



*St Therese Parish Community*

**Strategic Plan  
2009-2017**

Milwaukee, WI



ST. THERESE

---

## Strategic Planning Committee Members

Jim Balliet

Sara Jean Donegan, SSND

Dr. Alexandra Guliano

Pat Hall

Wally Hesselbein

Kathy Hubrich

Chuck Jagemann

Christine Jensen

Judy Miller, CSJ

Mari Pavleje

Cathy Smith



## INTRODUCTION

### **Why plan?**

Our Strategic Planning process is in response to the reality that these changing times of both the institutional church and society will influence the future of parishes. In the past, the directives for parish planning have come from the Archdiocese to parishes after a consultation process. In the present, we as St. Therese Congregation determined it is important to assess our own viability and direction, and present our results to the Archdiocese for their review. Knowing our need to chart a course into the future, we undertook a process to develop a Strategic Plan.

### **What plan?**

The intent of the Strategic Plan is to provide a roadmap for the parish over the next five to eight years that will help us realize our mission and vision. As we began, we soon realized that unless there was a ‘sense of the parish’ any effort would be wasted. To get this ‘sense of the parish,’ last year we asked all parishioners who attended Mass to participate in a brief survey. Empowered by the results of the survey, which showed a solid commitment to St Therese and our vision, we proceeded to author the plan which the reader will find on the following pages.

St. Therese’s history covers over eighty years. Beginning in 1925 as just a small chapel on Bluemound Road to its current site, built in 1956, the “little flower” of Saint Therese has blossomed into a lively community of believers. Though there have been and still



are challenges for the Parish, Saint Therese has always met them under the inspiration of our patron, Saint Therese of Lisieux, following her “Little Way.” Our charism has been one of welcome and openness to all with great emphasis on human concerns of education, advocacy, and direct service as we strive to live as God’s people.

The plan is structured to expect results which will be reviewed by the Parish Council or a designated committee annually. The detail of the plans and execution are left to those parishioners or groups that are designated. The plan is not meant to be inflexible. To the contrary, if circumstances or a review dictates, the plan will be adjusted. Additionally, as a result of the annual review a new year will be added to the overall plan to keep its focus on the future.

As we follow the recommendation of “Living our Faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, we wish to express our discipleship and stewardship through this strategic plan. This plan will guide us in our efforts to continue the good work begun at St. Therese and to further the mission and vision of our parish, and to collaborate within our Cluster and the Archdiocese.

With this brief statement as to the Why and What of the Strategic Plan, the following pages detail more specifically what the plan is and the areas it covers. The document is to be owned by the Community of St. Therese, with the Parish Council having direct oversight and responsibility for its execution, range of areas, and its continued vitality.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction..... 3

I. Mission Statement ..... 6

II. Our Values and Beliefs ..... 7

III. Our Vision ..... 8

IV. Our Actions ..... 9

    As a Worshiping & Compassionate Community ..... 10

    As a Stewardship & Green Community..... 11

    As a Ministering & Welcoming Community ..... 12

    As a Lifelong Learning & Social Justice Community ..... 13

    As a Prophetic Community ..... 14

V. Strategies ..... 15

    As a Worshiping & Compassionate Community..... 16

    As a Stewardship & Green Community..... 20

    As a Ministering & Welcoming Community ..... 22

    As a Lifelong Learning & Social Justice Community ..... 26

    As a Prophetic Community ..... 28

VI. Resources..... 31

VII. Appendix (Statistical Information)..... 32



ST. THERESE

---

## OUR MISSION

(Our identity, Our purpose)

We are St. Therese Catholic Church,  
a community of believers,  
who walk together by faith in Christ Jesus,  
and minister in the Little Way of St. Therese,  
as we strive hand in hand to live as  
God's people.



