

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE ATCHISON PASTORAL REGION
PLANNING TASK FORCE
ARCHDIOCESE OF KANSAS CITY IN KANSAS**

JULY 10, 2009

AMENDED JANUARY 19, 2010

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God: Father, Son and Spirit,

*you formed the missionaries of the Church who spread your word;
 you formed our ancestors who settled on this land and built churches
 and schools so that the apostolic faith might take root and grow.*

*You continue, dear Lord, to form us today
 so that we might carry out the work of your Church now and in the future.*

You lead us forward, beyond who we are, and we praise and thank you.

*May our prayer, work, study and planning for the future
 of the Catholic Church in the Atchison Pastoral Region
 please you, be led by you, and demonstrate your great love for us.*

*In gratitude and hope we lift our prayer to you,
 the one, true God, forever and ever. Amen*

The Atchison Pastoral Region has three distinct demographic characteristics: the rural communities in the north and west; the city of Atchison; and the exurban areas of southern and eastern Jefferson County. Those distinctions create different challenges and opportunities and competing objectives for pastoral resources.

The Catholic Church in small rural communities is central to the lives of families and single, typically elderly, parishioners. The Church is especially important to those communities in which it is the sole or one of a handful of communal institutions. The survival of small communities without schools and other community organizations is literally threatened by the loss of its Catholic Church particularly in those communities that are substantially Catholic. However, the reality of demographic changes cannot be ignored in the face of finite resources including parish priests. The U.S. Census Bureau projects populations in Brown and Doniphan Counties to continue declining substantially through 2030.

On the other hand, Atchison County is expected to experience modest increase in population through 2030. Half of registered Catholics in the Pastoral Region live in and near the city of Atchison. There are abundant resources available to those parishes and parishioners including the St. Benedict's Abbey, Benedictine College and Mount St. Scholastica. Abbey priests provide regular assistance for weekend Mass celebrations to several of these parishes as well as assist with the sacrament of reconciliation and other pastoral responsibilities. There are many choices of Mass celebrations, nineteen in all. Additionally, Benedictine College students serve an important role in religious education classes as catechists and assistants.

Those people moving into the exurban areas of Jefferson County tend to be middle-aged without children at home. They may continue their memberships in their home parishes in Topeka, Lawrence and Leavenworth. This movement into these areas is expected to continue pushing population up significantly in Jefferson County through 2030.

The recommendations proposed by the Planning Task Force acknowledge and attempt to address these realities. The Planning Task Force, with input from parishioners, determined that all parishes should be expected to strive to meet the Signs of Parish Vitality. As the number of registered parishioners decreases, it becomes more difficult to marshal the resources necessary to be a vital parish. Consequently, parishes are strongly encouraged to collaborate and share resources. Obviously, every parish wishes to remain open. However, in the event there are fewer priests available to serve all these parishes in the future, it will become necessary to merge the smallest parishes with adjoining ones.

The Signs of Parish Vitality developed with the participation of all the parishes in the Pastoral Region are proposed as an integral guide for parish planning and regular, formal evaluation. Leadership is sought from the Archdiocese to determine the feasibility of a regional council to assist parishes in collaborating and sharing resources to enhance their vitality.

The Planning Task Force believes that, in total, these recommendations meet the objectives of the planning process. It strived to balance the deep bonds of parishioners' affiliations with their parishes with the need to respond to changing realities.

Change is an inescapable reality. We don't resist change so much as we resist being changed. During this planning process all parishioners in the Pastoral Region were invited to participate in two series of parish meetings in order to engage them in actively forming the Region's response to change.

The following are some of the realities and trends presented to parishioners during the process to underscore the need to plan and prepare now for the future.

- Eighty-two percent of Kansas counties – all of them rural except for Wyandotte County – are estimated to have lost population since 2000 according to the U.S. Census Bureau including all four counties in the Atchison Pastoral Region. However, it is estimated that Jefferson County decreased by just .12% and Atchison County by 1.7% through 2008. Populations in Atchison, Brown and Doniphan Counties have continuously declined since a peak in 1900. Jefferson County eventually exceeded its 1900 census in 1990. See Figure 1 for a map of county population changes between 1990 and 2000.
- Population projections by the U.S. Census Bureau from 2000 to 2030 offer a grim forecast for Brown County with a decrease of 24% of its population, closely followed by Doniphan County with a 16.8% decline. Atchison County will remain essentially stable with an increase of 5% while Jefferson County is expected to grow 21.2% due to exurban migration to its southern and eastern flanks. See Figure 2 for a map of county population changes between 2000 and 2030.
- The age of residents is also a critical issue. In all four counties the 2008 estimates of the number of children from birth through age 14 and youths age 15 through 19 are lower than the 2000 census counts. More telling is that the numbers of adults in the childbearing ages 25 through 44 have declined as well (see Figure 3 for age cohorts). This trend also is illustrated in public school enrollments. Figure 4 shows that nearly all districts have experienced declines since 2000. Two districts – Atchison County USD 409 and Hiawatha USD 415 – have had significant decreases of more than 100 and 200 students respectively. For the Hiawatha District that is over 20% of total enrollments.
- Obviously, the population of these counties is growing older. The median age is greater than Kansans as a whole as shown in Figure 5. Median ages have increased by 15% to 25% in these four counties since 1980. Jefferson County, the only county of the four to grow, has had the greatest increase in median age. Most of those migrating into the county's exurban areas are middle-aged, which is reflected in Figure 6 -- population projections of people aged 65 and over. The other three counties will actually experience decreases in the numbers and percentages of people aged 65 and older by 2030, which emphasizes the advanced age of current residents.
- The sources of population changes since 2000 are further evidence of change. The number of deaths actually exceeded the number of births in both Brown and Doniphan Counties (see Figure 7). All four counties experienced a negative net migration, which is occurring primarily in the 25 through 44 age group. Plainly, communities are not able to provide working adults jobs that offer the challenges, income and promotion opportunities more widely available in larger cities.

- Lastly, the age of priests currently serving as pastors in the Pastoral Region has imminent implications. Five of the seven priests are members of St. Benedict's Abbey.

Fr. Gabriel Landis	47
Fr. Benjamin Tremmel	71
Fr. Roderic Giller	74
Fr. Gerard Senecal	79
Fr. Bertrand LaNoue	81

Fr. Louis Kirby who assists Fr. Bertrand LaNoue by celebrating Sunday Mass at St. Patrick is 86.

The other two are priests of the Archdiocese.

Fr. John Reynolds	47
Fr. Earl Dekat	69

Both age and physical impediments limit the activity of some of these men. All physically able Benedictine priests at the Abbey currently are staffing parishes or chaplaincies or assisting with weekend Mass celebrations at area parishes. Sixty-nine percent of Benedictine priests living within the Archdiocese are 70 years and older. As the numbers of Benedictine priests has declined, the Abbey has been forced to relinquish the staffing of parishes that were founded by the order nearly 150 years ago, before the establishment of the Archdiocese.

While the number of priests serving in the Archdiocese is a finite resource, it is much more dire in other parts of the country and the world. In the US there is one priest for every 1,500 Catholics on average. By contrast, Mexico and Central and South America have only one priest for every 7,000 Catholics. In this Archdiocese there is one priest for every 1,925 Catholics on average. In the Atchison Pastoral Region there is one full-time parish priest for every 754 Catholics.

In spite of the disproportionate distribution worldwide of priests, foreign bishops are willing to assign priests in the US because they cannot afford to keep them on their payrolls. The 2006 study, *International Priests in America*, reported that one of six diocesan priests now serving in the United States came from abroad and about one-third of men studying for the priesthood in American seminaries are foreign-born. About one in ten parish priests in this Archdiocese came from other countries. About 300 international priests arrive to work here each year. The Archdiocese is striving to attract many of them.

Rural parishes particularly are the center of community life. Greater percentages of rural residents regularly attend Mass and volunteer to undertake most of the responsibilities in the parish. Generations after the founding of these parishes, descendants actively support them and incorporate their parishes as a vital aspect of family life, assuring allegiance to the Church and faithfulness to its teachings.

The Church is an essential institution of stability in an area that is experiencing significant change. Throughout these decades the instruments of the Church -- Archdiocese, Benedictine Abbey and Mount St. Scholastica -- have maintained deep commitments to supporting family life in rural communities. They are particularly mindful of the need for continuing to provide opportunity for all Catholics to participate in the Eucharist, to receive the sacraments, and to be educated about Church doctrine and teaching. It is in this spirit that the Planning Task Force undertook its charge and presents its recommendations.

The Atchison Pastoral Region is the sixth of eight regions within the Archdiocese to undertake a long-range planning process. Recognizing that the Church must continue to adapt to changing circumstances, Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann wrote in the January 13, 2006 issue of *The Leaven*, "The Church is not about sustaining the status quo. We always have to ask ourselves the question: How can we best fulfill the mission of Jesus today? How can we best use our limited resources to: 1) provide for the pastoral and spiritual needs of the Church; 2) pass the faith on to future generations; and 3) proclaim the Gospel of Jesus and bring his love to as many people as possible in our time?" He concluded, "Let us pray for one another that we will be willing to make whatever sacrifices are required to fulfill the mission of the Church in this time and place."

In October 2008, the Archdiocese engaged Michael Maude, president of Partners In Philanthropy of Lawrence, Kansas, to facilitate the planning process. The purpose of planning was to study the current realities of the Pastoral Region and develop a long-range plan that will capitalize on its strengths and opportunities to create a viable, vital future for the Church.

In his December 17 letter to parishioners announcing the planning initiative the Archbishop noted, "The Atchison Region has a rich and wonderful tradition of a vibrant Catholic community supported by the priests and monks at St. Benedict's Abbey in Atchison. Over time there have been many changes that have occurred in our society and communities. In order to fulfill the mission Jesus has entrusted to the Church, we must respond to the effects of these changes upon our parish communities. Good pastoral planning involves seeking the best thinking and insights of the entire community."

Archbishop Naumann in consultation with the priests of the Pastoral Region, appointed the following members of the Planning Task Force.

Rita Baker	St. Benedict Parish, Bendena
Betty Bunck	St. Leo Parish, Horton
Fr. Earl Dekat	St. Leo Parish, Horton and St. Mary Parish, Purcell
Dick Delaney	St. Ann Parish, Hiawatha
Jennifer DuLac	Sacred Heart Parish, Atchison
Elmer Fangman	St. Benedict Parish, Atchison
Al Funk	St. Joseph Parish, Nortonville
Thad Geiger	St. Charles Parish, Troy
Roderic Giller, OSB	St. Benedict Parish, Bendena; St. Charles Parish, Troy; and St. Joseph Parish, Wathena
Gene Hegarty	St. Ann Parish, Effingham
Bob Heinen	St. Mary's Immaculate Conception Parish, Valley Falls
Steve Holthaus	St. Mary Parish, Purcell
Gabriel Landis, OSB	St. Ann Parish, Hiawatha
Joseph Ley	St. Joseph Parish, Atchison
Bertrand LaNoue, OSB	St. Joseph Parish, Atchison and St. Patrick Parish, Atchison
Jim McAnerney	St. Joseph Parish, Wathena
Mary Meyers	St. Patrick Parish, Atchison
Fr. John Reynolds	Corpus Christi Parish, Mooney Creek; Immaculate Conception Parish, Valley Falls; and St. Joseph Parish, Nortonville
Brendan Rolling, OSB	Benedictine College

Don Schrick	Corpus Christi Parish, Mooney Creek
Mary Elizabeth Schweiger, OSB	Benedictine Sisters of Mount St. Scholastica
Abbot Barnabas Senecal, OSB	St. Benedict's Abbey
Benjamin Tremmel, OSB	St. Ann Parish, Effingham and St. Louis Parish, Good Intent
Gerard Senecal, OSB	Sacred Heart Parish, Atchison and St. Benedict Parish, Atchison
Henry Scherer	St. Louis Parish, Good Intent

Monsignor Gary Pennings, Chancellor of the Archdiocese, and Carroll Macke, Communications and Planning Director, served ex officio.

The charge to the Planning Task Force was to:

- provide leadership in forming a vision for parish ministry in the future;
- solicit input from stakeholders and use that input in planning;
- provide leadership in planning how parishes should be structured to best serve the Atchison Pastoral Region; and
- develop recommendations for a strategic plan to be submitted to the Archbishop for consideration.

Archbishop Naumann in his letter to parishioners explained that the planning process would include local listening sessions in each parish whereby parishioners would be able to reflect on the facts and provide feedback to the Planning Task Force. He asked each parishioner to prayerfully remember the planning effort and to participate in “the important process of planning for a bright future for the life of the Church for years to come.”

The steps in the planning process involved the following activities.

November 25, 2007	Priests of the Pastoral Region, Abbot Senecal and Carroll Macke Review the process, determine qualifications of the Planning Task Force, and set a preliminary meeting schedule
December 17	Letter from Archbishop Naumann All parishioners in the Pastoral Region notified of the planning process with an invitation to participate
December 5-10	Priests of the Pastoral Region Interviews with individual priests to gather information about the history, culture and current status of parishes
December 13-14	Announcement from pulpits Parish priests described the purpose of the planning process and noted parish representatives on the Planning Task Force at all weekend Masses
January 6	Planning Task Force Description of its role and responsibilities, review of the planning objectives and process, and discussion of the essential elements of parish vitality

January 31 – February 8	Attendance at weekend Masses Head count of persons attending Mass at each parish over the course of two or three separate weekends
February 10	Planning Task Force Draft Signs of Parish Vitality and discuss implications of demographic trends
February 15 – March 10	Parish Congregations Review demographic and parish census data, discuss implications of trends, consider draft Signs of Parish Vitality, and explore ways to fulfill the elements of parish vitality
March 12	Regional Parish Leadership (Pastoral, Finance and School Council representatives from each parish) Present resources of the Abbey, College and Mount; evaluate parishes according to Signs of Parish Vitality; and develop plans to address areas in need of improvement
March 31	Planning Task Force Review feedback from parish meetings and develop preliminary responses to future scenarios of fewer priests serving the Pastoral Region
April 21	Planning Task Force Complete development of possible future parish configurations and draft recommendations for strengthening parish vitality
April 26 – May 12	Parish Congregations Discuss possible future parish configurations and draft recommendations for strengthening parish vitality
May 26	Planning Task Force Consider feedback from parish meetings and discuss final recommendations
June 16	Planning Task Force Reach consensus on final recommendations for presentation to Archbishop Naumann

Parish representatives on the Planning Task Force attended meetings at their respective parishes and at the regional parish leadership meeting.

Archbishop Naumann attended the regional parish leadership meeting hosted by St. Benedict Parish in Atchison. Attendance was limited to six representatives from each parish.

A total of 393 persons or approximately 26% of registered households participated in the first round of parish meetings. The second round drew 265 persons or an estimated 17% of registered households.

	<u>February 15 – March 10</u>	<u>April 26 – May 12</u>
Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek	9	17
Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls	3	4
Sacred Heart, Atchison	17	1
St. Ann, Effingham	39	38
St. Ann, Hiawatha	18	14
St. Benedict, Atchison	26	17
St. Benedict, Bendena	38	15
St. Charles, Troy	26	15
St. Joseph, Atchison	87	45
St. Joseph, Nortonville	18	13
St. Joseph, Wathena	25	7
St. Leo, Horton	16	13
St. Louis, Good Intent	24	27
St. Mary, Purcell	33	22
St. Patrick, Mt. Pleasant	14	7

The Atchison Pastoral Region is comprised of Atchison, Brown and Doniphan Counties and the northern portion of Jefferson County (see Figure 8). From a demographic perspective, these counties are comprised of three distinct areas.

The city of Atchison and surrounding suburban areas are comprised of five parishes: Sacred Heart, St. Benedict and St. Joseph within the city limits; St. Louis located in the countryside to the north; and St. Patrick in the countryside to the south. Many parishioners registered in St. Louis and St. Patrick parishes live and work in Atchison. However, their family histories are often rooted in these rural parishes. Together these five parishes claim 1,136 registered households and 2,637 persons according to annual reports filed with the Archdiocese for 2008. This represents half of all registered Catholics in the Pastoral Region. Additionally, many students at Benedictine College attend Mass at St. Benedict throughout the school year. The five parishes offer 13 weekend Masses plus another six Masses at St. Benedict Abbey, Mount St. Scholastica, and Maur Hill-Mount Academy. Masses at the institutions are attended primarily by their members, staff, faculty and students.

