HOLY INFANT CATHOLIC CHURCH

Long-Term Strategic Plan

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2018
FISCAL YEARS 2016-2018

Compiled by: Parish Planning Committee
September 2015
Dear Parishioners:

It is my pleasure to present to you the Long Term Strategic Plan for 2016-2018. The objectives delineated in this document are the fruit of the efforts of our Parish Planning Committee, and I am deeply grateful for their many hours of sacrifice and hard work. This document is more than the merger of many fine minds; it is a work of love for our parish, its traditions, and its future. As you will read, this plan is divided into six priorities that seek to embody the vision and mission statements of Holy Infant Parish community. The foundation upon which all of this is built is the Gospel message as expressed in the Salesian charism, which initially came to Durham in 1970 through our first pastor Fr. Edward Friel, OSFS – an Oblate of St. Francis de Sales; however, the personification of the Oblate Salesian spirit began with Blessed Louis Brisson, the first Oblate priest.

Father Brisson knew the power of God's grace to animate his zeal to live the Gospel. He stated,

I had a very strong feeling that I was being called to make the Lord loved with an infinite love, to make his love so strong in souls, so complete, that there could no longer be anything to rival it; this love must set all aflame (Françoise Bouchard, Father Louis Brisson: a heart that beats in rhythm with God, Troyes France, 2011, Salvator).

Setting hearts aflame with love for God, the goal of all ministries in our parish community, is reflected in the first three priorities of this plan: formation through faith development and liturgical life, community and family, and outreach and evangelization. Faith development enlivens the mind, while liturgical life invigorates the spirit. Vibrant minds and spirits are essential to healthy community and family life; the strength of the family provides strength for the parish community, and the parish community is vital in strengthening and nourishing the Christian family. The love we have for one another becomes a conduit of grace as we seek to bring the gospel in action to the world outside of our parish family. Becoming the visible presence of Christ in the world is facilitated through effective communication (the fourth priority) and stewardship (the fifth priority).

Ablaze with the love of God, we go forth to transform the world. But as we transform the world, the world also changes us. This is seen most clearly in the growth of our community. Father Louis Brisson had a similar experience in 1845. He was chaplain to the Sisters of the Visitation, who were experiencing the rapid growth of their community. The sisters had two choices; they could either begin turning away women who wanted to join the monastery, or they could expand their facilities. They chose the latter, enlarging and embellishing the chapel, the common community rooms, and the housing where the sisters lived. One of the major obstacles they encountered was finding a supply of fresh water for the convent, a task so daunting that it almost caused Father Brisson to give up the project. Mother Mary de Sales Chappuis, the superior of the monastery, was confident that God was guiding them. She asserted without hesitation,

“Entrust yourself to God. The Savior promised living water to the Samaritan woman; can't he give you the natural water you need?”

Eventually, they discovered a spring of abundant and clean water not far from the monastery.

Nearly 200 years later the Holy Infant parish community has a similar problem; we have grown to more than 800 families and our facilities are inadequate to meet the needs of all. Just as the sisters did in 1845, we have two options; we can either turn people away, or we can make significant improvements to our parish plant. The happy resolution of this dilemma is the goal of the sixth priority of our strategic plan: effective management of growth. It is natural to have concerns about how growth will affect the quality of community life, but remember the words of Mother Mary de Sales Chappuis, “entrust yourself to God.” God provided the Samaritan woman with the water she needed, He provided the Visitation sisters with the monastery they needed, and He will grace us with his providence. This will require good planning, hard work, patience, and trust that the people who have been led to us by the spirit of God are vital to the continuing mission of Holy Infant parish.