## OUR VALUES & BELIEFS

(Our roots, Our call, Our place in the world)

- We believe in God revealed to us through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, now working through our lives.
  - We follow the teaching of Jesus set forth in the Gospels.
  - We embrace the Bible as the inspired Word of God.
- We profess the Creed and are committed to the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, the Beatitudes, and Catholic Social Teachings.
- We are open to all who wish to worship and pray with us while we remain faithful to the Catholic tradition.
- We are committed to empowering our membership, to unleash the gifts of the Holy Spirit within them for their good, for the parish, and for the broader community.



## OUR VISION

(Our challenge to grow and better reflect God's grace among and within us)

St Therese Parish is a Catholic community, who has met each challenge by being faithful to our call to trust God on our journey. As a faithful community we emulate our patron, St Therese of Lisieux, whose Little Way of following Christ through everyday life and every day acts, inspire us to transform our lives to be a:

Worshipping and Compassionate Community

Ministering and Welcoming Community

Stewardship and Green Community

Lifelong Learning and Social Justice Community

A Prophetic Community



## OUR ACTIONS

What we will do to realize our Vision,  
proclaim our Beliefs,  
and further the Mission as a

Worshipping and Compassionate Community  
Ministering and Welcoming Community  
Stewardship and Green Community  
Lifelong Learning and Social Justice Community  
A Prophetic Community



## OUR ACTIONS

### **As a Worshipping and Compassionate Community**

Our objective is to support vibrant participatory celebrations and to provide opportunities for participation by:

1. Promoting parishioner participation in liturgy
2. Initiating new forms of personal and communal prayer in addition to those already celebrated
3. Continuing and enhancing our prayer for others
4. Sharing our sacred space with others and calling the community to prayer
5. Committing to meet the needs of the homebound
6. Celebrating with other Christians and other believers



## OUR ACTIONS

### As a Stewardship and Green Community

Our objective is to acknowledge that all we have comes from GOD: our time, our talents, our treasure, our environment, and all of creation by

1. Stewardship of our treasure
2. Stewardship of our building and grounds
3. Stewardship of parish facilities
4. Stewardship of creation



## OUR ACTIONS

### As a Ministering and Welcoming Community

Our objective is to live out our baptismal call to use our gifts and to make hospitality alive in the parish by welcoming all through:

1. Communication
2. Ministry formation & recruitment
3. Welcoming
4. Concern for safety and health
5. Celebration of the feast of St. Therese



## OUR ACTIONS

### As A Lifelong Learning and Social Justice Community

Our objective is to realize that to grow as God's people, we need to continue to learn more about the faith, and to strive to live the call to justice and peace by

1. Continuing the development of the catechetical formation process and programs
2. Promoting the parish library
3. Answering the call to justice and peace
4. Reaching out to the community



## OUR ACTIONS

### As a Prophetic Community

Our objective is that we believe we are Church with a reverence of the past and willingness to pioneer new ways of being Church by:

1. Continuing to thrive as a parish with a canonically appointed Parish Director or Pastor
2. Encouraging women and men to answer the call to lay and ordained leadership in the church
3. Responding to the priest shortage with increased collaboration between clergy and laity
4. Promoting of the Little Way of St Therese as a means of being Church now and in the future
5. Reaching beyond our parish boundaries to bring the Reign of God to the world
6. Creating a gathering space that is the center for our community sharing, welcoming, and hospitality



## STRATEGIES

(The Hows)

**We will use to carry out the  
actions of our Vision,  
to proclaim our Beliefs,  
and to further the Mission as a  
Worshipping and Compassionate Community  
Ministering and Welcoming Community  
Stewardship and Green Community  
Lifelong Learning and Social Justice Community  
A Prophetic Community**



## STRATEGIES

A. As a Worshiping and Compassionate Community we support vibrant, participatory celebrations, and provide opportunities for all by:

**1. Promoting parishioner participation we will:**

- a. Invite and encourage all parishioners including persons with physical and mental challenges, to participate in the liturgical ministries of altar server, lector, Eucharistic minister, lay presider, greeter, and usher by:
  - i. Personal contacts, invitations, announcements in bulletin, newsletter, website
  - ii. Promotion of liturgical ministries on website
  - iii. Scheduled training sessions and update sessions
  - iv. Recruiting people to serve on the Prayer and Worship Committee
- b. Have an open dialogue about the music ministry as an essential component of liturgy and how it can better serve the assembly's needs by:
  - i. Establishing music ministry as a sub-committee of Prayer & Worship
  - ii. Inviting members of choirs, cantors, musicians to serve on this committee
  - iii. Inviting representative parishioners from a cross-section of the parish membership