The rural area has the second lowest density of the pastoral regions next to the Nemaha-Marshall Pastoral Region. It hosts ten parishes serving 1,174 registered households with 2,639 persons. Three of those parishes offer two Masses each weekend while the rest have just one. Of the three with two Masses only St. Ann’s church in Hiawatha is too small to accommodate all regular attendees at one Mass.

The third distinct area lies at the southern boundary the Atchison Pastoral Region. It is the exurban areas concentrated in south Jefferson County and to a lesser extent in the east. This exurban area distorts the demographic data for the portion of the County that lies within the Atchison Pastoral Region boundary. For example, the significant growth experienced between 1970 and 2000 has not occurred proportionately throughout the County.

Outside of the city of Atchison, the population in the Pastoral Region has been in decline for more than a century and is projected to continue to decrease (see Introduction). Only a handful of communities have populations of more than 1,000 people – Hiawatha, Horton, Troy, Valley Falls and Wathena. The cities have all lost population since the 2000 census as well.

The Atchison Pastoral Region is comprised of 15 parishes serving 2,310 registered households with about 5,276 persons. It is staffed by seven priests, five of whom are members of the St. Benedict’s Abbey.

Fr. Earl Dekat	St. Leo Parish, Horton and St. Mary Parish, Purcell
Fr. Roderic Giller, OSB	St. Benedict Parish, Bendena; St. Charles Parish, Troy; and St. Joseph Parish, Wathena
Fr. Gabriel Landis, OSB	St. Ann Parish, Hiawatha
Fr. Bertrand LaNoue, OSB	St. Joseph Parish, Atchison and St. Patrick Parish, Atchison
Fr. John Reynolds	Corpus Christi Parish, Mooney Creek; Immaculate Conception Parish, Valley Falls; and St. Joseph Parish, Nortonville
Fr. Gerard Senecal, OSB	Sacred Heart Parish, Atchison and St. Benedict Parish, Atchison
Fr. Benjamin Tremmel, OSB	St. Ann Parish, Effingham and St. Louis Parish, Good Intent

Fr. Louis Kirby from St. Benedict’s Abbey assists Fr. Bertrand LaNoue by celebrating Mass at St. Patrick each Sunday. Scheduling Mass at St. Patrick on Sunday has greatly improved weekly attendance.

Fr. Gerard Senecal is assisted each weekend by various priests from the Abbey to share in celebrating seven Masses at Sacred Heart and St. Benedict.

Most parishioners in the Pastoral Region are well served by the schedule of weekend Masses as shown below. One exception perhaps is that St. Joseph in Wathena offers weekend Mass only on Saturday evening. Consequently, some parishioners regularly attend Sunday Mass across the river at parishes in St. Joseph. Weekly Mass attendance is strong across the Pastoral Region. Attendance over the two weekends during which head counts were taken averaged 63.6% of registered Catholics compared to 42% of Catholic adults nationally.

Saturday

4:30 pm	Sacred Heart, Atchison		
5:00 pm	Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek	St. Ann, Effingham	St. Leo, Horton
5:00 pm (continued)	St. Joseph, Wathena	St. Joseph, Atchison	St. Ann, Hiawatha
5:15 pm	St. Benedict, Atchison		
6:30 pm	St. Louis, Good Intent		

Sunday

7:00 am	Sacred Heart, Atchison		
8:00 am	St. Benedict, Bendena	St. Joseph, Nortonville	St. Ann, Effingham
8:00 am (continued)	St. Mary, Purcell	St. Joseph, Atchison	
8:30 am	St. Benedict, Atchison		
9:00 am	St. Ann, Hiawatha		
9:30 am	Sacred Heart, Atchison	St. Patrick, Mt. Pleasant	
10:00 am	Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls	St. Leo, Horton	St. Benedict's Abbey
10:15 am	St. Charles, Troy	Mount St. Scholastica	
10:30 am	St. Benedict, Atchison	St. Louis, Good Intent (9:30 am during summer)	
11:00 am	St. Joseph, Atchison		
6:30 pm	St. Benedict, Atchison		

The Atchison Pastoral Region is particularly blessed by the proximity and rich resources available through St. Benedict's Abbey, Benedictine College and Mount St. Scholastica. These resources are available to parishes intent on enhancing parish vitality in areas such as religious education, catechetical training, youth ministry, adult faith formation, spiritual renewal and social justice ministries.

Obviously, the greatest benefit offered by the Abbey is the assignment of priests to parishes. This is augmented with the assistance of other priests at the Abbey for the celebration of weekend Masses and with communal penance services. Daily Mass is open to all as are weekend Masses at the Abbey. Additionally, spiritual retreats are regularly scheduled at the Abbey and open to everyone. Retreats could be developed in conjunction with parishes in their efforts to meet the spiritual needs of parishioners. Also, the Abbey offers instruction through the Archdiocesan religious studies program, which can be offered in conjunction with parishes to enhance the faith formation of both youth and adults.

Benedictine College prepares students for active participation in parish life through sacramental liturgy programs, catechesis, spiritual exercises and involvement in social justice missions. A core group of nearly 100 students lead confirmation retreats in a four-state region, which every parish in the Pastoral Region can take advantage of. Students currently teach religious education classes or assist teachers in some of the parishes. More parishes could take advantage of this resource to strengthen education programs and expand the number of classroom teachers. This year there were 120 students majoring in youth ministry. These young adults could be recruited to enhance and energize youth group programs throughout the Pastoral Region. The College stages a fall Ministry Fair for students that provides an opportunity for parishes to recruit students for volunteer services through the academic year. Parishioners throughout the Pastoral Region also are welcome to attend lectures and educational programs on campus.

The Sophia Center at Mount St. Scholastica offers spiritual retreats on campus or at parish sites for prayer, reflection and renewal. The Mount also sponsors discussion groups, meditation exercises and other activities to promote personal spiritual development. Such programs could be developed in conjunction with parishes.

The parishes and some of the churches in the Pastoral Region are among the oldest in the Archdiocese, having been founded by the Benedictines before the establishment of the Archdiocese. All parish facilities are reportedly in good to excellent condition. The church buildings at St. Mary in Purcell and St. Patrick near Mt. Pleasant are on the National Register of Historic Places and the Register of Historic Kansas Places. Both have received grants from the Heritage Trust Fund. A stipulation of receiving those funds is that the State may require weatherproofing or structural repairs necessary to prevent serious deterioration in the event of disuse or neglect. If ownership is not retained by the original grantee, the State may choose to recapture grant funds, the amount of which is reduced by 20% each year for five years after the funded project is completed.

Built in 1866, St. Patrick is the oldest Catholic church building in continuous use in all of Kansas. Current parishioners include families that have been members for six generations with a seventh on the way. Over the years a choir loft was added to provide needed seating and later a sacristy was built. The exterior and interior of the church has been well maintained and updated through the years retaining a high degree of architectural and structural integrity. It was nominated to the Register for its architectural significance as a vernacular limestone church with Gothic detailing. Originally owned by the Benedictines, St. Patrick was deeded to the Archdiocese in 2002.

St. Mary Church was built in 1896 of red brick to replace a smaller, frame structure and is the oldest continually used Catholic church in Doniphan County. The church has survived two tornadoes, the most recent in 1991 caused severe structural damage. Repairs and upgrades including the recent restoration of its stained glass windows have assured a high degree of architectural and structural integrity. It was nominated to the Register for its architectural significance as a modern Gothic revival church. At least five generations of founding families are active members of the parish today.

In considering response to changes in the future it can be useful to review parish statistics. While there are several factors to consider in assessing participation in Mass, it may reflect the capability or willingness of parishioners to actively strive to strengthen parish vitality. The accuracy of the numbers of registered households reported by parishes was verified in a general way during parish meetings. However, the numbers of registered persons have much less credibility as many parishes do not conduct a regular census.

2008 Parish Size		
	Households	Parishioners
St. Benedict, Atchison	562	1,450
St. Joseph, Atchison	275	550
St. Leo, Horton	217	470 <small>(2005 numbers reported)</small>
St. Ann, Hiawatha	210	495
Sacred Heart, Atchison	175	362
St. Joseph, Nortonville	145	350
Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls	135	261
St. Ann, Effingham	106	225
St. Joseph, Wathena	100	254
Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek	79	141
St. Benedict, Bendena	79	180
St. Louis, Good Intent	76	175
St. Charles, Troy	58	150
St. Patrick, Mt. Pleasant	48	100
St. Mary, Purcell	45	113 <small>(2005 numbers reported)</small>

Generally, it is true that the smaller parishes have greater attendance at Mass. Five of the six parishes with less than 100 registered households have the highest average attendance. Many parishioners are members of families with histories of long membership in the parish. It is also testament to the importance of the church in these close-knit communities and, some say, the strength of their faith. Mass counts were taken in January and February of 2009.

2009 Average Mass Attendance as Percentage of Registered Persons	
	Percentage
St. Patrick, Mt. Pleasant	104.5
Sacred Heart, Atchison	104.4
Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek (Saturday Mass only)	94.7
St. Mary, Purcell (2005 registered persons report)	81.9
St. Joseph, Atchison	73.5
St. Louis, Good Intent	70.6
St. Ann, Effingham	65.3
Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls	62.3
St. Charles, Troy	59.3
St. Ann, Hiawatha	58.8
St. Benedict, Atchison (Benedictine College students account for about 10%)	56.0
St. Joseph, Wathena (Saturday Mass only)	51.8
St. Joseph, Nortonville	49.1
St. Leo, Horton (2005 registered persons report)	48.5
St. Benedict, Bendena	46.7

As a way to verify the accuracy of the numbers of registered parishioners, one can look at the number per household who attend Mass regularly. As shown below, there is a high degree of correlation between the numbers of registered persons and registered households.

2009 Average Mass Attendance by Persons Per Registered Household	
	Percentage
St. Patrick, Mt. Pleasant	2.18
Sacred Heart, Atchison	2.16
St. Mary, Purcell (2005 registered household report)	2.06
Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek (Saturday Mass only)	1.69
St. Louis, Good Intent	1.63
St. Charles, Troy	1.53
St. Joseph, Atchison	1.47
St. Benedict, Atchison (Benedictine College accounts for about .25 of this number)	62.3
St. Ann, Effingham	1.39
St. Ann, Hiawatha	1.39
St. Joseph, Wathena (Saturday Mass only)	1.32
Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls	1.20
St. Joseph, Nortonville	1.19
St. Leo, Horton (2005 registered household report)	1.05
St. Benedict, Bendena	1.06

There is little difference overall in the economic status of average households in the region by county. Median household and per capita income for the counties in the Pastoral Region date to the 2000 census. As explained previously, statistics for Jefferson County are heavily influenced by exurban migration to its southern and eastern edges and do not accurately reflect the portion of the County that lies within the Atchison Pastoral Region. Excluding Jefferson County, the difference in per capita income among counties amounts to slightly less than one dollar a day.

County	Household	Per Capita
Atchison County	\$34,355	\$15,207
Brown County	31,971	15,163
Doniphan County	32,537	14,849
Jefferson County	50,557	19,373

An indicator of the importance of a parish to the lives of its members is the financial support they provide the parish. Even though there certainly are economic variations from parish to parish, these are probably not significant. However, as shown below, parishes' ordinary collections and receipts vary by a factor of more than three or \$771 annually.

2008 Average of Ordinary Collections and Receipts Per Registered Household	
St. Joseph, Wathena	\$1,093
St. Charles, Troy	1,088
St. Benedict, Atchison (includes school tithes)	1,073
St. Joseph, Atchison (includes school tithes)	1,040
Sacred Heart (includes school tithes)	928
St. Joseph, Nortonville	915
St. Benedict, Bendena (excludes insurance payment and interest and dividends)	896
St. Patrick, Mt. Pleasant (includes school tithes)	859
St. Ann, Effingham	680
St. Mary, Purcell	656
Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls	653
St. Ann, Hiawatha	564
St. Louis, Good Intent	436
Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek	366
St. Leo, Horton	322

The number of registered persons per household may be an indicator of the “youthfulness” of a parish – the number of households with children.

2008 Registered Persons Per Household	
St. Charles, Troy	2.59
St. Benedict, Atchison	2.58
St. Joseph, Wathena	2.54
St. Mary, Purcell	2.51
St. Joseph, Nortonville	2.41
St. Ann, Hiawatha	2.36
St. Louis, Good Intent	2.30
St. Benedict, Bendena	2.28
St. Leo, Horton	2.17
St. Ann, Effingham	2.12
St. Patrick, Mt. Pleasant	2.08
Sacred Heart	2.07
St. Joseph, Atchison	2.00
Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls	1.93
Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek	1.78

However, there is not a clear correspondence to the number of students enrolled in religious education. This may reflect the emphasis a particular parish places on religious education and on encouraging parents to enroll children. Or it may reflect the quality of the religious education and youth ministry programs and catechists.

2008 Religious Education Students Per Registered Household	
St. Mary, Purcell, (2005 figures reported)	.78
Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls	.71
St. Ann, Hiawatha	.54
Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek	.53
St. Joseph, Wathena	.49
St. Joseph, Nortonville	.48
St. Benedict, Bendena	.46
St. Louis, Good Intent	.46
St. Leo, Horton (2005 figures reported)	.39
St. Charles	.34
St. Ann, Effingham	.32
St. Benedict, Atchison (117 students attend ACES; ratio would be .37 if these students were included)	.16
Sacred Heart, Atchison (21 students attend ACES; ratio would be .26 if these students were included)	.14
St. Joseph, Atchison (38 students attend ACES; ratio would be .21 if these students were included)	.07
St. Patrick, Mt. Pleasant (5 students attend ACES; ratio would be .35 if these students were included)	.25

The figures used in this section are derived from 2008 records provided by the Archdiocese as drawn from annual parish reports unless otherwise noted. NR indicates that the data was not reported to the Archdiocese.

The numbering and text of the Signs of Parish Vitality in this section relate to the original draft (see appendix) presented at parish meetings. Evaluations were determined by parish leadership at the meeting with the Planning Task Force and Archbishop Naumann on March 12 using suggested criteria (see appendix) developed by the Planning Task Force.

Corpus Christi Parish

Corpus Christi Parish in Mooney Creek is located in the countryside on a paved rural road in northern Jefferson County. The parish was founded in 1872 and the current church was built in 1907. The former school building is used as the church hall while the rectory holds religious education classes. The old convent is unused. Fr. John Reynolds is the pastor.

The parish has 79 registered households with 141 persons or 1.78 per household, the lowest in the Pastoral Region. Descendants of many of the founding families are still members. Fr. John reports that several families have registered this year bringing the number of households to 85. That number has been increasing since 2006 as shown below.

Children and youth in religious education classes was .5 per household last year.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	70	NR	60	70	64	70	79
Number of Persons	309	NR	200	120	150	150	141
Infant Baptisms	7	NR	6	2	4	0	3
1st Communion					0	4	5
Confirmations	0	NR	NR	NR	0	9	0
Religious Education Students	45	NR	26	46	43	30	42
RCIA Participants	9	NR	NR	NR	0	0	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	1	NR	0	6	2	0	0

The church seats approximately 272 and is about half occupied at Mass on Saturday, although nearly all members attend regularly. Mass attendance was reported as follows.

Time	January 31			February 7		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
5:00 Saturday	142	100.7%	52%	125	88.7%	46%

Financially, the parish has been making some capital improvements without reducing its cash and savings balances. Ordinary collections dropped significantly this past year and well below expenditures.

Corpus Christi Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	48,707	46,841	28,902
Capitol Funds	551	331	678
Bequests	6,496	34,223	34,153
Other Income	5,177	34,223	34,153
Disbursements	50,723	40,129	45,353
Capitol Expenditures	0	33,747	33,000
Net Income (loss)	10,208	7,869	(10,105)
Cash Balance	20,622	17,216	11,953
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	18,656	29,931	25,088

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in **red**.

- 1.2** Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationship with Jesus Christ.
- 1.4** Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages.
- 1.5** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes or in a leadership role with other denominations, offers periodic occasions for spiritual renewal and/or encounters with Christ for adults and youth.
- 2.1** The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events. **The Hospitality Committee will compile a list of people to contact.**
- 2.5** The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions and ignorance.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.