We place our trust in God's good pleasure. “God's good pleasure” is St. Francis DeSales' understanding of how God operates in our lives. God always acts as he pleases, and what pleases him most is our welfare. In 1848 the French government began a massive project of constructing canals to improve shipping throughout the country. This was a noble work on one level, one another it presented a crisis for the Sister of the Visitation; one of the major canals would pass directly through the newly renovated monastery. While others panicked, Mother Mary de Sales Chappuis placed her trust in God as she prayed,

“It is to You that I give it. You will keep it or You will give it back to us, according to your good pleasure.”

Mother Mary de Sales Chappuis was talking about the monastery; she was willing to accept its loss if that is what God had planned. Four years later the monastery was saved when plans for the canal's course were rerouted. As long as we work hard, plan well, and trust in God's good pleasure we will manage our growth effectively. Place all of your worries about our growth and the quality of our community life into the hands of God and you will not be disappointed!

God Be Blessed!

Fr. Robert Rutledge, OSFS
on the Feast of Blessed Louis Brisson
Oct 12, 2015
Overview of the Plan Development Process

Background
The Holy Infant Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) implemented a long-term strategic planning process to support Holy Infant’s efforts to provide spiritual and organizational direction to the parish. This planning process is based on honest listening and prayerful discernment to determine the specific attitudes, behaviors and activities that reflect a Christ-centered and mission focused faith community.

In 2009, the PPC formed a planning team that was dedicated to the development of a strategic planning program guided by the following key principles:

- Transparency
- Ongoing dialog and communication among all constituencies
- Openness to new models and ideas
- Commitment to implementation
- Strong leadership at all levels

The Parish Life Survey
The planning team worked closely with the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University. CARA is a national research and consulting services organization that has assisted hundreds of parishes with research and planning needs. CARA and the planning team conducted a comprehensive “in pew” survey to identify the parish’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. In early 2010, CARA provided a Parish Life Survey Report for Holy Infant Parish (available on the parish website www.holyinfantchurch.org under About Us > Planning and Reports).

Based on critical parish issues defined by parish leaders and the findings of the CARA report, the planning team identified key topics that were appropriate for further evaluation by a diverse assembly of parishioners. Each of these topics became a point of discussion for focus groups that were asked to provide guidance for the formation of the parish’s priorities, goals and objectives.

The planning team recognized that our parish strategic plan must be mission-driven, well-coordinated and priority-oriented. The plan needed to reflect high-level, program-related organizational goals with specific objectives that support these goals. In addition, applicable initiatives within the Pastoral Plan of the Diocese of Raleigh were incorporated into Holy Infant’s plans.

The Long-Term Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011-2015
Based on the parish survey, focus groups, Diocesan initiatives, and careful listening to parishioners’ concerns, the parish leaders and planning team published the Long-Term Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011-2015 in November 2010. The plan defined the following four priorities:

- Formation
- Facilities
- Outreach
- Parish Community and Communications

The Parish Planning Committee oversees the annual planning process and monitors adherence to Holy Infant’s long-term strategic plan. Each year the committee publishes an Annual Parish Plan that is used as an operational planning tool that includes defined tasks, timelines and other accountability measures intended to achieve the long-term strategic goals and objectives.

At the conclusion of the term of the Long-Term Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011-2015, the Parish Planning Committee developed an Accountability Report. This report contains a detailed update regarding implementation of the long-term strategic plan priorities. Based on evidential data, the report describes whether an objective was met, partially met, or not met. A copy of the Accountability Report for the Long-Term Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011-2015 is available on the parish website www.holyinfantchurch.org under About Us > Planning and Reports.
The Long-Term Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016-2018

As the term of the Long-Term Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011-2015 ended, the Parish Planning Committee initiated the process to develop a new long-term strategic plan. The Accountability Report for this strategic plan was critical in determining whether new priorities and goals should be addressed. It was also helpful in determining whether specific objectives within this plan should continue as ongoing or be revised.

Given that there will be future “milestone” opportunities to understand parishioner concerns through surveys, focus groups, and other means, the Parish Planning Committee determined that a three-year planning cycle is the most appropriate for a new long-term strategic plan.