**2. Initiating new forms of personal and communal prayer in addition to those already celebrated – examples are:**

- a. Taize prayer, Novena to St. Therese prior to feast day, Liturgy of the Hours with an option for Communion, Lectio Divina, Centering Prayer, Labyrinth, forms of Meditation (Sacred Space) we will:
  - i. Utilize in-house educational services
  - ii. Teach through a reflection or homily on various prayer forms and their benefit
  - iii. Present a short article on prayer forms in the bulletin, newsletter and website
  - iv. Introduce different forms of prayer, weekly, monthly, seasonally, etc
  - v. Train leaders for various prayer forms
  - vi. Form groups that would learn and practice one of the prayer forms and invite other to join them
  - vii. Publicize prayer opportunities through handouts, announcement on bulletin board, weekly bulletin, newsletter and website.

**3. Continuing and enhancing our prayer for others we will:**

- a. Intercede for the sick, the dying and those in need by
  - i. Maintaining the present practice during the General Intercessions of the weekend masses.
  - ii. Continuing to list those in need in the bulletin, website, and newsletter.



- b. Incorporate the “Book of Prayer” in our liturgy
  - i. Present the “Book of Prayer” as part of the procession of the gifts during week-end Liturgies
  - ii. Place the book on a stand near the altar
  - iii. Reference the book of prayer during the Eucharistic Prayer or General Intercessions
  
- c. Place second Prayer Board at either the Bluemound or Bell Tower Entrance

**4. Sharing our Sacred Space with others and calling the Community to prayer we will:**

- a. Open the Chapel of St. Therese for a definite time each day as a place to “come apart for awhile” by
  - i. Asking parishioners what hours they would like in order to take advantage of this opportunity (early morning, late afternoon, early evening)
  - ii. Insuring we can offer this opportunity and maintain security.
  
- b. Ring the church bells to announce our worship by
  - i. Investigating the condition of the bells
  - ii. Ringing the bells before week-end masses and on other occasion



**5. Committing to the needs of the homebound we will**

- a. Expand and promote a “Visitation and Eucharistic” ministry to the homebound by encouraging parishioners to bring the Eucharist and pray with the homebound
- b. Start a “Ride to Church” ministry by establish a list of parishioners that would be willing to provide transportation to church and match them with individuals needing this service

**6. Celebrating with other faith communities we will**

Encourage greater participation and attendance in our collaborative celebrations and prayer services with neighboring faith communities by

- i. Personal invitations
- ii. Encouraging several people or families to go as a group
- iii. Selecting representatives from our parish to attend and participate



## STRATEGIES

### **B. As a Stewardship and Green Community to acknowledge that all we have comes from God by**

#### **1. Stewardship of our time, talent, and treasure we will**

- a.** Encourage our membership to answer the call to the covenant of stewardship of their time and talent to parish, community and civic ministries by
  - i.** Personal recruitment to various ministries
  - ii.** Ministry fairs
  
- b.** Promote the concept of Biblical tithing and the Christian concept of sacrificial giving as a response to our baptism through
  - i.** Articles or reflections on the topic of giving and tithing
  - ii.** Other educational methods and discussions
  
- c.** Ensuring our financial structure is understood and establish transparent, financial communications by periodic reports – oral and written

#### **2. Stewardship of our buildings and grounds we will**

- a.** Establish a schedule of planned maintenance to continue updating and improving our properties by
  - i.** Formation of a Building and Grounds Committee
  - ii.** Formation of a “Grounds Ministry” for lawn mowing, snow removal, tree and planted area maintenance



