be my people. Ez 37:27*

The Challenge of the Gospel: It is in the setting of our parish facilities – our parish church, our classrooms, our meeting rooms, our social halls, our offices that the day in and day out life of the parish takes place. Our facility is by necessity large to accommodate our large parish and in time it may need to be larger. We will continue to maintain and be good stewards of the facility that has been entrusted to us so that the present and future generations may continue to worship and grow in this setting.

### Action Steps

- \*To assess the existing structure of Seton Parish and make needed repairs that are immediately necessary (for example, the roof maintenance for the church during the fall of 2006).
- \*To assess the existing structure of Seton Parish and review those aspects of the building that are in need of updating (for example current office space and church seating).
- \*To assess those aspects of our facility not meeting the needs of our current parish (for example, possibly not enough adult meeting space).
- \*To look ahead at the growth of the parish, and begin planning the facility that will be needed to handle that growth.
- \*To assess whether a Parochial School would ever be a possibility in our future.

### **Stewardship**



*...But each of you, as much as you can, in proportion to the blessings which the Lord your God has bestowed upon*

*you...Deuteronomy 16:17*

*I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest, for those others have made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she from her poverty has offered her whole livelihood. Luke 21:3-4*

**The Challenge of the Gospel:** Stewardship in one word sums up the Christian way of life. It sums up, as the psalmist says, “the earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it.” This is the vehicle through which we will accomplish all our hopes and dreams for our time in the Lord’s vineyard. When we become stewards, we begin to give as God has given to us. Through stewardship, we invite and encourage all of our parishioners to develop an ownership in the parish by the sharing of their talents, reaching out to others, and rededicating themselves to their faith and relationship with Jesus Christ.

### **Action Steps:**

\*To create an atmosphere in Seton Parish where all ministries and individual talents and gifts are welcomed, recognized and valued.

\*To make stewardship a priority in the life of the parish by:

- teaching this to our children and teens and help them to practice it.
- educating the parish on a regular basis.
- making this a part of various organizations and committees in the parish.

\*To promote ways in which parishioners may become true stewards of “time, talent and treasure”.

\*To receive and train parishioners who have signed up to serve into new ministries in a timely manner.

\*To continue to seek ways in which more and more parishioners may truly begin to become engaged as true stewards in Seton parish.

\*To be better caretakers of all the gifts God has entrusted to us locally, nationally and globally (example, taking care of our parish grounds and our facilities, our neighborhoods and our earth).

\*In the end, for all Seton Parishioners to believe in Stewardship as a Way of Life.

## **An Invitation to Help Shape Our Future**

**T**he ideas set forth in this Vision Plan are drawn from the many voices of Seton parish. From these voices and the wisdom of the scriptures, this plan takes shape. It will now take the willing hands and hearts of all of us, each in our own way, to make this plan unfold. This is an invitation for all to embrace the Vision Plan and its goals and to consider how you are being called to help implement the ideals it seeks to achieve. This journey is meant to lead us ever closer to our God and each other. With God's grace, please join us on this path.

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