Immaculate Conception

Immaculate Conception in Valley Falls has 135 registered households with 261 persons or 1.9 per household, the second lowest in the Pastoral Region. It has a closer affinity to Topeka than other parishes in the Region. Fr. John Reynolds is the pastor.

It appears that the numbers of households and registered parishioners have been decreasing since 2000, as have baptisms and first communicants, although the number of children and youth in religious education classes increased last year, which is .7 students per household.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	NR	130	150	154	NR	139	135
Number of Persons	NR	350	350	600	NR	325	261
Infant Baptisms	NR	6	3	1	NR	10	5
1st Communion					11	9	2
Confirmations	NR	20	0	NR	NR	16	0
Religious Education Students	NR	60	93	81	NR	67	96
RCIA Participants	NR	6	4	0	NR	0	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0	0

The church seats approximately 400 and is about 40% occupied at Mass on Saturday with less than two-thirds of registered persons attending. Mass attendance was reported as follows.

Time	January 25			February 1		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
10:00 Sunday	164	62.8%	41%	161	61.7%	40%

Ordinary collections and receipts have been declining in recent years, although contributions for capital improvements increased. Both cash balances and deposits with the Archdiocese have increased.

Immaculate Conception Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	100,534	90,893	88,106
Capitol Funds	5,258	8,596	38,686
Bequests	0	0	0
Other Income	0	0	0
Disbursements	75,813	79,394	69,052
Capitol Expenditures	16,919	12,030	13,188
Net Income (loss)	13,060	8,065	44,552
Cash Balance	5,528	10,998	37,672
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	130,865	133,428	151,337

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 3.1** Families in all parishes are encouraged to enroll children in nearby Catholic schools as a first choice.
- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 3.8** A standardized curriculum is offered for religious education programs and tailored for use by rural parishes, e.g. teaching multiple grades.
- 3.9** Adult education programs are offered regularly and all parishioners are encouraged to participate in RCIA.
- 4.1** The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc.
- 4.2** The parish is aware of and responds to the needs of those with special needs such as the elderly, homebound, and shut-ins and their caregivers through regular visits and distribution of the Eucharist and sacramental ministries by laypersons and/or the pastor. Transportation to Mass and parish activities is available to them.
- 4.4** The parish supports financial, emotional and spiritual assistance for women experiencing crisis pregnancies and others in crisis, perhaps through regional centers.
- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
- 5.3** Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets.
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. The parish has not developed a plan to address priority needs this next year.

- 1.2** Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ.
- 1.3** The parish encourages Eucharistic adoration and commitment to frequent prayer.
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. The parish has not developed a plan to address priority needs this next year. (Continued).

- 3.3** The parish has an adequate number of catechists supported by Archdiocesan training programs offered in the Region.
- 3.4** As the first teachers of children, parents are supported in this role by providing them programs and with materials for use at home.
- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
- 5.2** Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.

Sacred Heart Parish

Fr. Gerard Senecal pastors Sacred Heart Parish in Atchison with assistance celebrating Mass and hearing confessions on alternating weekends from Fr. Maurice Haefling, OSB. Several years ago the rectory was sold to finance improvements to the church. About 12% of students at Atchison Catholic Elementary School are members of Sacred Heart. The parish pays an assessment based on the number of students.

The parish has 175 registered households with 362 persons or 2.1 per household. There are only about .14 religious education students per household as 21 students attend ACES.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	207	NR	238	212	209	209	175
Number of Persons	600	NR	585	500	540	320	362
Infant Baptisms	6	NR	7	5	6	5	1
1st Communion					4	10	5
Confirmations	6	NR	SB*	NR	0	6	4
Religious Education Students	SB*	NR	SB*	28	28	28	25
RCIA Participants	SB*	NR	SB*	NR	0	0	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	0	NR	0	0	0	0	0

*included with report by St. Benedict

The church seats approximately 250. Two Masses are required each weekend to accommodate parishioners as shown below. Total attendance regularly is greater than the number of registered persons.

Time	January 31 - February 1			February 7-8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
4:30 Saturday	198	54.7%	79%	189	52.2%	76%
7:00 Sunday	63	17.4%	25%	66	18.2%	26%
9:30 Sunday	123	34.0%	49%	117	32.3%	47%
TOTAL	384	106.1%	154%	372	102.8%	149%

The parish operates a thrift store with volunteer labor, which generates in the range of \$40,000 to \$42,000 for parish operations. Sacred Heart ended the fiscal years 2005-2007 with a very small net income and last year ended with a net loss as it struggles to pay its student assessment to Atchison Catholic Elementary School. It has modest sums in its checking account and in savings with the Archdiocese.

Sacred Heart Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	145,565	172,309	162,459
Capitol Funds	3,074	364	460
Bequests	47,873	4,380	2,040
Other Income	5,022	0	0
Disbursements	200,151	174,373	172,003
Capitol Expenditures	0	0	2,344
Net Income (loss)	1,383	2,680	(9,388)
Cash Balance	60,304	53,186	29,762
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	40,507	34,141	35,522

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 3.1** Families in all parishes are encouraged to enroll children in nearby Catholic schools as a first choice.
- 3.5** The parish provides facilities and support for home-school families
- 4.1** The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc
- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in red.

- 1.1** All liturgical celebrations are well attended and participated in with reverence and enthusiasm
- 1.2** Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ. **Daily Mass will be offered twice weekly with opportunities for reconciliation prior to Mass.**
- 2.1** The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events.
- 2.2** It is important to retain all Catholics within the body of Christ, the Church. Parishioners give personal testimony and live their lives as powerful models of faith and service to influence youth and others..
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass..
- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 2.5** The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions and ignorance.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.
- 3.4** As the first teachers of children, parents are supported in this role by providing them programs and with materials for use at home.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.
- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.
- 5.2** Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.

St. Ann - Effingham

St. Ann in Effingham has 106 registered households with 225 persons or 2.1 per household. Archbishop Naumann has given the parish his blessing to proceed with rebuilding its church, which was lost to fire. It has since been using the parish hall for Mass. Archbishop Naumann asked parishioners to take the recommendations of this planning process into account in making their decision to rebuild and cautioned that he cannot commit to assigning a resident pastor. However, the parish committed to construction contracts in May. Fr. Benjamin Tremmel, OSB is pastor.

The number of registered households and persons has declined over the years. There are about .3 students per household in religious education classes.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	122	115	120	119	NR	NR	106
Number of Persons	341	345	250	370	NR	NR	225
Infant Baptisms	6	2	6	3	NR	NR	3
1st Communion					5	5	4
Confirmations	23	0	NR	2	NR	NR	13
Religious Education Students	100	60	30	48	NR	NR	34
RCIA Participants	0	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	0	1	0	1	NR	NR	0

The new church will seat approximately 240, the same as the church hall. Regular attendance shows that less than two-thirds of the capacity of the church hall (and planned church) is needed if only one weekend Mass were offered. Mass attendance was reported as follows.

Time	January 31 - February 1			February 7-8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
5:00 Saturday	85	37.8%	35%	59	26.2%	25%
8:00 Sunday	62	27.6%	26%	88	39.1%	37%
TOTAL	147	65.3%	61%	147	65.3%	61%

Ordinary collections and receipts dipped in 2006-07 but rebounded last year. Expenses have increased as plans have been developed for the new church. Insurance proceeds are sufficient to cover the costs of building.

St. Ann - Effingham Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	72,267	58,568	72,102
Capitol Funds	39,072	5,925	5,300
Bequests	2,263	1,160	16,611
Other Income	27,847	15,288	115,917
Disbursements	81,207	78,616	104,168
Capitol Expenditures	57,100	9,520	6,698
Net Income (loss)	3,142	(7,194)	99,064
Cash Balance	23,617	16,153	122,970
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	5,000	5,000	0

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
- 5.3** Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets.

The following elements were judged to be in need of improving. Among those the Parish Council has chosen items 2.3, 4.2, 3.4 and 3.7 (highlighted in red below) in that order as the top four most important issues to address based on a poll of Council members. The first step will be to conduct a parish census. The Parish has requested the assistance of Matt Karr at the Chancery. A subcommittee has been appointed for each of the four areas to develop recommendations for a plan of action.

- 1.2** Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ.
- 1.3** The parish encourages Eucharistic adoration and commitment to frequent prayer.
- 1.4** Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages.
- 1.5** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes or in a leadership role with other denominations, offers periodic occasions for spiritual renewal and/or encounters with Christ for adults and youth.
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
- 2.5** The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions and ignorance.
- 3.4** As the first teachers of children, parents are supported in this role by providing them programs and with materials for use at home.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.

- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.
- 3.9** Adult education programs are offered regularly and all parishioners are encouraged to participate in RCIA.
- 4.2** The parish is aware of and responds to the needs of those with special needs such as the elderly, homebound, and shut-ins and their caregivers through regular visits and distribution of the Eucharist and sacramental ministries by laypersons and/or the pastor. Transportation to Mass and parish activities is available to them.
- 4.4** The parish supports financial, emotional and spiritual assistance for women experiencing crisis pregnancies and others in crisis, perhaps through regional centers.
- 4.5** Parishioners advocate with policy makers for issues critical to Catholics especially efforts to protect the unborn and newborn.

St. Ann - Hiawatha

St. Ann in Hiawatha has 210 registered households with 495 persons or 2.3 per household. After steadily declining through 2000 the number of registered households has increased modestly even while the county population continues to decrease. There are about .5 students per household in religious education classes. Fr. Gabriel Landis, OSB just finished his first year as pastor.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	250	228	192	202	202	209	210
Number of Persons	693	619	467	453	459	440	495
Infant Baptisms	23	8	4	6	6	9	5
1st Communion					0	11	11
Confirmations	43	NR	NR	30	1	0	0
Religious Education Students	187	153	127	121	108	108	113
RCIA Participants	1	NR	1	0	0	1	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	NR	NR	1	0	0	1	0

The new church will seat approximately 240, the same as the church hall. Regular attendance shows that less than two-thirds of the capacity of the church hall (and planned church) is needed if only one weekend Mass were offered. Mass attendance was reported as follows.

Time	January 31 - February 1			February 7-8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
5:30 Saturday	132	26.7%	59%	113	22.8%	50%
9:00 Sunday	154	31.1%	68%	183	37.0%	81%
TOTAL	286	57.8%	127%	296	59.8%	132%

Ordinary collections and receipts have been fairly static in recent years, although contributions for capital improvements have increased. The costs of a new parish hall have depleted savings at the Archdiocese.

St. Ann - Hiawatha Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	116,941	123,849	118,411
Capitol Funds	35,107	82,293	90,764
Bequests	12,971	0	0
Other Income	32,582	1,346	9,199
Disbursements	121,100	113,247	128,092
Capitol Expenditures	13,567	115,854	418,150
Net Income (loss)	62,934	(21,613)	(277,868)
Cash Balance	68,296	115,982	83,475
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	314,360	245,360	0

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 1.3** The parish encourages Eucharistic adoration and commitment to frequent prayer.
- 1.4** Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages.
- 2.1** The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events.
- 2.2** It is important to retain all Catholics within the body of Christ, the Church. Parishioners give personal testimony and live their lives as powerful models of faith and service to influence youth and others.
- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 3.3** The parish has an adequate number of catechists supported by Archdiocesan training programs offered in the Region.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.
- 3.8** A standardized curriculum is offered for religious education programs and tailored for use by rural parishes, e.g. teaching multiple grades.
- 4.2** The parish is aware of and responds to the needs of those with special needs such as the elderly, homebound, and shut-ins and their caregivers through regular visits and distribution of the Eucharist and sacramental ministries by laypersons and/or the pastor. Transportation to Mass and parish activities is available to them.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.

- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
- 5.1** In response to a call to tithe, parishioners generously provide sufficient funds, goods and services for ongoing and long-term operating and facility needs of the parish as well as special collections.
- 5.2** Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.
- 5.3** Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets.
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in red.

- 1.5** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes or in a leadership role with other denominations, offers periodic occasions for spiritual renewal and/or encounters with Christ for adults and youth. **An adult faith program will be offered in the fall following the success of an eight-week program this spring, which drew about 60 people each week. A parish mission may be scheduled for early 2010.**
- 2.5** The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions and ignorance.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.
- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home. **Representatives from campus ministries at Benedictine College, University of Kansas, and Kansas State University will be invited to speak to parish youth before the fall terms start.**
- 4.4** The parish supports financial, emotional and spiritual assistance for women experiencing crisis pregnancies and others in crisis, perhaps through regional centers. **Although liturgical celebrations (1.1) were rated satisfactory, the evaluation process prompted the parish to recruit a new organist and to change the Saturday Mass time as ways to increase attendance and participation.**

St. Benedict - Atchison

St. Benedict in Atchison was founded in 1858 as Sts. Peter and Paul. The current church building was dedicated in 1869 as the Benedictine's monastic church. The parish took ownership in 1877 and over the years has undertaken considerable improvements. It has always held the position as the primary Catholic church in Atchison and is now pastored by Fr. Gerard Senecal, OSB.

The parish has 562 registered households with 1450 persons or 2.6 per household. Excluding students from St. Joseph and St. Patrick, there are about .10 students per household in religious education classes, which reflects the emphasis that the parish places on the importance of its school.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	523	550	576	570	570	577	562
Number of Persons	1463	1550	1700	1500	1500	1500	1450
Infant Baptisms	39	38	32	23	18	24	18
1st Communion					44	29	30
Confirmations	47	41	54	52	49	33	56
Religious Education Students	119	39	NR	33	69	72	90
RCIA Participants	35	10	10	NR	7	4	4
Adult Baptisms/Professions	5	11	8	11	3	8	3

The church seats approximately 474 to 525 and usually is not more than half filled at weekend Masses. It is estimated that one-third of attendees (approximately 55-60 persons) at the Saturday Mass and 40% of the Sunday evening Mass (approximately 65-105) are Benedictine College students during the academic year. Two Masses could accommodate all parishioners as well as some students. Mass attendance was reported as follows.

Time	January 31 - February 1			February 7-8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
5:15 Saturday	172	11.9%	36%	196	13.5%	41%
8:30 Sunday	189	13.0%	40%	179	12.3%	38%
10:30 Sunday	250	17.2%	53%	213	14.7%	45%
6:30 Sunday	164	11.3%	35%	262	18.1%	55%
TOTAL	775	53.4%	164%	850	58.6%	179%

No tuition is charged to parents of school children, although they are asked to consider an annual gift to the parish of \$2,400. Tuition for about ten non-Catholic families is \$3,800. The cost to educate each student is about \$4,000.

Financially, the parish is struggling due to the operating expense of Atchison Catholic Elementary School (ACES). Approximately 65% of students enrolled at ACES are parishioners of St. Benedict, which equated to an assessment of \$463,025 this past year. For several years the parish has been dipping into savings to meet overall operating expenses. The remaining savings of about \$40,000 could be depleted this coming year. A group of Atchison parishioners, pastors and school personnel are working with the Chancery to explore options for governance and financing of the school.

St. Benedict - Atchison Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	560,579	631,618	602,794
Capitol Funds	9,081	0	7,593
Bequests	1,260	310	345
Other Income	6,055	40,090	19,774
Disbursements	571,160	662,448	687,809
Capitol Expenditures	347	6,329	136
Net Income (loss)	5,468	3,241	(57,439)
Cash Balance	101,322	128,696	48,273
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	0	0	0

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 1.3** The parish encourages Eucharistic adoration and commitment to frequent prayer.
- 3.1** Families in all parishes are encouraged to enroll children in nearby Catholic schools as a first choice.
- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 3.3** The parish has an adequate number of catechists supported by Archdiocesan training programs offered in the Region.
- 4.1** The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc.
- 4.2** The parish is aware of and responds to the needs of those with special needs such as the elderly, homebound, and shut-ins and their caregivers through regular visits and distribution of the Eucharist and sacramental ministries by laypersons and/or the pastor. Transportation to Mass and parish activities is available to them.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in **red**.

- 1.1** All liturgical celebrations are well attended and participated in with reverence and enthusiasm.
- 1.2** Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ. **Additional opportunities for reconciliation will be provided prior to daily Mass.**
- 1.4** Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages. **A parish pilgrimage will be scheduled in the coming year.**
- 1.5** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes or in a leadership role with other denominations, offers periodic occasions for spiritual renewal and/or encounters with Christ for adults and youth. **A parish mission in collaboration with Sacred Heart Parish will be scheduled and promoted during the 2009-10 year.**
- 2.1** The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events.

