



***St. Thomas More Oratory  
Pastoral Planning 2016-2020***

***Vision Statement***

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

***Mission Statement***

We, the community of St. Thomas More Oratory, are the home of Catholic Campus Ministry at the University of Delaware. We are empowered by the Spirit and inspired by John Henry Newman's motto: *Heart Speaks to Heart* to reach out inclusively to make Jesus present to all who share their journey with us. We commit ourselves to the mission of Jesus Christ, which has been entrusted to us:

- to proclaim the Gospel in word and action;
- to worship God by active participation in the liturgy;
- to nurture on-going faith formation;
- to build a just society without boundaries by standing in solidarity with the poor.

***What makes our parish different from other parishes?***

Our mission statement reflects our canonical status as a university parish entrusted by the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington with a specific mission: to embrace fully our ministry of serving as a strong Catholic presence at the University of Delaware. We are a parish community of less than 400 families along with hundreds of students dedicated to serving the spiritual needs of the university. By focusing on worship, learning, and service to the local and global community, we accompany our students toward lifelong commitment to faith in action in the Catholic tradition. Enriched by many persons from within and beyond the university, we commit ourselves to hospitality, generosity, gratitude, and prayerfulness that mark those gathered at the table of the Risen Lord.

## ***Priority # 1 – Forming the Faith Community***

**Goal:** St. Thomas More Oratory embraces the totality of its diverse faith community: (university students; faculty, staff and administration; emeritus, retired and alumni members; and other permanent individuals and families) by empowering the community to full and active participation in all aspects of parish life.

### ***Objectives***

- 1) To expand the pool of people engaged in liturgical ministries: lectors, servers, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.
- 2) To host annual events that bring the whole community together for fellowship.
- 3) To create an event for all musicians from the Oratory and other local parishes to come together for professional development.
- 4) To enhance the celebrating, singing, and preaching at all the liturgies.
- 5) To visit the sick and homebound on a regular basis.
- 6) To sponsor a six-week series entitled: *Teaching the Mass* at all the liturgies.
- 7) To foster awareness of the many vocational opportunities that the Catholic Church has to offer and to promote the vocation of priesthood and consecrated life.
- 8) To optimize the use of multiple technology channels to facilitate incoming and outgoing communications with among parishioners.
- 9) To enhance the community's hospitality ministry by inviting each of the liturgy communities to come together once a month for fellowship.
- 10) To explore ways to engage the faculty and staff at the university to be a presence to our Catholic at sponsored events at the university.

## ***Priority # 2 – Forming Faith Development***

**Goal:** St. Thomas More Oratory encourages all members to put on the mind of Christ and inform their consciences by the Gospel of Christ as guided by the Church.

### ***Objectives***

- 1) To offer each semester *Thirsty for Christ Thursdays* on relevant topics for ongoing faith formation for all members of the community.
- 2) To strengthen and enhance student personal development and leadership.

- 3) To offer opportunities for university students and permanent members to engage in further education through Book Clubs, Bible Study, RCIA, and retreats.
- 4) To offer an annual parish mission for the evening portion of the mini-retreat.
- 5) To continue to improve the Religious Education program and to further integrate families into the faith formation process.
- 6) To create an exploratory pilgrimage to Annecy (the land of St. Francis de Sales) in 2016 that would create leaders to prepare a parish wide pilgrimage.
- 7) To organize and facilitate a parish wide pilgrimage to Annecy, France in 2018.
- 8) To expand attendance and participation in the annual beach retreat.
- 9) To offer a local weekend retreat for permanent (non-student) members of the community.
- 10) To engage the academic expertise of the university community to offer presentations or workshops on relevant topics.
- 11) To explore ways for the Oratory to engage and be the beacon of spiritual and moral growth for the thousands of Catholic university students as they mature into adulthood.

***Priority # 3 – Educating for Peace and Justice***

***Goal:*** St. Thomas More Oratory inspires, challenges and assists its members in responding to God’s call to promote the dignity of the human person through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy and service to the poor both locally and beyond.

***Objectives***

1. To educate and inspire the community to increase participation in direct service and social justice activities in the Newark and beyond at all levels.
2. To keep these charitable commitments as priorities of the Oratory: Water is Life Kenya, The Little Sisters of the Poor, Nativity Prep, Empowerment Center, and annual toy drives at Christmas.
3. To provide more service opportunities for youth and young adults by promoting such events as local charitable events, DeSales Service Works, and January and Spring break service trips.
4. To provide a service trip for university students nationally or even internationally.
5. To sponsor opportunities for the community to assist with tasks around the Oratory: gardening, painting, meals for the elderly, hosting university students especially international students.
6. Enhance awareness of the needs of the many people and ministries seeking our assistance and how we support them through the St. Thomas More Charities.

7. Promote the prudent use of natural resources and care for the environment as part of responsible stewardship of God's creation.
8. To partner with local Christian and non-Christian faith communities on social justice issues.

#### ***Priority # 4 – Effectively Managing Growth***

**Goal:** St. Thomas More Oratory provides facilities that appropriately meet the existing and future needs for worship, gathering/hospitality, faith development, and other parish activities.

#### ***Objectives***

- 1) To create an Advisory Council that would fulfill the mission of the parish Pastoral Council with representation from all the diverse membership of the community.
- 2) To create new job descriptions for all staff positions: Pastor, Associate Pastor, Director of Campus Ministry, Coordinator of Religious Education, and Administrative Assistant.
- 3) To create a plan for the annual Oblate contribution and to implement it.
- 4) To renovate the main office, entrance foyer, and to complete the library improvements, replace the doorframes to the side stairwell and paint all exterior doors. (2016).
- 5) To renovate the lower hallway, bathrooms, and sacristy (2017).
- 6) To whitewash or paint the exterior of the Oratory building (2018).
- 7) To replace the boiler by 2019.
- 8) To 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.
- 9) To implement an annual Stewardship weekend in which the pastor would report on the parish financial situation with goals, opportunities for stewardship, and update the parish census.
- 10) To engage an architectural firm to provide a master plan for the expansion of the facility according to these projected needs: expand seating of chapel from 250 to 300; create a more functional sacristy; create a space for a confessional; create a welcoming gathering space; expand the parking lot (2020).
- 11) To explore ways to reach out to the alumni and parishioners to ascertain the potential success for a capital campaign to meet the expense for a facility expansion.

Approved September 25, 2016 by the St. Thomas More Oratory Advisory Council:  
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