Holy Infant’s renewed strategic plan is a result of careful analysis of the Accountability Report, thoughtful consideration of the needs and desires of various parish constituencies, and an assessment of the resources available to accomplish the stated objectives. The Parish Planning Committee drew input from the pastor, parish staff, parish councils, commissions, ministries and groups.

The Long-Term Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016-2018 establishes the following six priorities:

- Formation-Faith Development and Liturgical Life
- Community and Family
- Outreach and Evangelization
- Communications
- Stewardship
- Effective Management of Growth

The following pages describe the goals of each priority, along with the specific objectives designed to support the successful accomplishment of these goals. Each objective identifies designated lead responsibilities and timelines. We believe that the concepts described in this plan embody the hopes, expectations and commitments expressed in our parish Vision and Mission statements.

HOLY INFANT VISION STATEMENT

Together, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, we “Live Jesus,” reaching out, embracing all with compassion, humility and gentleness.

HOLY INFANT MISSION STATEMENT

- To celebrate the presence of God in our midst and in our liturgy
- To spread the Good News of Jesus Christ
- To welcome all people and encourage their participation in parish life
- To build our community of faith through a strong spirituality and commitment to hospitality, faith formation, stewardship, and long range planning
- To minister to the needs of God’s people through inclusion and outreach

We commit ourselves to do all things in the spirit of St. Francis de Sales, with compassion, humility and gentleness.
Priority: Formation – Faith Development and Liturgical Life

**Goal:** Holy Infant will embrace faith development and liturgical formation as a community-based lifelong journey.

**Objective 1**
Recognizing sacred liturgy as the source and summit of our faith experience, actively respond to the need for consistent and ongoing training and education in all aspects of the church’s liturgical life.
*Lead Responsibility: Liturgical Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 2**
Emphasize community building by providing opportunities to attract and more fully integrate families into the faith formation process.
*Lead Responsibility: Faith Development Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 3**
Foster awareness of the many vocational opportunities that the Catholic Church has to offer and promote the vocation of priesthood and consecrated life.
*Lead Responsibility: Faith Development Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 4**
Inspire, challenge and help Catholics witness marriage as a natural institution founded by God and raised to the dignity of a Christian sacrament.
*Lead Responsibility: Faith Development Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

Priority: Community and Family

**Goal:** Holy Infant will embrace the totality of its diverse faith community, supporting Catholic family life and encouraging all members to engage in full participation in all aspects of parish life.

**Objective 1**
Promote fellowship and community identity by increasing opportunities for parishioner interaction after weekend liturgies, at social events and during other parish activities.
*Lead Responsibility: Parish Life Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 2**
Promote the understanding that the family is our first community and is the most basic way that the Lord gathers us to act in the world.
*Lead Responsibility: Faith Development Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 3**
Engage and include diverse parish constituencies by respecting and supporting differences such as cultural diversity, various life stages, inactive Catholics, young adults and families including those with special needs.
*Lead Responsibility: Faith Development Commission and Liturgical Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*
Priority: Outreach and Evangelization

Goal: Holy Infant will inspire, challenge and assist its members in responding to God’s call to promote the dignity of the human person through spiritual and corporal works of mercy, empowerment and advocacy in our local community and beyond.

**Objective 1:** Promote respect for the sacredness of God’s creation and the sanctity of human life.
*Lead Responsibility: Peace, Justice and Human Concerns Commission and Faith Development Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 2:** Educate and inspire our parish community to increase participation in direct service and social justice activities in the local community.
*Lead Responsibility: Peace, Justice and Human Concerns Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 3:**
Enhance awareness of the needs of the many people and ministries seeking our assistance provided through parishioner contributions to our charity and justice fund.
*Lead Responsibility: Stewardship Commission and Peace, Justice and Human Concerns Commission and Faith Development Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 4:**
Continue to support domestic and/or foreign mission initiatives.
*Lead Responsibility: Peace, Justice and Human Concerns Commission*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

Priority: Communications

Goal: Holy Infant will provide multiple channels of communication to inform, educate, and communicate with parishioners effectively and efficiently.