- 2.2** It is important to retain all Catholics within the body of Christ, the Church. Parishioners give personal testimony and live their lives as powerful models of faith and service to influence youth and others.
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 2.5** The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions and ignorance.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.
- 3.4** As the first teachers of children, parents are supported in this role by providing them programs and with materials for use at home.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings. **The desirability and feasibility of retaining a youth minister will be investigated.**
- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.
- 3.9** Adult education programs are offered regularly and all parishioners are encouraged to participate in RCIA.
- 5.1** In response to a call to tithe, parishioners generously provide sufficient funds, goods and services for ongoing and long-term operating and facility needs of the parish as well as special collections.
- 5.2** Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.

St. Benedict - Bendena

St. Benedict in Bendena was the first Benedictine parish in the Archdiocese. Parishioners take a great deal of ownership of the parish, which is common among the Region's small parishes. There are 79 registered households with 180 persons or 2.3 per household. The number of registered households and persons has held increased modestly over the years contrary to the trend of the general population in the area. Fr. Roderic Giller, OSB is pastor.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	73	69	69	70	77	78	79
Number of Persons	210	132	139	145	151	161	180
Infant Baptisms	2	3	1	4	7	3	2
1st Communion					1	0	2
Confirmations	8	0	0	16	2	15	0
Religious Education Students	41	45	44	48	42	39	36
RCIA Participants	0	NR	NR	NR	2	2	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	1	1	0	0	0	1	0

The church seats approximately 275 people and is less than one-third filled at Mass on Sunday, which represents less than half of registered parishioners. Mass attendance was reported as follows.

Time	February 1			February 8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
8:00 Sunday	82	45.6%	30%	86	47.8%	31%

A substantial increase in ordinary collections and receipts last year included an insurance payment. Both the church and the church hall are in need of new roofs. The church is currently being rewired and insulated. Approximately \$500,000 reported by the parish in its cash balance is the value of a trust administered by a bank. Only the earnings are available to the parish.

St. Benedict - Bendena Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	55,006	59,279	92,546
Capitol Funds	0	0	0
Bequests	3,641	5,941	5,988
Other Income	25,651	27,083	50,291
Disbursements	81,408	83,958	128,233
Capitol Expenditures	294	156	340
Net Income (loss)	2,596	8,189	20,252
Cash Balance	25,977	21,666	506,614
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	32,000	44,500	75,197

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 1.1** All liturgical celebrations are well attended and participated in with reverence and enthusiasm.
- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.
- 4.1** The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc.
- 4.2** The parish is aware of and responds to the needs of those with special needs such as the elderly, homebound, and shut-ins and their caregivers through regular visits and distribution of the Eucharist and sacramental ministries by laypersons and/or the pastor. Transportation to Mass and parish activities is available to them.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
- 4.5** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
- 5.2** Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.
- 5.3** Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets.
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. The parish has not developed a plan to address priority needs this next year.

- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.

St. Charles

St. Charles in Troy has 58 registered households with 150 persons or 2.6 per household. Parish membership has been slowly declining. Students in religious education classes have averaged about .35 per household over the last several years. Fr. Roderic Giller, OSB is pastor.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	NR	77	74	60	60	NR	58
Number of Persons	NR	190	176	154	154	NR	150
Infant Baptisms	NR	3	2	1	1	NR	3
1st Communion					0	NR	0
Confirmations	NR	2	0	9	0	NR	0
Religious Education Students	NR	45	17	20	21	NR	20
RCIA Participants	NR	0	2	0	0	NR	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	NR	2	0	4	0	NR	0

The church seats approximately 275 people and is less than one-third filled at Mass on Sunday, which represents less than half of registered parishioners. Mass attendance was reported as follows.

Time	February 1			February 8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
10:15 Sunday	84	56%	37%	94	62.7%	42%

Financially, the parish was blessed with a major bequest from a family that is managed by UMB Bank. Ordinary collections and receipts have increased each of the last three years; however, there was a net loss in two of those years. The parish's cash balance and savings at the Archdiocese are comparable to three years' operating expenses.

St. Charles Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	50,569	56,993	63,089
Capitol Funds	0	0	0
Bequests	0	0	0
Other Income	1,449	1,317	725
Disbursements	54,120	53,181	66,176
Capitol Expenditures	0	0	0
Net Income (loss)	(2,102)	5,129	(2,362)
Cash Balance	28,473	26,908	33,385
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	156,377	163,071	156,621

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury..
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. The parish has not developed a plan to address priority needs this next year.

- 1.2** Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ.
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.

St. Joseph - Atchison

St. Joseph in Atchison was originally founded to serve African American families. It has 275 registered households with 550 persons or 2.0 per household. The recently demolished school building initially housed K-8 grades and later was used as the primary education center when the Atchison Catholic schools were consolidated. When the building purchased from Mount. St. Scholastica Academy to house both the primary and intermediate grades burned down, the decision was made to add on to the school at St. Benedict instead of rebuilding here.

The church and church hall are fully accessible, the only one of the Catholic churches in Atchison that is. Additionally, considerable parking space is available and the parish owns an adjoining three to four acres that can be utilized as the City develops to the south. Fr. Bertrand LaNoue, OSB is pastor.

Fr. Bertrand reports that 20 students were enrolled in religious education this past year, which is .07 per household, low since 38 students attend ACES.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	240	303	286	276	NR	NR	275
Number of Persons	675	886	NR	550	NR	NR	550
Infant Baptisms	14	25	26	12	NR	NR	14
1st Communion					NR	NR	20
Confirmations	NR	16	12	3	NR	NR	6
Religious Education Students	SB*	50	28	0	NR	NR	0
RCIA Participants	SB*	2	0	0	0	NR	1
Adult Baptisms/Professions	2	10	1	0	NR	NR	1

*included in report by St. Benedict

The church seats approximately 360. Two weekend Masses are required to accommodate parishioners who regularly attend. About three-quarters of registered persons regularly attend Mass as reported below.

Time	January 31 - February 1			February 7-8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
5:00 Saturday	117	21.3%	33%	111	20.2%	31%
8:00 Sunday	93	16.9%	26%	99	18.0%	28%
11:00 Sunday	203	36.9%	56%	185	33.6%	51%
TOTAL	413	75.1%	115%	395	71.8%	110%

Ordinary collections and receipts have increased enough to offset inflation the last three years. However, the parish has ended each of the three years with an operating deficit. This is primarily due to its struggle to pay its assessment to Atchison Catholic Elementary School, which amounted to \$150,381 last year for 38 students. Its cash reserves have been diminished as a result.

St. Joseph - Atchison Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	265,876	272,631	285,955
Capitol Funds	3,670	2,163	2,498
Bequests	9,535	7,463	8,299
Other Income	755	725	1,198
Disbursements	272,471	289,368	301,155
Capitol Expenditures	17,137	0	6,000
Net Income (loss)	(9,722)	(6,386)	(9,205)
Cash Balance	32,075	24,239	12,104
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	71,905	73,355	76,318

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 2.5** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 3.1** Families in all parishes are encouraged to enroll children in nearby Catholic schools as a first choice.
- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 4.1** The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury..
- 5.1** In response to a call to tithe, parishioners generously provide sufficient funds, goods and services for ongoing and long-term operating and facility needs of the parish as well as special collections.
- 5.2** Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.
- 5.3** Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets.
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in red.

- 1.2** Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ. *To increase participation additional opportunities for reconciliation will be offered after Sunday Masses once a quarter to supplement offering the sacrament before Masses and at communal services during the year.*
- 1.4** Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages. *A committee will work with the pastor to establish a program for faith formation and to encourage parishioners' participation. Study groups will meet at parishioners' homes possibly with child care available.*
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc. *Two parishioners are working to create a parish website to be updated monthly or as needed. Additionally, a monthly newsletter, *The Carpenter's Corner*, will be published for insertion in the bulletin listing activities, new parishioners, baptisms, and other information.*
- 3.5** The parish provides facilities and support for home-school families. *We will encourage home-school families to participate in programs at Atchison Catholic Elementary School and to provide facilities and assistance at St. Joseph's as needed.*

St. Joseph - Nortonville

St. Joseph in Nortonville has 145 registered households with 350 persons or 2.4 per household. Registered households have declined only a little in recent years. Its school closed two years ago due to low enrollment. Students in religious education classes have increased steadily with .48 per household. Classes are held in the former school building. Fr. John Reynolds is pastor.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	140	135	151	166	149	146	145
Number of Persons	380	350	400	415	450	341	350
Infant Baptisms	11	4	10	18	7	3	2
1st Communion					5	5	5
Confirmations	17	NR	1	31	0	13	0
Religious Education Students	59	60	46	59	59	58	69
RCIA Participants	0	NR	6	0	7	4	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	1	2	1	0	0	3	0

The church seats approximately 240. Mass attendance was reported as follows.

Time	February 1			February 8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
8:00 Sunday	147	42%	61%	197	56.3%	82%

Financially, total revenues have closely matched disbursements the past two years. There is a comfortable cushion in its cash balance and savings account at the Archdiocese to cover unexpected capital needs.

St. Joseph - Nortonville Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	80,538	136,243	132,644
Capitol Funds	0	2,934	1,889
School Account	0	160,693	0
Bequests	2,296	7,918	9,608
Other Income	30,961	39,871	31,173
Disbursements	105,726	192,588	147,214
Capitol Expenditures	656	1,261	27,012
School Account	0	154,860	0
Net Income (loss)	7,413	(1,050)	1,088
Cash Balance	57,901	49,661	54,155
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	65,274	72,464	79,312

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.
- 4.1** The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in red.

- 1.4** Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages.
- 1.5** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes or in a leadership role with other denominations, offers periodic occasions for spiritual renewal and/or encounters with Christ for adults and youth. **Times for Eucharistic adoration will be scheduled. Parishioners will be encouraged to make use of the church during the day for prayer and to utilize prayer books and prayer cards there.**
- 2.1** The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events. **The Parish Council will contact other parishes regarding their welcoming policies. A plan will be developed for implementation by ushers this fall.**
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.

- 2.5** The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions and ignorance.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.
- 3.4** As the first teachers of children, parents are supported in this role by providing them programs and with materials for use at home.
- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.

St. Joseph - Wathena

St. Joseph in Wathena has 100 registered households with 254 persons or 2.5 per household. It has slowly been losing members at least partly due to the fact that its only weekend Mass is on Saturday evening. Also, St. Joseph with six parishes and Catholic schools along with convenient shopping is a short distance across the river. Fr. Roderic Giller, OSB is pastor.

There are .49 students per household enrolled in religious education. The number has declined with the decrease in registered households.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	125	115	130	114	101	NR	100
Number of Persons	300	225	250	277	250	NR	254
Infant Baptisms	4	4	10	3	2	NR	3
1st Communion					6	NR	7
Confirmations	12	1	2	13	0	NR	2
Religious Education Students	67	77	55	53	44	NR	49
RCIA Participants	2	NR	NR	NR	0	NR	2
Adult Baptisms/Professions	1	1	2	2	0	NR	0

The church seats an estimated 328 persons. Mass attendance is hurt by its scheduling on Saturday with just over half registered persons attending regularly. Attendance was reported as follows

Time	January 31			February 7		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
5:00 Saturday	144	56.7%	44%	119	46.9%	36%

Ordinary collections and receipts has held steady in recent years. Cash and savings balances equal nearly two years of operational expenses.

St. Joseph - Wathena Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	106,541	106,051	109,255
Capitol Funds	806	0	2,410
Bequests	25,013	33,532	6,837
Other Income	142,322	12,598	20,142
Disbursements	149,267	118,268	138,379
Capitol Expenditures	15,932	10,937	2,703
Net Income (loss)	109,483	22,976	(2,438)
Cash Balance	173,087	186,674	182,459
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	71,440	80,830	93,352

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 1.1** All liturgical celebrations are well attended and participated in with reverence and enthusiasm.
- 1.3** The parish encourages Eucharistic adoration and commitment to frequent prayer.
- 1.5** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes or in a leadership role with other denominations, offers periodic occasions for spiritual renewal and/or encounters with Christ for adults and youth.
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 4.1** The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
- 4.4** The parish supports financial, emotional and spiritual assistance for women experiencing crisis pregnancies and others in crisis, perhaps through regional centers.
- 4.5** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in red.

- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc. **Fr. Roderic and the Parish Council will develop a website by the end of 2009.**
- 3.1** Families in all parishes are encouraged to enroll children in nearby Catholic schools as a first choice.
- 3.3** The parish has an adequate number of catechists supported by Archdiocesan training programs offered in the Region.
- 3.4** As the first teachers of children, parents are supported in this role by providing them programs and with materials for use at home.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings. **Leaders of the parish youth group and youth ministry students at Benedictine College will be consulted to develop a plan to enrich the youth ministry program by the end of 2009.**
- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.
- 3.9** Adult education programs are offered regularly and all parishioners are encouraged to participate in RCIA. **Although item 4.2 was rated satisfactory overall, the evaluation process also prompted the parish to decide to create a list of parishioners with special needs and develop a program to provide them transportation to Mass and other parish activities.**

St. Leo

St. Leo in Horton at last report in 2005 had 217 registered households with 470 persons or 2.2 per household. Religious education classes were moved from Sunday to Wednesday three years ago, which negatively impacted Mass attendance. Fr. Earl Dekat is pastor.

At last report, about .39 students per household were enrolled in religious education. This was prior to changing classes to Sunday morning.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	NR	250	250	217	NR	NR	NR
Number of Persons	NR	950	750	470	NR	NR	NR
Infant Baptisms	NR	11	15	6	NR	NR	NR
1st Communion					NR	NR	NR
Confirmations	NR	4	47	0	NR	NR	NR
Religious Education Students	NR	126	99	85	NR	NR	NR
RCIA Participants	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Adult Baptisms/Professions	NR	21	10	7	NR	NR	NR

The church seats approximately 400 and usually is one-quarter to one-third filled at weekend Masses. One Mass could accommodate parishioners. Fewer than half of registered persons attend Mass regularly. Mass attendance was reported as follows.

Time	January 31 - February 1			February 7-8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
5:00 Saturday	96	20.4%	24%	101	21.5%	25%
10:00 Sunday	132	28.1%	33%	127	27.0%	32%
TOTAL	228	48.5%	57%	228	48.5%	57%

Ordinary collections and receipts fell off last year, which was not compensated by an increase in other income. A comfortable sum is held in its checking and savings accounts.

St. Leo Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	90,642	96,213	69,975
Capitol Funds	1,573	1,398	313
Bequests	0	0	0
Other Income	24,024	27,480	48,607
Disbursements	105,956	113,789	113,600
Capitol Expenditures	2,146	7,359	6,000
Net Income (loss)	8,137	3,943	(705)
Cash Balance	44,989	54,433	49,095
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	71,065	73,936	76,927

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

1.3 The parish encourages Eucharistic adoration and commitment to frequent prayer.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in red.

1.2 Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ.

1.4 Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages.

2.1 The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events. This is one of our top priorities. The next couple of months we will have the ushers and Eucharistic ministers be greeters before each weekend Mass. A hospitality committee will be put together to visit new families and to reach out to lapsed Catholics. They will also come up with a source of weekly greeters. Coffee and rolls following Sunday Mass will be scheduled on a regular basis.

- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass. **Last year we received a fair response to invitations to inactive Catholics to an outdoor Mass and picnic. This year a stronger effort will be made to improve the turnout.**
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.
- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 3.4** As the first teachers of children, parents are supported in this role by providing them programs and with materials for use at home.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.
- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.
- 3.9** Adult education programs are offered regularly and all parishioners are encouraged to participate in RCIA. **Fr. Earl will suggest a program to be offered in the fall. Hopefully, it will be offered either while children are in religious education classes or on Sunday evening.**
- 5.1** In response to a call to tithe, parishioners generously provide sufficient funds, goods and services for ongoing and long-term operating and facility needs of the parish as well as special collections.
- 5.2** Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.

