

St. Joseph Catholic Church Vision Plan

Submit comments to
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Mission Statement

“St. Joseph is a Catholic community dedicated to growth in faith, prayer, and service.”

For over 100 years, St. Joseph Catholic Church has been a **beacon of faith, prayer, and service** in South St. Petersburg. From its humble beginnings as a mission in 1922 to its present-day role as a **multicultural parish family**, the parish has lived out Christ’s call to **serve and welcome all people**.

This Vision Plan belongs to all of us—the people of St. Joseph—and will guide our shared journey of faith into the future by building on our **history, mission, and identity**.

I. Remembering Our Roots

St. Joseph’s history reflects:

- **Faithful beginnings** as a mission parish serving immigrant and working-class families.
- **A legacy of inclusion**, especially through the Immaculate Conception Mission, which ministered to Black Catholics during segregation.
- **A commitment to justice**, expressed in parish involvement in local community action.
- **A multicultural identity**, reflected in worship traditions and the contributions of diverse parishioners over the years.
- **Partnership with the Cathedral of St. Jude**, which today provides administrative and pastoral support, ensuring stability and growth.

“We have come this far by faith.”

II. Vision Statement

St. Joseph Catholic Church envisions a future where every person feels **welcomed, formed in faith**, and **sent forth in service**. Rooted in the Eucharist and inspired by our heritage, we strive to be:

- **A HOME OF FAITH** – where all generations encounter Christ in vibrant liturgy and prayer.
- **A SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP** – where children, youth, and adults grow as missionary disciples.
- **A BEACON OF HOPE** – where outreach, advocacy, and service witness to God’s love.
- **A FAMILY OF FAMILIES** – united across cultures, backgrounds, and life experiences.

III. Core Pastoral Priorities

1. Worship and Prayer

- Deepen reverence and participation in the liturgy.
- Celebrate the parish’s multicultural spirit while maintaining a unified Catholic identity.
- Strengthen music ministry to enrich prayer and worship.
- Expand opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration, retreats, and devotions.

2. Faith Formation and Discipleship

- Strengthen OCIA, adult education, and youth faith formation.
- Expand adult catechesis with Bible studies, Church history, apostolic studies, and teachings on the sacraments and precepts of the Church.
- Provide lifelong formation opportunities through small Christian communities and parish-wide study series.
- Support sacramental preparation with robust catechesis and mentoring.

3. Family and Community Life

- Build programs to strengthen marriages, families, and parenting.
- Provide intergenerational activities that foster unity.

- Encourage fellowship events that celebrate the parish's cultural diversity.

4. Outreach and Service

- **Hot Meals Ministry:** Expand this vital outreach by growing the number of volunteers and reaching more of our neighbors in need.
- **Pantry Ministry:** Strengthen weekly food support in partnership with the Cathedral of St. Jude, St. Paul (St. Petersburg), and Blessed Trinity.
- Broaden outreach to the poor, immigrants, and marginalized communities.
- Continue justice and peace advocacy through collaboration with community leaders.
- Reach out to former parishioners.

5. Youth and Young Adults

- Develop leadership opportunities in liturgy, service, and parish governance.
- Foster mentorship and vocational discernment (marriage, religious life, lay ministry).
- Offer engaging programs such as mission trips, service projects, and retreats.

6. Stewardship and Sustainability

- Promote stewardship of time, talent, and treasure through formation and witness.
- Ensure long-term financial sustainability through transparent communication.
- Maintain and upgrade parish facilities to meet present and future needs.

IV. Overarching Parish Goal

Increase Volunteerism Across All Ministries

To build a truly vibrant parish life, St. Joseph will actively encourage all parishioners to share their gifts in ministry.

Goal: *By August 2026, at least 25% of active parishioners will be involved in at least one ministry.*

When a majority of households are engaged in ministry, the parish will reflect a **living Body of Christ** at work in the Church and in the world.

V. Strategic Goals for the Next 5–10 Years

- **Liturgy & Prayer:** Establish quarterly multicultural liturgies and an annual parish mission or retreat.
- **Faith Formation:** Launch a comprehensive adult formation track (Bible, Church history, sacraments).
- **Family Life:** Form a Family Ministry team to coordinate marriage, parenting, and intergenerational programming.
- **Outreach:** Grow the Hot Meals and Pantry Ministries with more volunteers and stronger parish partnerships.
- **Youth/Young Adults:** Contingent on funding, hire a Youth & Young Adult Ministry Coordinator.
- **Volunteerism:** Promote widespread ministry participation across all age groups and backgrounds.
- **Stewardship:** Initiate a capital campaign for parish hall renovation and technology improvements.

VI. Interim Markers and Community Events (2025–2026)

To help us live the vision visibly and build parish momentum:

- **November 2025 – Black Catholic History Month**
Celebrate a parish-wide liturgy or event honoring the accomplishments and sacrifices of African American Catholics, including those on the path to sainthood.
- **December 2025 / January 2026 – Kwanzaa Celebration**
Host a Kwanzaa cultural event in the parish hall, celebrating African and Catholic values of family, community, and faith.
- **February 2026 – Black History Month**
Offer a parish-wide liturgy or event recognizing the contributions of Black Catholics throughout Church history.
- **March 2026 – JoPatty Celebration**
Launch a combined St. Joseph and St. Patrick celebration, lifting up the multicultural unity of our parish.

- **Spring/Summer 2026 – Parish Unity Picnic**
Host a parish-wide picnic celebrating our unity, diversity, and partnership with the Cathedral of St. Jude.
- **July/August 2026 – Vacation Bible School**
Provide a joyful, faith-filled summer experience for children, centered on scripture, Catholic values, music, crafts, and community-building.
- **August 2026 – Garth A. Albury Back to School Bash**
Honor the legacy of service and education in our community by equipping students with backpacks, school supplies, and blessings for the new academic year.
- **August 2026 – Ministry Milestone**
Reach our benchmark of **25% parishioner ministry participation**, reflecting a growing culture of service and stewardship.

VII. Living the Vision

To stay accountable and focused on progress:

- Form a **Vision Implementation Team** made up of clergy, staff, and lay leaders.
- Hold an **annual parish-wide town hall** to assess progress, celebrate wins, and set future goals.
- Invite **every parishioner to see this vision as their own**—a shared mission in service of Christ and His Church.

VIII. Conclusion

St. Joseph Parish has endured and flourished for over a century through the **faith, resilience, and generosity** of its people. Just as our ancestors built this parish on prayer and service, we are called to **build the future with courage and conviction**.

“The Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom.” (Luke 12:32)

Let us walk forward together—**with hope, unity, and joy**.