**Objective 1:**
Form a communications committee to evaluate the current media used by the parish. Determine the most effective media channels and distribution protocols appropriate for the range of information to be disseminated to the parish.
*Lead Responsibility: Parish Pastoral Council and Planning and Operations Committees*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 2:**
Optimize the use of multiple technology channels to facilitate incoming and outgoing communications with and among parishioners.
*Lead Responsibility: Parish Pastoral Council and Planning and Operations Committees*
*Timeline: FY2016-FY2018*

**Objective 3:**
Inform parishioners about the impact of parish contributions to various initiatives and programs (such as garden production, Share Your Christmas, second collections, the Bishop’s Annual Appeal (BAA) and other charitable contributions) in order to provide accountability to donors and increase participation.
Priority: Stewardship

Goal: Recognizing that active involvement in parish ministries and groups is a return of the many gifts we have been blessed with by God, Holy Infant will encourage its members to become good stewards through sharing of their time, talent and treasure.

Objective 1:
Develop a comprehensive Stewardship handbook to educate parishioners on Holy Infant’s approach to the implementation of stewardship, related initiatives, and the various opportunities for members to participate in ministries and groups.
Lead Responsibility: Stewardship Commission
Timeline: FY2016

Objective 2:
Promote awareness, understanding and commitment to service using broad and targeted communication methods.
Lead Responsibility: Stewardship Commission
Timeline: FY2016-FY2018

Objective 3:
Promote the need for material support of the parish to assure its financial stability and to provide for its growth as a vibrant faith community.
Lead Responsibility: Stewardship Commission and Parish Finance Council
Timeline: FY2016-FY2018

Objective 4:
Develop a planned-giving program for long-term support, with the assistance of the Diocese of Raleigh.
Lead Responsibility: Stewardship Commission and Parish Finance Council
Timeline: FY2017

Objective 5:
Promote the prudent use of natural resources and care for the environment as part of responsible stewardship for all building improvements.
Lead Responsibility: Stewardship Commission and Planning and Operations Committees
Timeline: FY2016-FY2018

Priority: Effective Management of Growth

Goal: Holy Infant will provide parish facilities that appropriately meet existing and future needs for worship, gathering/hospitality, faith development and other parish activities.

Objective 1:
Maintain existing facilities to meet current usage requirements, emphasizing the worship environment and meeting/classroom space.
Lead Responsibility: Planning and Operations Committees
Timeline: FY2016-FY2018
**Objective 2:**
Based upon the completed Facilities Needs Assessment Self-Study, engage an architectural firm to provide a master plan study with preliminary cost estimates for alternative design scenarios. Engage consultants to conduct a capital campaign feasibility and planning study.

*Lead Responsibility: Planning and Operations Committees, Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Council*

*Timeline: FY2016*

**Objective 3:**
Determine a design scenario that is most consistent with parish needs and projected sources of funding. Develop a comprehensive financial plan that describes estimated costs, sources and the timing of funding. Present the plan for approval by the Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Finance Council, Diocesan Building and Real Estate Commission and the Diocesan Finance Council.

*Lead Responsibility: Planning and Operations Committees, Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Council*

*Timeline: FY2016*

**Objective 4:**
Conduct a capital campaign with approval from the Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Finance Council and the Diocese of Raleigh.

*Lead Responsibility: Planning and Operations Committees, Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Council*

*Timeline: FY2017*

**Objective 5:**
Engage an architectural firm to provide a master site plan and building design schematics. Engage a project manager to assist with construction coordination. Engage a construction firm responsible for initiating and completing the facilities project.

*Lead Responsibility: Planning and Operations Committees, Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Council*

*Timeline: FY2017-FY2018*