St. Louis

St. Louis in Good Intent is located in the countryside about six miles northwest of Atchison. It has 76 registered households with 175 persons or 2.3 per household. The original church burned down around 1980. Fr. Benjamin Tremmel, OSB is pastor.

There are .46 students per household enrolled in religious education classes.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	72	80	75	71	NR	NR	76
Number of Persons	254	240	200	200	NR	NR	175
Infant Baptisms	6	4	9	4	NR	NR	1
1st Communion					NR	NR	4
Confirmations	5	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	10
Religious Education Students	57	55	45	53	NR	NR	35
RCIA Participants	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	NR	1	0	0	NR	NR	1

The church seats approximately 182 persons and is usually not more than half filled. Over two-thirds of registered persons regularly attend Mass. One weekend Mass could easily accommodate parishioners. Attendance was reported as follows.

Time	January 17-18			January 24-25		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
6:30 Saturday	34	19.4%	19%	35	20.0%	19%
10:30 Sunday	90	51.4%	49%	88	50.3%	48%
TOTAL	124	70.9%	68%	123	70.3%	68%

Ordinary collections and receipts have been static in recent years. A comfortable cash balance could cover most unexpected capital needs.

St. Louis Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	30,920	33,275	33,159
Capitol Funds	308	207	576
Bequests	1,510	2,485	13,819
Other Income	264	165	120
Disbursements	31,790	39,845	32,977
Capitol Expenditures	0	0	0
Net Income (loss)	1,212	(3,713)	14,697
Cash Balance	33,209	29,496	50,939
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	0	0	0

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 3.3** The parish has an adequate number of catechists supported by Archdiocesan training programs offered in the Region.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
- 4.4** The parish supports financial, emotional and spiritual assistance for women experiencing crisis pregnancies and others in crisis, perhaps through regional centers.
- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.

- 5.1** In response to a call to tithe, parishioners generously provide sufficient funds, goods and services for ongoing and long-term operating and facility needs of the parish as well as special collections.
- 5.3** Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets.
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. The parish has not developed a plan to address priority needs this next year.

- 1.3** The parish encourages Eucharistic adoration and commitment to frequent prayer.
- 1.4** Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages.
- 2.1** The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events.
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
- 2.5** The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions and ignorance.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.
- 3.5** The parish provides facilities and support for home-school families.
- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.

St. Mary

St. Mary in Purcell at last report in 2005 had 45 registered households, the smallest in the Pastoral Region, with 113 persons or 2.5 per household. Those numbers have been slowly declining. The church was built in 1896 and is the oldest continually used Catholic church in Doniphan County. It is on the National Register of Historic Places and the Register of Kansas Historic Places. The church has survived two tornadoes, the most recent in 1991 caused severe structural damage. Repairs and upgrades including the recent restoration of its stained glass windows have assured a high degree of architectural and structural integrity. The church is not accessible currently to people with physical disabilities. Fr. Earl Dekat is pastor.

At last report, approximately .31 students per household were enrolled in religious education classes.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	NR	55	50	45	NR	NR	NR
Number of Persons	NR	180	150	113	NR	NR	NR
Infant Baptisms	NR	5	4	0	NR	NR	NR
1st Communion					NR	NR	NR
Confirmations	NR	0	NR	1	NR	NR	NR
Religious Education Students	NR	38	38	35	NR	NR	NR
RCIA Participants	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
Adult Baptisms/Professions	NR	5	0	0	NR	NR	NR

The church seats approximately 250 and is little more than one-third filled on typical weekends. A high percentage of registered persons attends Mass regularly. Attendance was reported as follows.

Time	February 1			February 8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
8:00 Sunday	87	77.0%	35%	98	86.7%	39%

Ordinary collections and receipts have been static in recent years. A comfortable cash balance could cover most unexpected capital needs.

St. Mary Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	32,411	32,191	29,515
Capitol Funds	93	16	87,399
Bequests	0	0	0
Other Income	3,084	2,165	7,044
Disbursements	34,664	33,641	38,921
Capitol Expenditures	0	0	121,265
Net Income (loss)	924	731	(36,228)
Cash Balance	10,000	10,825	8,748
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	66,820	70,639	9,490

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.
- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
- 5.1** In response to a call to tithe, parishioners generously provide sufficient funds, goods and services for ongoing and long-term operating and facility needs of the parish as well as special collections.
- 5.2** Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.
- 5.3** Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in red.

- 1.2** Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ. **Cards will be printed and distributed at church with an explanation for the need for reconciliation, available times, and the Act of Contrition. An insert in the bulletin will be developed explaining how to make a good confession and the reasons why reconciliation is important. A member of Mount St. Scholastica community will be invited to address this parish this summer about reconciliation.**
- 2.1** The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events. **Ushers will arrive prior to Mass and greet newcomers as they enter the church.**

- 2.2** It is important to retain all Catholics within the body of Christ, the Church. Parishioners give personal testimony and live their lives as powerful models of faith and service to influence youth and others. **A card with a picture of the church will be sent to inactive Catholics with the message “We really miss you at St. Mary’s.”**
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass. **See 2.2.**
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc. **A combined website for St. Mary and St. Leo will be created featuring weekly updates, parish news, upcoming events, photos from the 150th anniversary celebration and restored stained glass windows, etc. A website designer has been contacted and should complete the project by fall.”**
- 3.1** Families in all parishes are encouraged to enroll children in nearby Catholic schools as a first choice.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs. **A wheelchair ramp will be constructed by parishioners this fall in conformance with requirements of the National and Kansas Historic Registers.**

St. Patrick

St. Patrick near Mt. Pleasant has 48 registered households with 100 persons or 2.1 per household. These numbers have held steady for many years. St. Patrick is the oldest continually used Catholic Church in Kansas. It is on both the National Register of Historic Places and the Register of Kansas Historic Places. In recent years the parish has received \$110,000 from the Heritage Trust Fund for a new roof and interior restorations. Fr. Bertrand LaNoue, OSB is pastor, although Fr. Louis Kirby, OSB who is 87 years of age, celebrates Sunday Mass at St. Patrick.

Five students attend Atchison Catholic Elementary School (ACES). Fr. Bertrand reports that 12 students were enrolled in religious education classes, which is .25 per household.

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Registered Households	60	NR	45	47	NR	NR	48
Number of Persons	125	NR	NR	100	NR	NR	100
Infant Baptisms	1	NR	2	2	NR	NR	1
1st Communion					NR	NR	2
Confirmations	0	NR	2	1	NR	NR	2
Religious Education Students	NR	NR	4	NR	NR	NR	0
RCIA Participants	NR	NR	0	0	NR	NR	0
Adult Baptisms/Professions	NR	NR	NR	1	NR	NR	0

The church seats an estimated 157 persons and is usually about two-thirds filled. Generally, nearly all registered persons attend Mass weekly. Attendance was reported as follows.

Time	January 31			February 8		
	Number	% persons	% capacity	Number	% persons	% capacity
9:30 Sunday	110	110%	70%	99	99%	63%

Ordinary collections and receipts have been fairly steady in recent years. About half of total disbursements are expended on its assessment from ACES. It was necessary for the parish to use its cash balance to cover operating and capital expenditures last year. The parish has a separate account, St Patrick's Heritage Preservation Fund, to manage donations and grants restricted to the maintenance of the church.

St. Patrick Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	41,730	44,269	41,239
Capitol Funds	1,475	822	698
Bequests	10	3,429	1,940
Other Income	0	0	61
Disbursements	38,908	37,462	70,805
Capitol Expenditures	0	0	0
Net Income (loss)	4,307	10,058	(26,867)
Cash Balance	44,277	54,833	27,387
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	26,628	27,129	27,708

St. Patrick Heritage Preservation Financial Status	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Collections & Receipts	300	418	552
Capitol Funds	0	0	0
Bequests	5,460	635	50
Other Income	85,440	0	0
Disbursements	92	10	0
Capitol Expenditures	114,275	3,304	0
Net Income (loss)	(23,167)	(2,261)	602
Cash Balance	24,313	22,053	22,655
Archdiocesan Savings Balance	0	0	0

In its self-evaluation of the Signs of Parish Vitality the following areas were rated outstanding.

- 2.1** The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events.
- 2.3** The parish reaches out to inactive Catholic and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
- 2.4** The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 2.5** The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions and ignorance.
- 2.6** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.
- 3.1** Families in all parishes are encouraged to enroll children in nearby Catholic schools as a first choice.
- 3.2** The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 3.3** The parish has an adequate number of catechists supported by Archdiocesan training programs offered in the Region.
- 3.9** Adult education programs are offered regularly and all parishioners are encouraged to participate in RCIA.
- 4.1** The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc.
- 4.2** The parish is aware of and responds to the needs of those with special needs such as the elderly, homebound, and shut-ins and their caregivers through regular visits and distribution of the Eucharist and sacramental ministries by laypersons and/or the pastor. Transportation to Mass and parish activities is available to them.
- 4.3** Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
- 4.4** The parish supports financial, emotional and spiritual assistance for women experiencing crisis pregnancies and others in crisis, perhaps through regional centers.
- 4.5** Parishioners advocate with policy makers for issues critical to Catholics especially efforts to protect the unborn and newborn.
- 4.6** The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
- 5.1** In response to a call to tithe, parishioners generously provide sufficient funds, goods and services for ongoing and long-term operating and facility needs of the parish as well as special collections.
- 5.2** Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.
- 5.4** Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

These elements were judged to be in need of improving. Parish plans to address these areas are indicated in red.

- 1.4** Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages. Beginning immediately, programs available at Benedictine College, St. Benedict's Abbey and Mount St. Scholastica will be publicized at announcements at Mass and in the bulletin and participation encouraged. Virginia McCoy, parishioner and Mt. St. Scholastica oblate, will educate other parishioners about oblate programs and Sophia Center retreats and post information with schedules on the church bulletin board.
- 1.5** The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes or in a leadership role with other denominations, offers periodic occasions for spiritual renewal and/or encounters with Christ for adults and youth. A plan will be developed for hosting occasional mini spiritual retreats and times of reflection.
- 2.2** It is important to retain all Catholics within the body of Christ, the Church. Parishioners give personal testimony and live their lives as powerful models of faith and service to influence youth and others. This summer a devotional plan for the purpose of inspiring all parishioners to apply God's word in daily life will be refined. Benedictine College youth ministry majors, priests and sisters will be invited to share their faith journeys. Parishioners Brooke Johnson and Tammy Wagner will lead Bible devotionals and group discussions.
- 3.6** Appealing youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings. A plan is being developed to have quarterly Mass celebrations planned by youth to institute cross-generational worship. Benedictine College youth ministry students will be utilized to provide leadership and assistance with the youth group program including events that may appeal to non-Catholics as well. Invitations are being issued to begin programs to share individuals' faith journeys with youth to strengthen their Catholic faith and inspire religious vocations. Amy Funk and Ann Corpstein are leading this effort.
- 3.7** The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home. Kelyn Funk, Ann Corpstein and parents of college students will organize an effort to actively send e-mail messages and bulletins electronically to college students and those in military service. Care packages of snacks, necessities and inspirational items will be sent to these groups.
- 5.3** Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets. As soon as possible the Parish Council with assistance from Fr. Bertrand will publish detailed financial reports of revenues and expenses in the bulletin on a regular basis.

Additionally, Carolyn Kane will organize blood drives at least annually beginning this fall through the Community Blood Center.

The goal for all parishes in the Archdiocese is to be healthy and vibrant churches capable of carrying out the work of Christ and the Church. Our desire, as Archbishop Naumann has noted, is “to utilize the many resources and gifts God has entrusted to us in order to proclaim the Gospel effectively and to bring the love of Jesus to all the people of Northeastern Kansas.”

Monsignor Gary Pennings, Chancellor of the Archdiocese, in a letter to the Planning Task Force addressed parish vitality from the aspect of Archbishop Naumann’s pastoral priorities.

“Each parish must look at itself and see how it can best contribute to:

CONVERSION of individual hearts so that people grow closer in their love and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

EVANGELIZATION to share the good news of the Gospel, that God loves us unto death, death on a cross, and we as Jesus’ disciples are called to witness such love in our world.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION in all its forms (Catholic schools, religious education programs, adult education, RCIA, sacramental preparation, etc.) so that the what, why and how of our Catholic faith is better understood and communicated.

OUTREACH TO THE NEEDY, especially the poor and disenfranchised, so that the love of Jesus becomes not just something we talk about, but is truly experienced in our world.

A spirituality of STEWARDSHIP, so that Catholics come to appreciate that all they have is a freely given gift from God and that they feel compelled out of gratitude to return a generous portion of their time, talent and treasure to God and the work of His Church.

Not every parish has the capacity to carry out the work and mission of the Jesus Christ on its own with its limited numbers and resources. There will be a need to collaborate and, in many cases, to share its gifts and share its resources.”

The Planning Task Force first defined the essential elements of parish vitality using as a framework the five pastoral priorities. This draft document (see Appendix) was shared in meetings with parish congregations and responses were sought to the following questions.

- What does it mean to be a vital parish?
- Are there any elements that you believe are not necessary to be a vital parish?
- Are there modifications you would make to be more applicable to your parish?
- Are there additional elements you think are important to be a vital parish?
- How would you suggest that each element be evaluated?

The Planning Task Force considered this input in adopting the following Signs of Parish Vitality for recommendation to Archbishop Naumann.

SIGNS OF PARISH VITALITY FOR THE ATCHISON PASTORAL REGION

As baptized Catholics we share a common vocation to grow in holiness and to continue the ministry of Jesus as members of his body, the Church: to pray and worship, to heal and serve, to proclaim and teach. Archbishop Naumann has identified five pastoral priorities: conversion, evangelization, Catholic education, serving those in need, and stewardship.

These priorities are essential for an alive, vital parish to be capable of fully carrying out the work of the Church. The following criteria represent the basic functions or characteristics that must be present in every parish in the Atchison Pastoral Region. They are necessary, key parts of parish life and visible signs of active spirituality.

1.0 CONVERSION

An essential mission of the Church is to bring individuals into contact with Jesus Christ, allowing them to be transformed by the experience of His love. The Church accomplishes this in numerous ways but most especially through the sacramental life of the Church.

- 1.1 All liturgical celebrations are well attended and participated in with reverence and enthusiasm.
- 1.2 Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ.
- 1.3 The parish encourages Eucharistic adoration and commitment to habitual prayer.
- 1.4 Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages.
- 1.5 The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes or in a leadership role with other denominations, offers periodic occasions for spiritual renewal and/or encounters with Christ for adults and youth.

2.0 EVANGELIZATION

The mission that Jesus gave the Church was to go and make disciples. It is easy for us to become internally focused individually and as a parish. However, to really accomplish this mission we must always be seeking to invite others to know Christ and understand the Gospel.

- 2.1 The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events.
- 2.2 It is important to retain all Catholics within the body of Christ, the Church. Parishioners give personal testimony and live their lives as powerful models of faith and service to influence youth and others.
- 2.3 The parish reaches out to inactive Catholics and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
- 2.4 The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
- 2.5 The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions, and ignorance.

3.0 CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Catholic education, in all its forms, is an important endeavor of the Church. Catholic schools and religious education classes provide environments where students have the opportunity for formal religious instruction that integrates their faith into all the other disciplines and into their personal moral development. It is equally important to cultivate within adults a desire to continue to grow in their knowledge of their Catholic faith.

- 3.1 Families in all parishes are encouraged to enroll children in nearby Catholic schools as a first choice.
- 3.2 The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
- 3.3 The parish has an adequate number of trained catechists supported by Archdiocesan training programs offered in the Region.
- 3.4 As the first teachers of children, parents are supported in this role by providing them programs and with materials for use at home.
- 3.5 The parish provides facilities and support for home-school families.
- 3.6 Youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are appealing as they are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.
- 3.7 The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.
- 3.8 A standardized curriculum is offered for religious education programs and tailored for use by rural parishes, e.g. teaching multiple grades.

4.0 SERVING THOSE IN NEED

The parish Church is called to make the love of Christ visible and tangible to all who are poor, who are vulnerable, and who live on the margins of society.

- 4.1 The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc.
- 4.2 The parish is aware of and responds to the needs of those with special needs such as the elderly, homebound, and shut-ins and their caregivers through regular visits and distribution of the Eucharist and sacramental ministries by laypersons and/or the pastor. Transportation to Mass and parish activities is available to them.
- 4.3 Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
- 4.4 The parish supports financial, emotional and spiritual assistance for women experiencing crisis pregnancies and others in crisis, perhaps through regional centers.
- 4.5 Parishioners advocate with policy makers for issues critical to Catholics especially efforts to protect the unborn and newborn.
- 4.6 The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.

5.0 STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is a way of life and a way of looking at life and the earth. It is an expression of spirituality and our profound gratitude from seeing everything as God's gift to us. It is out of this gratitude that we inevitably are motivated to want to return a portion of the time, talent, and treasure that God has given us.

- 5.1 In response to a call to tithe, parishioners generously provide sufficient funds, goods, and services for the ongoing and long-term operating needs and facility needs of the parish as well as special collections.
- 5.2 Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.
- 5.3 Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets.
- 5.4 Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

The leadership of each parish (representatives of Pastoral and Finance Councils) evaluated parish performance according to suggested measures (see Appendix) for each element of the Signs of Parish Vitality as outstanding, satisfactory or needs improving. Parish plans were subsequently developed the address priority areas in need of improvement.

Interestingly, midway through the planning process on April 27 the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life released the report of a survey of 10,545 Americans entitled *Faith in Flux: Changes in Religious Affiliation in the U.S.*, which included a section titled *Leaving Catholicism*. Its findings have a timely relevance for what it means to be a vital parish as Archbishop Naumann enumerated in his letter to parishioners at the commencement of the planning process: 1) to provide for the pastoral and spiritual needs of the Church; 2) to pass the faith on to future generations; and 3) to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus and bring His love to as many people as possible in our time.

The following findings, shared in most of the second round of parish meetings, point to areas in which parishes need to focus attention and resources to ensure the continued vitality of the Church. The Signs of Parish Vitality address most of these issues directly.

- The Catholic Church has lost the most members among all denominations even though its retention rate of childhood members (68%) is comparable with or better than the retention rates of other religious groups. Those who have left Catholicism outnumber those who have joined the Catholic Church by a four-to-one margin. Overall, one-in-ten Americans adults (10.1%) have left the Catholic Church after having been raised Catholic.
- Former Catholics are about evenly divided between those who have become Protestant and those who are now unaffiliated with any religion. Among Catholics who have become Protestant, most now belong to evangelical denominations.
- Almost half (48%) of Catholics who are now unaffiliated left Catholicism before reaching age 18, as did one-third who are now Protestant. Among both groups, an additional three-in-ten left the Catholic Church as young adults between ages 18 and 23.
- Among people who were raised Catholic, both former Catholics and those who have remained Catholic report similar levels of childhood attendance at religious education classes and Catholic youth group participation. Additionally, one-quarter of lifelong Catholics say they attended Catholic high school, somewhat higher than among former Catholics who have become Protestant (16%) but roughly similar to former Catholics who have become unaffiliated (20%).

- Among lifelong Catholics, weekly church attendance dropped from 86% during childhood to 69% during adolescence and continued to decline between adolescence and adulthood (to 42%).
- For those who are now Protestant, attendance also dropped between childhood (79% attended weekly) and adolescence (60%). As adults, however, weekly church attendance has remained stable among this group (at 63%).
- Those who have become unaffiliated exhibit a sharp decline in worship service attendance through their lifetime: 74% attended regularly as children, 44% did so as teens, and only 2% do so as adults.
- While 46% of lifelong Catholics report having had very strong faith as children, only 35% of Catholic converts to Protestantism and 30% of those who have become unaffiliated say the same. For all three groups, strength of faith declined at least slightly between childhood and teen years, dropping 12 percentage points among lifelong Catholics, 13 points among those who are now Protestant, and 18 points among those who are now unaffiliated. From teenage years to adulthood, however, reports of very strong faith increased dramatically, from 22% to 71% among former Catholics who are now Protestant. Among lifelong Catholics, 46% say they now have very strong faith.
- Most former Catholics say they gradually drifted away from Catholicism. Nearly three-quarters of former Catholics who are now unaffiliated (71%) say this, as do more than half of those who have left Catholicism for Protestantism (54%).
- Majorities of former Catholics who are now unaffiliated also cite having stopped believing in Catholicism's teachings overall (65%).
- Among former Catholics who are now Protestant, 71% say they left Catholicism because their spiritual needs were not being met. A similar number (70%) say they left the Catholic Church because they found another religion they liked more. Lack of spiritual fulfillment is a particularly common impetus for leaving Catholicism among those who are now members of evangelical Protestant churches (78%) but is cited less often by former Catholics who have become members of mainline Protestant churches (57%).
- Mainline Protestants are much more likely than their evangelical counterparts to say they left Catholicism because they married a non-Catholic (44% vs. 22%) or due to dissatisfaction with the priests at their parish (39% vs. 23%).
- About one-in-five former Catholics (19% of those now unaffiliated and 20% of those now Protestant) say they left Catholicism due to discomfort with the feeling of community at their parish. Those who take this view tend to say their parish did not have enough sense of community. Significant minorities, however, say their parish community was too close, with too many people involved in other people's business.
- When asked why they joined their Protestant denomination, former Catholics most commonly cite enjoying the religious services and the style of worship of their new faith, with fully eight-in-ten (81%) expressing this point of view. Three-in-ten former Catholics who have become Protestant say they were attracted by a particular minister or pastor, and the same proportion say they joined their new religion because a member invited them.
- Many Catholics who are now unaffiliated remain open to the possibility that they could some day find a religion that suits them; one-third say they just have not found the right religion yet.

Parishes should take these findings into account when devising annual plans to strengthen parish vitality.

The Atchison Pastoral Region Planning Task Force respectfully submits the following recommendations to Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann. The overriding objective of the planning process has been to strengthen parish life to more fully carry out the mission of Jesus Christ and the work of His Church. The parishes of the Atchison Pastoral Region are especially blessed to have proximate access to the resources of St. Benedict's Abbey, Benedictine College and Mount St. Scholastica to help in this regard.

Secondarily, the Planning Task Force has sought to support the desire of small, rural parishes to maintain their parishes as essential foundations of community and family life. This objective has been balanced with a desire for parish priests to have adequate time to nourish their relationships with parishioners and to attend to their own personal needs. This balance becomes increasingly difficult to achieve as the numbers of parish priests decreases and their ages advance.

While the future cannot be known, the Planning Task Force proposes these recommendations to guide actions and decisions over the next five to ten years. If decisions about the deployment of fewer priests are required in the future, the Planning Task Force believes that it will be advisable to revisit these recommendations in the context of then current data.

1. SIGNS OF PARISH VITALITY

As baptized Catholics we believe that we share a common vocation to grow in holiness and to personify the ministry of Jesus as members of His body, the Church. The Planning Task Force **recommends** that the Signs of Parish Vitality on pages 53-55 be accepted to fulfill the pastoral priorities that Archbishop Naumann has set forth for the Archdiocese: conversion, evangelization, education, serving those in need, and stewardship. The Task Force realizes that conversion of the heart is both the root and aim of each of these functions.

Upon acceptance, the Planning Task Force **recommends** that the Signs of Parish Vitality be communicated to all parishioners through a variety of means and reinforced at regular intervals within each parish.

The Planning Task Force believes that all parishes regardless of size can strive and should be encouraged to strive to fulfill these expectations of our Catholic doctrine, faith and practice. Therefore, it **recommends** that these Signs of Parish Vitality form the basis of continuing evaluation and planning by each parish and of developing initiatives for collaboration among parishes.

It further **recommends** that progress toward achieving annual plans should be documented as part of each parish's annual report to the Archdiocese and that parish reports should include updated plans for the upcoming year, which specifically address the Signs of Parish Vitality.

2. PARISH COLLABORATION

Eight of the fifteen parishes in the Atchison Pastoral Region have approximately 100 registered households or fewer. Consequently, many parishes have scant resources to vigorously address the Signs of Parish Vitality and/or small numbers of participants or potential participants. Additionally, the array of meetings, programs and events among parishes served by one pastor are significant claims upon priests' time.

Considering these factors, the Planning Task Force believes that parishes should be strongly encouraged to combine as many functions as possible. It recommends that during the upcoming year, Parish Councils or appointed representatives of Parish Councils in each group of parishes served by a single pastor should meet together to identify areas for collaboration and cooperation and develop plans for implementation. These plans should be included in parish's annual reports to the Archdiocese. Areas to be examined include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The feasibility of parish Pastoral and Finance Councils in each group served by one pastor to meet in tandem on the same night.
- Opportunities for adult faith formation developed and offered collaboratively for parishioners of some or all parishes in each group.
- RCIA classes offered jointly for all parishes in each group (commonly done already).
- Religious education classes developed and offered jointly for some or all parishes in each group.
- Youth ministry programs developed and offered jointly for some or all parishes in each group. Alternately, occasional joint programs offered to make feasible efforts such as social justice initiatives, social outings, etc.
- Perpetual adoration or regularly scheduled Eucharistic adoration supported by all or some parishes in each group.
- Programs or groups aimed at specific parishioners such as young adults, young parents, etc. developed and offered jointly for some or all parishes in each group.

While distance between parishes is acknowledged as a practical consideration, the bias should be toward collaboration and cooperation. Decisions to maintain functions separately among parishes in each grouping should be justified in submitting annual reports to the Archdiocese.

3. REGIONAL COUNCIL

The Planning Task Force is aware that the approved recommendation to establish a Regional Council in the Nemaha-Marshall Pastoral Region has not been implemented. While there are benefits to a Regional Council, the Planning Task Force believes that a different approach in the Atchison Pastoral Region may be more effective.

Therefore, the Planning Task Force **recommends** that Archbishop Naumann appoint a separate planning group following the acceptance of this report and recommendations to determine the feasibility of a Regional Council. In this way, participants may take ownership of the concept and its implementation. The planning group should be charged with deciding whether a Regional Council is the best vehicle for 1) assuring the implementation of approved recommendations, 2) promoting the collaborative utilization of resources to strengthen the vitality of parishes and ecclesial communities in the Pastoral Region, 3) monitoring progress by parishes in striving to achieve the Signs of Parish Vitality, and 4) overseeing the planning process for merging the parishes in the city of Atchison. If it is determined that a Regional Council is feasible, the planning group should recommend the composition and terms of the membership, meeting frequency, overall purposes, and initial objectives.

The planning group should consider the following Signs of Parish Vitality that a significant number (six or more) of parish self-evaluations determined were in need of improving. Is a Regional Council the most effective way to assist parishes in addressing these issues? If not, the planning group should offer an alternate plan.

- Encouraging parishioners to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Providing opportunities for adult faith formation
- Offering periodic opportunities for spiritual renewal
- Establishing an active hospitality ministry
- Reaching out to inactive Catholics
- Informing the wider community about teachings of the Church
- Establishing a website
- Supporting parents as first teachers of their children with materials for use at home
- Offering appealing youth ministry programs
- Providing information about Catholic campus ministry programs at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions

Additionally, in view of the need for a greater number of priests, a Regional Council could develop a program to promote vocational awareness throughout the Pastoral Region.

It is further **recommended** that the Regional Council, if established, should reconsider the recommendations approved from this report regarding the future configuration of parishes as decisions are to be made to assign fewer priests to parishes in the Pastoral Region. This will assure that current parish characteristics, new and updated demographic data, age and health of priests to be assigned, and other information can be considered to determine the prudence of these recommendations.

4. FUTURE DEPLOYMENT OF PRIEST RESOURCES

The Planning Task Force was charged with the responsibility to recommend a plan for configuring the current fifteen parishes in the Pastoral Region that might potentially be served by as few as four priests at some point in the future.

Presently, two Archdiocesan and five Benedictine priests serve fifteen parishes. As shown in the Introduction, five of the priests are very near or beyond age 70. One of those has had significant health problems in the past year and another is giving serious consideration to retiring. The Planning Task Force is aware that the Archdiocese will be hard pressed to replace any of these priests over the short term. It **recommends** the following parish groupings and mergers if fewer priests are available for assignment in the Pastoral Region.

The Planning Task Force wishes to emphasize that small, rural parishes are often the single and most important institution to community and family life. However, it recognizes that a continuing constraint of priest resources may require St. Benedict's Abbey to further contract its commitment to parish ministry and the Archdiocese to redeploy parish priests.

The numbers in parenthesis indicate the minimum number of weekend Mass celebrations required to accommodate the number of Catholics regularly attending Mass at each parish according to head counts taken during the planning process and seating capacity. Blue type indicates a realignment of a parish(es) while red shows a parish to be merged with an adjoining parish.

Current Parish Configuration

1. St. Benedict, Atchison (2) and Sacred Heart (1)
2. St. Joseph, Atchison (2) and St. Patrick (1)
3. Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls (1), St. Joseph, Nortonville (1), and Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek (1)
4. St. Ann, Effingham (1) and St. Louis, Good Intent (1)
5. St. Leo, Horton (1) and St. Mary, Purcell (1)
6. St. Ann, Hiawatha (2)
7. St. Joseph, Wathena (1), St. Benedict, Bendena (1), and St. Charles, Troy (1)

A. It is feasible for the parishes (Sacred Heart, St. Benedict, St. Joseph and St. Patrick) in the City of Atchison to merge into one parish. The number of weekend Mass celebrations can be reduced from eleven to as few as six to relieve assigned priests and assisting priests of liturgical responsibilities. There likely may also be financial savings that may be used to employ a parish administrator or other staff to further ease burdens on the parish priest(s).

The Planning Task Force **recommends** that a planning committee comprised of members of each parish and the pastors be formed as soon as practical to determine how to proceed with a merger. It requests that assistance be provided by the Chancery to facilitate the planning process. The process should include an adequate number of meetings with parishioners in order to give them a voice, to solicit suggestions, and to allow for meaningful participation. The Task Force wishes to emphasize that the process of merging into one parish should be anticipated to be an evolutionary process rather than adhering to a fixed timetable. The Task Force further **recommends** that oversight of the planning process be made a responsibility of the Regional Council recommended for establishment in the original report. The Regional Council will help assure that planning proceeds at a pace acceptable to the Archdiocese and will challenge the planning committee to address difficult issues.

While a merger of parishes is feasible, the Planning Task Force believes that the liturgical, pastoral, and administrative demands require two priests assigned full-time until it may be possible in the future to assign only four priests to the Atchison Pastoral Region as recommended in the scenario below. It may be desirable to assign two priests to one merged parish as either co-pastors or a pastor and assistant pastor depending upon circumstances at the time. Even with the assignment of two priests, assistance from the Abbey and/or the Archdiocese will be required to provide cover for vacations, illnesses and other special needs that arise.

B. The assignment of **six priests** would mean combining St. Ann in Hiawatha with St. Leo in Horton and aligning St. Mary, Purcell with St. Ann in Effingham and St. Louis in Good Intent. While this severs the current relationship between St. Leo and St. Mary, there are a number of compelling reasons.

- It provides for a more even distribution of households.
- The parishes are more similar (e.g. rural) and parishioners share more of the same issues and lifestyles.
- It allows for the celebration of three weekend Masses – one at each parish. The previous arrangement required four – including two at St. Ann in Hiawatha.
- There are good roads between the parishes.

- St. Mary and St. Ann Parishes have shared a priest in the past and have worked together.
- There are family relationships among parishioners at St. Mary and St. Louis Parishes.

1. St. Benedict, Atchison (2) and Sacred Heart (1)
2. St. Joseph, Atchison (2) and St. Patrick (1)
3. Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls (1), St. Joseph, Nortonville (1), and Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek (1)
4. St. Ann, Effingham (1), St. Louis, Good Intent (1), and St. Mary, Purcell (1)
5. St. Ann, Hiawatha (2) and St. Leo, Horton (1)
6. St. Joseph, Wathena (1), St. Benedict, Bendena (1), and St. Charles, Troy (1)

C. If just **five priests** are assigned to the Pastoral Region, several small, rural parishes would be merged with adjoining parishes. While merging these parishes, this change affects the smallest number of people. Many parishioners at these small parishes are likely to attend Mass at parishes in Atchison; whereas few, if any, parishioners in the Atchison parishes are likely to attend Mass outside the city.

- 1-2. St. Benedict, Atchison (2), Sacred Heart (1), and St. Joseph, Atchison (2) with two priests serving the three parishes. Merge St. Patrick.
3. Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls (1), St. Joseph, Nortonville (1), and St. Ann, Effingham (1). Merge Corpus Christi, Mooney Creek. Close St. Louis, Good Intent and St. Mary, Purcell
4. St. Ann, Hiawatha (2) and St. Leo, Horton (1)
5. St. Joseph, Wathena (1), St. Benedict, Bendena (1), and St. Charles, Troy (1)

If this scenario comes to pass, it will be decided at that time which parishes in Atchison will be assigned to each of the two priests

D. In the event there are only **four priests** available to the Pastoral Region, St. Charles in Troy will be merged so that the priest assigned to St. Joseph in Wathena and St. Benedict in Bendena can assist with weekend Mass at the Atchison parishes. Additionally, Sacred Heart, St. Benedict and St. Joseph parishes in Atchison will be merged. Assistance with weekend Mass will also likely be needed from the Abbey.

1. St. Benedict, Atchison (2), and St. Joseph, Atchison (2).
2. Immaculate Conception, Valley Falls (1), St. Joseph, Nortonville (1), and St. Ann, Effingham (1).
3. St. Ann, Hiawatha (2) and St. Leo, Horton (1)
4. St. Joseph, Wathena (1) and St. Benedict, Bendena (1). Merge St. Charles, Troy.

Lastly, it is **recommended** that each time parishes are merged the pastor be encouraged to work with the Pastoral Councils and parishioners affected to determine worship sites and Mass schedules as well as to resolve administrative issues. Additionally, it is **recommended** that the Parish Councils of the adjoining parishes develop plans to welcome and embrace parishioners from the smaller parishes. Many of them will be grieving the loss of independence of their parish communities and may feel like outsiders in their combined parishes. Resources available at the Chancery and the ecclesial communities should be utilized to help this transition.

5. HISTORICAL CHURCHES

The historical churches in the Pastoral Region are not only architecturally significant, they are testament to the faith and perseverance of the pioneers who settled the Kansas Territory. Upon the merging of the historical parishes – Corpus Christi in Mooney Creek, St. Mary in Purcell, and St. Patrick, it is **recommended** that they be considered for status as oratories for special events such as weddings, funerals and celebration of the feast days of their patron saints.

The combined parish will have to agree to assume financial responsibility for maintenance and operating expenses. However, it is **recommended** that a restricted fund should be established comprised of any funds to be transferred from the smaller parish, any deposits held by the smaller parish at the Archdiocese, future bequests designated for the preservation of the church, and any contributions by parishioners of the smaller parish that are restricted to its maintenance and operating expenses above and beyond the sums they had been contributing annually to their original parish.

If the combined parish cannot agree to assume responsibility for the oratory, it is **recommended** that parishioners of the smaller parish be allowed one year to form a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation for the purpose of owning and preserving the building.

Both St. Mary in Purcell and St. Patrick are on the National Register of Historical Places and the Register of Kansas Historic Places. Also, both have received grants from the Heritage Trust Fund. Consequently, there are certain responsibilities to consider including the following.

“The State may require such weatherproofing or structural repairs as may be necessary to prevent serious deterioration of the structure or the appearance of the property.”

“In the event of a violation of the project agreement, and in addition to any remedy now or hereafter provided by law, the State may, following reasonable notice to the grant recipients, institute suit to enjoin said violation or to require the restoration of the property to its condition at the time of this agreement, or condition at the time of the most recent satisfactory State inspection. The State may choose to recapture the grant funds in their entirety rather than order the restoration of the property. This decision would be made at the discretion of the State. The State shall be entitled to recover all costs or expenses incurred with such a suit, including all court costs and attorney’s fees.”

“If ownership of real property is not maintained by the grant recipient from the date of the signing of the project agreement until one year after the project is completed, the Heritage Trust Fund grant funds must be repaid in full. For properties held between one and five years after the project is completed, the grant recapture amount is reduced by twenty percent per year. Transfers of property during the course of the Heritage Trust Fund grant will result in a full recapture of grant funds unless the transfer is approved in writing by the Kansas State Historical Society.”

6. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

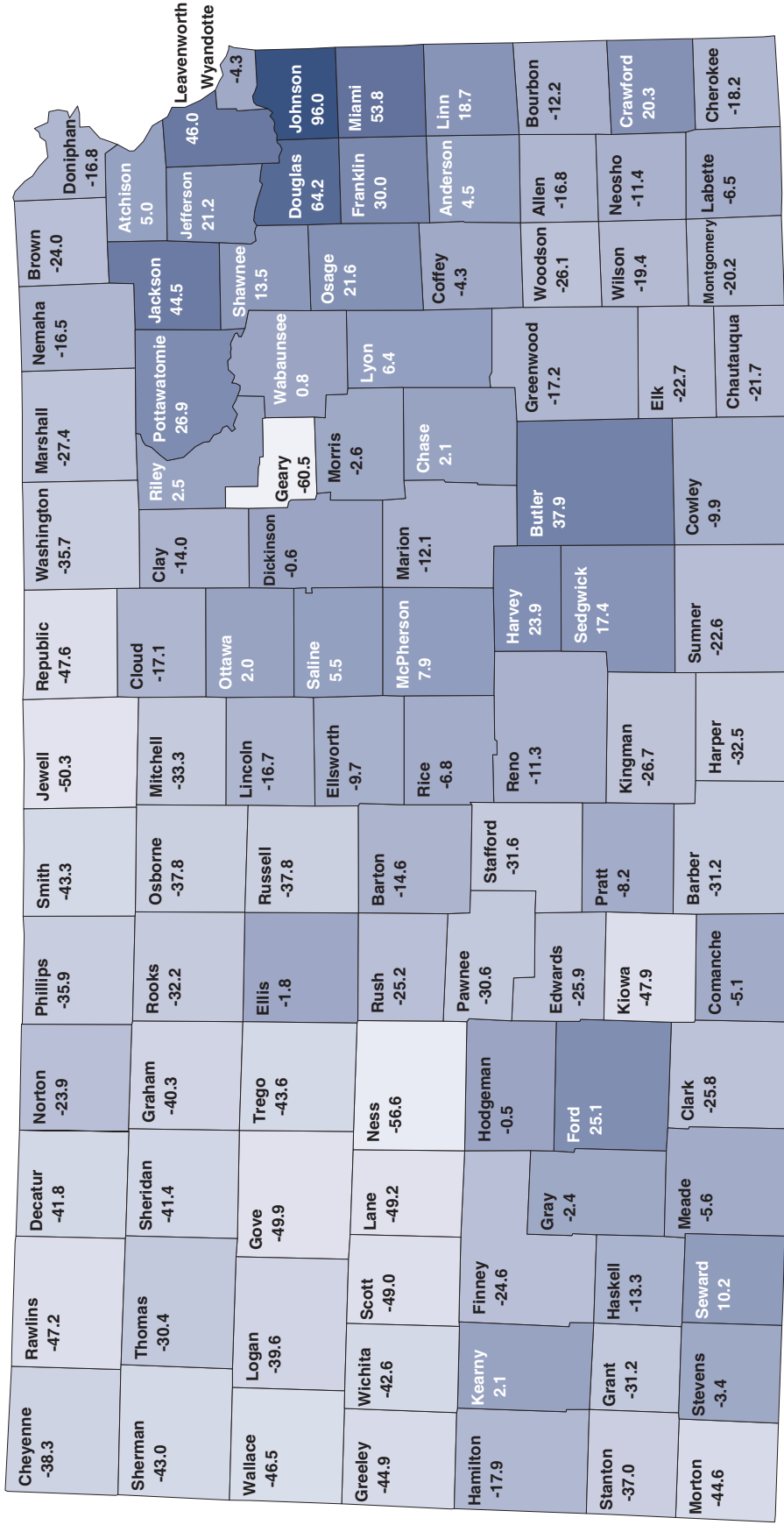
The following plan is proposed for the implementation of approved recommendations.

July through September	<p>Summary of the report and full recommendations communicated to parishioners in all parishes with comments by parish representatives on the Planning Task Force and pastors at weekend Masses.</p> <p>Pastoral Councils (or their representatives) of parishes within current groupings meet jointly to identify areas for collaboration and cooperation and develop plans for implementation.</p> <p>Parishes complete plans to address the Signs of Parish Vitality in need of improvement and those plans developed above for submission to the Chancery as addenda to annual parish reports.</p>
September/October	<p>Archbishop and Presbyteral Council accept this report and approve recommendations or amend recommendations.</p> <p>Following acceptance and approval, final recommendations communicated to parishioners in all parishes with comments by representatives on the Planning Task Force and pastors at weekend Masses. Include parish's plans to address areas of parish vitality in need of improving and plans for collaboration and cooperation with adjoining parishes.</p>
October	<p>Archbishop Naumann appoints a planning group to determine the feasibility of a Regional Council that will: 1) help assure implementation of recommendations in the Pastor Region; 2) promote collaborative utilization of resources to strengthening parish vitality; and 3) monitor parish progress.</p> <p>Parishes begin implementing annual plans.</p>
November	<p>Regional Council planning group convenes.</p>
December	<p>Regional Council planning group reports to Archbishop Naumann.</p>
January	<p>If determined to be feasible, Region Council members appointed by Archbishop Naumann.</p>
May	<p>If appointed, Regional Council develops a plan for the promotion of regional activities that will strengthen parish vitality such as training catechists.</p>
June	<p>Parishes evaluate functions according to the Signs of Parish Vitality and use evaluations to develop plans for FY 2010-11 including integration with the Regional Council's plans.</p>
July	<p>Parishes report progress toward implementing annual plans to the Chancery and submit new annual plans to further strengthen parish vitality.</p>

APPENDIX

FIGURE 2

**Projected Percent Population Change for Kansas, by County
2000–2030**



Source: Institute for Policy & Social Research; data from Wichita State University, Center For Economic Development and Business Research, 2008.

Kansas: 16.2

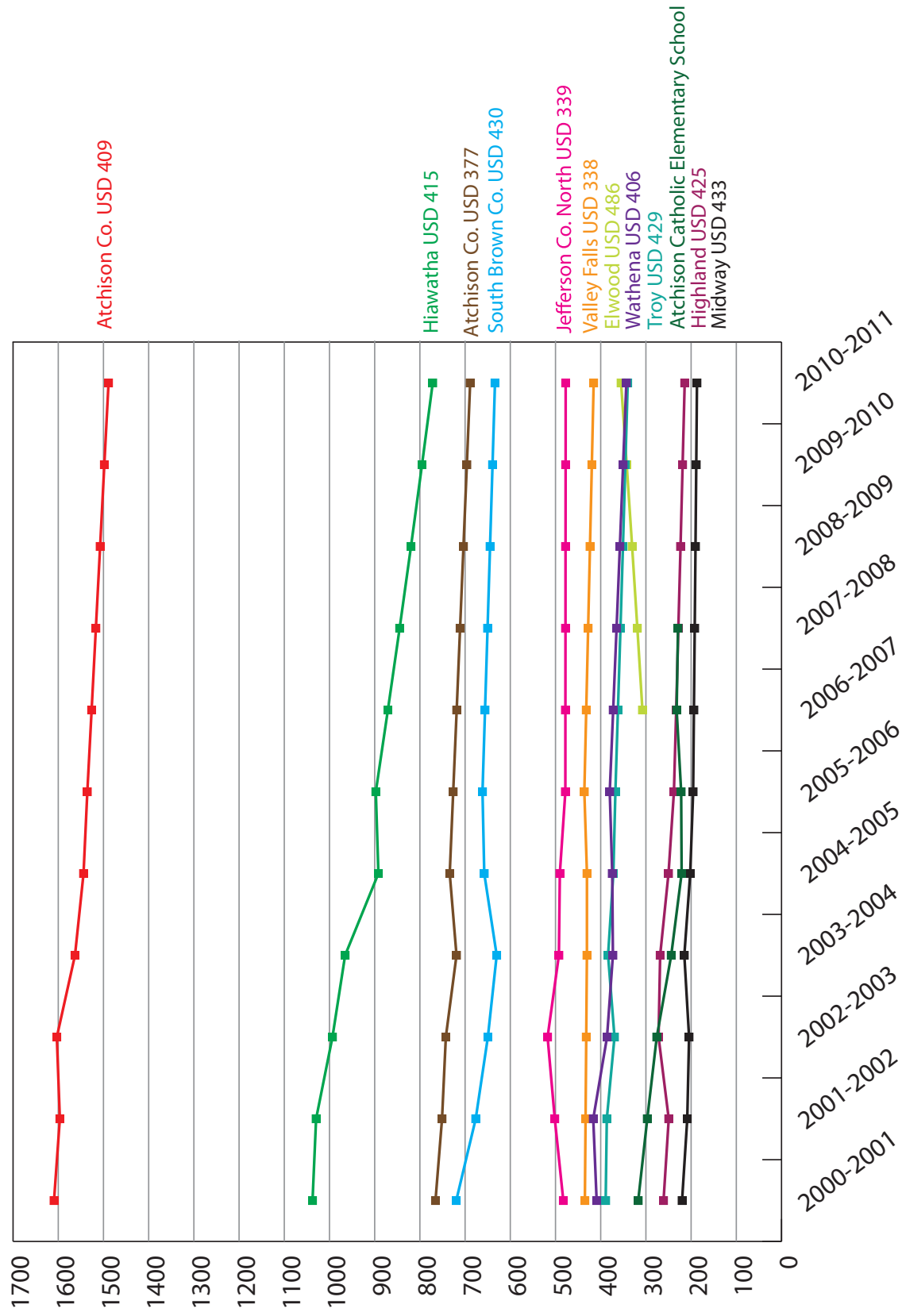
FIGURE 3

AGE COHORTS

	0-14	15-19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Atchison County						
2000	3,542 / 21.1%	1,612 / 8.6%	1,207 / 7.2%	4,085 / 24.4%	3,599 / 21.5%	2,720 / 16.2%
2008 Estimated	3,241 / 19.7%	1,370 / 8.3%	1,361 / 8.3%	3,866 / 23.5%	4,064 / 24.7%	2,579 / 15.6%
Brown County						
2000	2,250 / 21.0%	869 / 8.1%	499 / 4.7%	2,566 / 24.0%	2,447 / 22.8%	2,080 / 19.4%
2008 Estimated	2,000 / 20.0%	653 / 6.5%	641 / 6.4%	2,141 / 21.4%	2,735 / 27.3%	1,839 / 18.4%
Doniphan County						
2000	1,694 / 20.6%	827 / 10.0%	538 / 6.5%	2,027 / 24.1%	1,820 / 22.1%	1,329 / 16.1%
2008 Estimated	1,348 / 17.4%	754 / 9.7%	575 / 7.4%	1,768 / 22.8%	2,089 / 26.9%	1,219 / 15.7%
Jefferson County						
2000	4,038 / 21.9%	1,501 / 8.1%	785 / 4.3%	5,142 / 27.9%	4,614 / 25.0%	2,363 / 12.8%
2008 Estimated	3,286 / 17.8%	1,222 / 6.6%	1,144 / 6.2%	4,484 / 24.3%	5,514 / 29.9%	2,771 / 15.0%
Kansas Average						
2000	/ 21.8%	/ 7.8%	/ 7.1%	/ 28.5%	/ 21.5%	/ 13.2%
2008 Estimated	/ 20.8%	/ 7.1%	/ 7.5%	/ 26.0%	/ 25.5%	/ 13.1%

FIGURE 4

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND PROJECTIONS



Source: Kansas Department of Education

FIGURE 5

MEDIAN AGE

	1980	1990	2000	2007 estimate	Percent Change
Atchison County	29.7	33.5	36.2	36.5	+ 22.9%
Brown County	36.0	36.7	39.8	41.4	+ 15.0%
Doniphan County	31.4	35.1	36.8	38.9	+ 23.9%
Jefferson County	32.8	35.2	38.0	41.0	+ 25.0%
Kansas Average	30.1	32.9	35.2	36.1	+ 19.9%

FIGURE 6

POPULATION PROJECTIONS OF PEOPLE AGED 65 AND OVER

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% change 2000-2030
Atchison County	2,723	2,618	2,536	2,488	2,470	2,470	2,483	-8.8%
Brown County	2,089	1,845	1,671	1,542	1,444	1,365	1,298	-37.8%
Doniphan County	1,334	1,212	1,118	1,049	1,000	962	932	-30.2%
Jefferson County	2,358	2,450	2,527	2,605	2,684	2,768	2,858	21.2%
Kansas Average								1.0%

FIGURE 7

POPULATION CHANGE 2000-2008

	Births	Deaths	Net Migration	Net Increase (Decrease)
Atchison County	1,805	1,510	-499	(204)
Brown County	1,140	1,157	-669	(686)
Doniphan County	665	670	-441	(446)
Jefferson County	1,749	1,372	-268	109

FIGURE 8

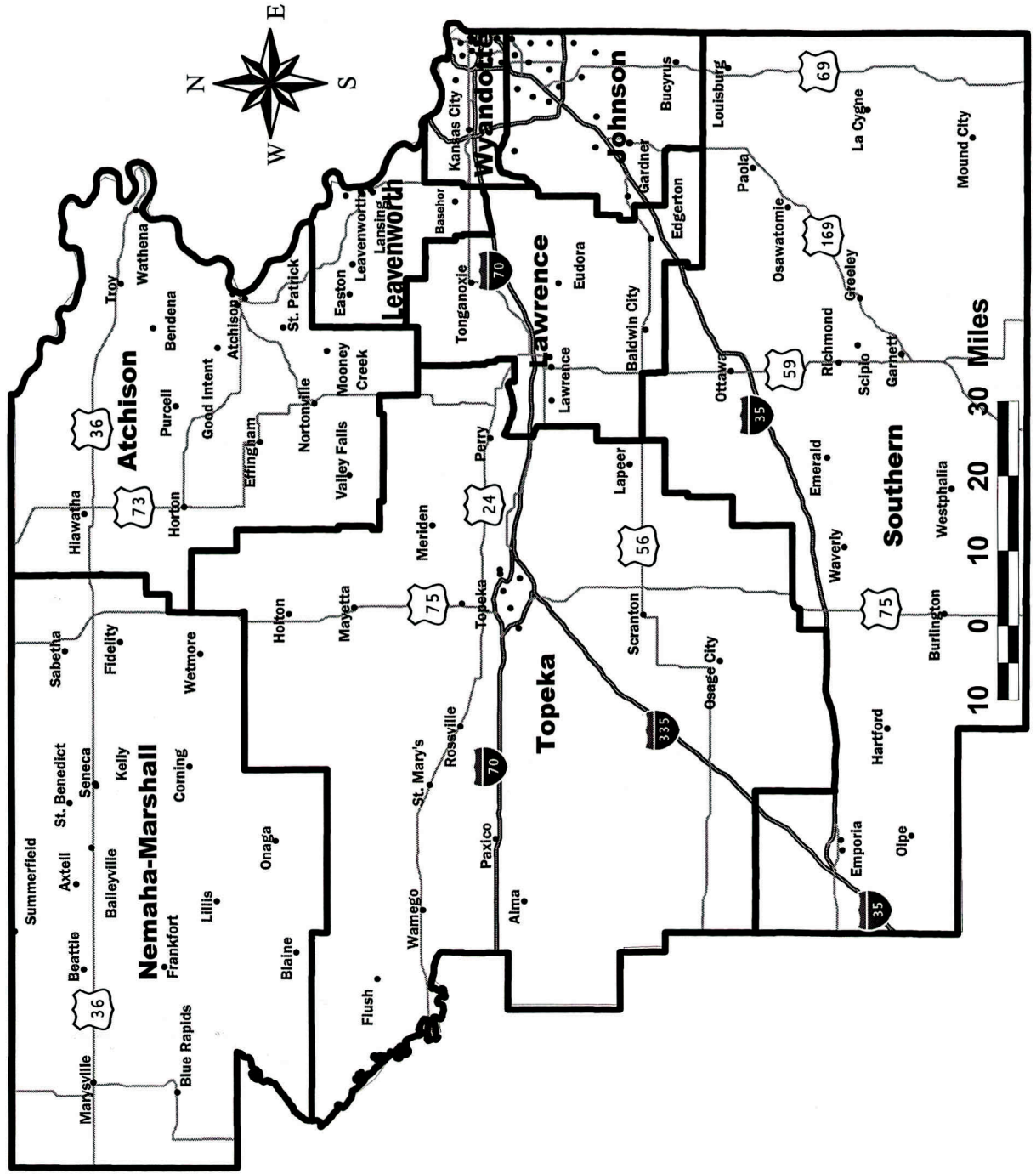


FIGURE 9

SIGNS OF PARISH VITALITY ATCHISON PASTORAL REGION

As baptized Catholics we share a common vocation to grow in holiness and to continue the ministry of Jesus as members of his body, the Church: to pray and worship, to heal and serve, to proclaim and teach. Archbishop Naumann has identified five pastoral priorities: conversion, evangelization, Catholic education, serving those in need, and stewardship.

These priorities are essential for an alive, vital parish to be capable of fully carrying out the work of the Church. The following criteria represent the basic functions or characteristics that must be present in every parish in the Atchison Pastoral Region. They are necessary, key parts of parish life and visible signs of active spirituality.

1.0 CONVERSION

An essential mission of the Church is to bring individuals into contact with Jesus Christ, allowing them to be transformed by the experience of His love. The Church accomplishes this in numerous ways but most especially through the sacramental life of the Church.

- 1.1 All liturgical celebrations are well attended and participated in with reverence and enthusiasm.
 - 1.1.a Is high quality liturgical music part of all liturgical celebrations?
 - 1.1.b Are youth and/or children's Masses offered regularly?
 - 1.1.c Are children provided separate age-appropriate teachings during homilies?
 - 1.1.d What percentage of registered persons attend Mass?
 - 1.1.e Are parishioners instructed periodically about reverent behaviors during Mass?
- 1.2 Parishioners especially as families actively participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year as a means of deepening their relationships with Jesus Christ.
 - 1.2.a Are communal evaluations of conscience provided during the year?
 - 1.2.b What percentage of registered persons attend communal penance services?
 - 1.2.c Are children/youth and their parents educated about the need for reconciliation?
 - 1.2.d Are college/university students encouraged to seek reconciliation before leaving for school?
- 1.3 The parish encourages Eucharistic adoration and commitment to habitual prayer.
 - 1.3.a Is Eucharistic adoration routinely scheduled by the parish?
 - 1.3.b Is the Rosary or other prayer led by parishioners before Masses begin?
 - 1.3.c Does the parish have an adoration chapel?
 - 1.3.d What percentage of registered persons participate in stations of the cross?
- 1.4 Opportunities for adult faith formation are available to parishioners of all ages.
 - 1.4.a Is adult education offered through the year by the parish?
 - 1.4.b Are Bible study programs encouraged and supported by the parish?
- 1.5 The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes or in a leadership role with other denominations, offers periodic occasions for spiritual renewal and/or encounters with Christ for adults and youth.
 - 1.5.a Are parish missions offered periodically?
 - 1.5.b Are opportunities for spiritual retreats in the area routinely promoted by the parish?

2.0 EVANGELIZATION

The mission that Jesus gave the Church was to go and make disciples. It is easy for us to become internally focused individually and as a parish. However, to really accomplish this mission we must always be seeking to invite others to know Christ and understand the Gospel.

- 2.1 The parish has an active hospitality ministry that welcomes newcomers to the community, invites people to Mass, and warmly greets strangers at Mass and events.
 - 2.1.a Does the parish have a Hospitality Committee?
 - 2.1.b Does the parish have friendly greeters at all Masses?
 - 2.1.c Is the number of registered households increasing?
 - 2.1.d Does the parish proactively contact people new to the community?
 - 2.1.e Does the parish have information packets for new members?
 - 2.1.f Does the parish have a program to welcome new parishioners?
- 2.2 It is important to retain all Catholics within the body of Christ, the Church. Parishioners give personal testimony and live their lives as powerful models of faith and service to influence youth and others.
 - 2.2.a Is the number of people who make professions of faith increasing?
- 2.3 The parish reaches out to inactive Catholics and strives to reconcile them to the Church, and contacts people who discontinue attending Mass.
 - 2.3.a Does the parish have a list of inactive Catholics?
 - 2.3.b Are inactive Catholics invited to parish activities?
 - 2.3.c Are parishioners prepared in how to approach inactive Catholics?
 - 2.3.d Does the pastor and/or lay parishioners contact inactive Catholics?
 - 2.3.e Are new parents who are inactive Catholics invited to have their children baptized and asked to participate in baptismal preparation?
 - 2.3.f Are bulletins mailed or e-mailed to inactive Catholics?
- 2.4 The parish invites non-parishioners to attend programs, social events, and ecumenical prayer services.
 - 2.4.a Are social activities regularly offered?
 - 2.4.b Are social activities widely promoted in the community?
- 2.5 The parish informs the wider community about teachings of the Church to overcome bias, misperceptions, and ignorance.
 - 2.5.a Are articles or advertisements placed in local media to inform the community?
 - 2.5.b Is information available in print or on the parish website for those who inquire about the Church?
 - 2.5.c Is there information on the parish website about becoming a Catholic?
- 2.6 The parish, perhaps in collaboration with other parishes, maintains a website with schedules of Mass, education programs, events, etc.
 - 2.6.a Does the parish have a website or contribute to a common website among parishes?

3.0 CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Catholic education, in all its forms, is an important endeavor of the Church. Catholic schools and religious education classes provide environments where students have the opportunity for formal religious instruction that integrates their faith into all the other disciplines and into their personal moral development. It is equally important to cultivate within adults a desire to continue to grow in their knowledge of their Catholic faith.

- 3.1 Families in all parishes are encouraged to enroll children in nearby Catholic schools as a first choice.
 - 3.1.a Is information provided to families about Catholic schools?
 - 3.1.b Does the parish provide financial assistance, if needed, for families who desire their children to attend Catholic schools?
- 3.2 The parish aims to enroll all other children in religious education classes, which can be offered in collaboration with adjoining parishes.
 - 3.2.a Does the parish have a religious education coordinator?
 - 3.2.b What percentage of children are enrolled in religious education?
- 3.3 The parish has an adequate number of trained catechists supported by Archdiocesan training programs offered in the Region.
 - 3.3.a Do all grades have teachers?
 - 3.3.b Are religious education teachers encouraged and supported to participate in training programs?
 - 3.3.c Are background checks routinely performed on all religious education teachers?
- 3.4 As the first teachers of children, parents are supported in this role by providing them programs and with materials for use at home.
 - 3.4.a Are materials and/or programs provided to parents to assist them in teaching their children at home about their Catholic faith?
- 3.5 The parish provides facilities and support for home-school families.
 - 3.5.a Does the parish identify these families?
 - 3.5.b Does the parish provide its facilities and programs specifically for home-school families?
- 3.6 Youth ministry programs with adult leadership, which can be in collaboration with other parishes, are appealing as they are vital to keeping youth actively involved in parish life and faithful to Church teachings.
 - 3.6.a Are youth routinely involved in Mass celebrations as lectors, commentators, ushers, etc?
 - 3.6.b Are youth regularly involved in parish programs to serve those in need?
 - 3.6.c What percentage of youth are actively involved in the youth program?
 - 3.6.d Does the parish survey youth to determine if the youth program is meeting their interests and needs?
 - 3.6.e Is a summer Bible school or other program provided for children and youth?
- 3.7 The parish actively provides information about Catholic campus ministries at public universities and Catholic higher education institutions, and parents encourage students to participate when away from home.
 - 3.7.a Are campus ministry representatives invited to speak and/or distribute information to high school students?
 - 3.7.b Does the parish send the bulletin to students by mail or e-mail?
 - 3.7.c Does the parish remain in contact with students during the year, for example by sending food baskets during exams?

- 3.8 A standardized curriculum is offered for religious education programs and tailored for use by rural parishes, e.g. teaching multiple grades.
- 3.9 Adult education programs are offered regularly and all parishioners are encouraged to participate in RCIA.
 - 3.9.a How many parishioners have participated in RCIA?

4.0 SERVING THOSE IN NEED

The parish Church is called to make the love of Christ visible and tangible to all who are poor, who are vulnerable, and who live on the margins of society.

- 4.1 The parish provides or works with other churches or ministerial alliances to provide for the needs of the poor and those temporarily in crisis, through efforts such as a food bank, transportation, companionship, clothing, shelter, etc.
 - 4.1.a Does the parish have a food pantry or collect food for community pantries?
 - 4.1.b Does the parish collect clothing and/or household goods for those in need?
 - 4.1.c Does the parish have fundraising events or special collections for those in need or in response to natural disasters?
 - 4.1.d Does the parish collect gifts at Christmas and at other times of the year for those in need?
- 4.2 The parish is aware of and responds to the needs of those with special needs such as the elderly, homebound, and shut-ins and their caregivers through regular visits and distribution of the Eucharist and sacramental ministries by laypersons and/or the pastor. Transportation to Mass and parish activities is available to them.
 - 4.2.a Does the parish have procedures for identifying those who may need assistance?
 - 4.2.b Are parishioners trained as Eucharistic ministers and to perform other services?
 - 4.2.c Does the parish visit people who are homebound, in hospitals, and in nursing homes at least weekly?
 - 4.2.d Does the parish actively offer transportation to parishioners who need assistance to attend Mass and other parish activities?
- 4.3 Cost-effective means are used to assure that parish facilities are easily accessible by those with special needs.
 - 4.3.a Are all parish facilities easily available to those who use wheelchairs, walkers, canes, etc?
 - 4.3.b Is unobtrusive space for those in wheelchairs provided in church?
 - 4.3.c Is adequate handicapped parking available?
 - 4.3.d Are assistive devices available for the hard-of-hearing, blind, etc?
- 4.4 The parish supports financial, emotional and spiritual assistance for women experiencing crisis pregnancies and others in crisis, perhaps through regional centers.
- 4.5 Parishioners advocate with policy makers for issues critical to Catholics especially efforts to protect the unborn and newborn.
 - 4.5.a Does the parish encourage members to contact policy makers?
 - 4.5.b Does the parish organize or participate in the March for Life and similar activities?
- 4.6 The parish supports members and their families at the end of life and during serious illness and injury.
 - 4.6.a Are funeral dinners offered to grieving families?
 - 4.6.b Does the parish have a prayer chain or other program to inform parishioners of others in need of prayer and material needs such as meals?
 - 4.6.c Are the names of parishioners who are ill included in the prayers of the faithful at each Mass?

5.0 STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is a way of life and a way of looking at life and the earth. It is an expression of spirituality and our profound gratitude from seeing everything as God's gift to us. It is out of this gratitude that we inevitably are motivated to want to return a portion of the time, talent, and treasure that God has given us.

5.1 In response to a call to tithe, parishioners generously provide sufficient funds, goods, and services for the ongoing and long-term operating needs and facility needs of the parish as well as special collections.

5.1.a Does the parish finish the fiscal year with a surplus?

5.1.b Are the physical needs of the parish met on a timely basis?

5.1.c Does the parish have savings to which it adds to annually so it can respond to unplanned needs or expanded programs?

5.1.d Has the parish established an endowment fund?

5.1.e Does the parish encourage estate gifts?

5.1.f Does the parish conduct an annual stewardship appeal?

5.1.g Are parishioners instructed about tithing and encouraged to tithe?

5.1.h What percentage of households financially support the parish?

5.1.i Does the parish have a preventive maintenance program?

5.2 Parishioners actively volunteer their time and talent to ensure the success and effectiveness of all parish ministries and events. Parish acknowledges and recognizes parishioners' service as a model for all to serve one another.

5.2.a Does the parish annually ask parishioners to volunteer their time and talents?

5.2.b Is training available to parishioners who wish to volunteer their time and talents?

5.2.c Are volunteers recognized publicly through the year?

5.2.d What percentage of registered persons volunteer each year?

5.2.e Do a sufficient number of people volunteer to lead efforts?

5.2.f Are all parish ministries well staffed with volunteers?

5.3 Complete parish (and school) finance reports are communicated at least annually, and preferably more often, to parishioners and included in new member packets.

5.3.a Are the costs of operating the parish communicated to parishioners in the bulletin and/or website regularly?

5.4 Parish meets or exceeds Archdiocesan Call to Share and other campaign goals.

5.4.a Is information about the benefits to the Pastoral Region from Call to Share gifts provided to parishioners?

5.4.b Does the parish consistently reach its goals?