### **3. Stewardship of our parish facilities we will**

- a. Find creative ways to increase our revenues by doing fund raisers, such as rummage sales, Piccolo Pizza, Noodles Night, Brewers Game concession, Suzy's Cheesecakes, Stone Creek Coffee, etc
- b. Form a group to promote the use/rental of our properties, and recruit help to oversee and supervise the users by
  - i. Researching the legalities and tax implications of such use and rental
  - ii. Suggesting donations for the occasional use of the parking lot
  - iii. Renting out the kitchen and hall
  - iv. Utilizing the skills of parish members

### **4. Stewardship of creation we will**

- a. Learn to reverence creation and earth in all its aspects by
  - i. Studying of the Earth Charter and other documents
  - ii. Publishing short articles in the bulletin, newsletter and website
- b. Encourage the reduction of our consumption of resources by
  - i. Using energy efficient lighting, etc.
  - ii. Providing information on alternative ways to use and save our resources
  - iii. Reducing the use of disposables, paper products, elimination of styrofoam, etc.
- c. Promote "green projects" (gardens, etc.) on the church properties.



## STRATEGIES

- C. As a Ministering and Welcoming Community to live out our baptismal call to use our gifts and to make hospitality alive in the parish by welcoming all through

### 1. Communication we will

- a. Establish ways to communicate through a group or ministry by
  - i. Reviewing and renewing the instruments now used for communication (bulletin and website)
    - (a) plan and provide material for website
    - (b) plan, provide and write material for the bulletin
    - (c) give consideration to establishing a blog
  - ii. Produce a newsletter to be mailed to all parishioners
- b. Provide direct, timely, complete communication with parishioners in all aspects of parish life by
  - i. Initiating a Suggestion Box then
    - (a) Research and provide answers for questions from the Suggestion Box. Post the question and answer in the bulletin, newsletter, website, or appropriate place
    - (b) Follow up and channel suggestions to other committees for action.
  - ii. Following up on suggestions and surveys by



- presenting them to the parish members for further feedback
  - iii. Posting a question and response from the survey
  - iv. Providing space in bulletin, newsletter, and website for committee and ministry update: e.g Parish Library, living green, etc.
  - v. Featuring a “Ministry/Committee of the Month” in the bulletin or newsletter
- c. Update the signage on Bluemound by
- i. Researching the possibilities and costs of signage
  - ii. Purchasing of signage with electronic possibilities
  - iii. Sponsoring a special fund-raiser to pay for the signage
- d. Update our logo and promotional efforts through
- i. Developing a strategy to promote St. Therese in a non-competitive and apostolic way
  - ii. Creating brochures, business cards, stationery, etc. to share all the good things in the parish with our parishioners and public
  - iii. Sponsoring a special fund-raiser to pay for promotional efforts

## **2. Welcoming All through**

- a. A sponsor/mentor program for new parishioners which
  - i. Pairs a new member with an established member
  - ii. Furnishes new member packets which explain the church, its organizations, ministries, etc.



- b. Inviting and welcoming visitors, persons of diverse cultures and backgrounds to our worship by
  - i. Having a hospitality area
  - ii. The greeter ministry
  - iii. Personal invitation to participation in worship and parish programs

### **3. Ministry Formation & Recruitment by**

- a. Encouraging parishioners to join and participate in at least one parish organization, ministry or committee through
  - i. Personal invitation
  - ii. Encouragement of all ages by active solicitation
  - iii. A Ministry Fair to present each organization, committee and ministry
  - iv. A full description of each organization, committee and ministry on the website
  - v. Personal call to inactive members

### **4. Concern For Safety and Health by**

- a. Continuing to offer blood pressure checks
- b. Informing parishioners of health fairs, flu vaccine, clinics, and the like through
  - i. Posters and flyers in Church
  - ii. Announcements in the bulletin, newsletter and website

- c. Forming an emergency team through



- i. Training programs (first-aid, CPR and AED)
- ii. Establishing a protocol to be followed in specific situations
- iii. Recruiting volunteers to up-date the first-aid and AED kits

## **5. Celebration Of The Feast Of St. Therese by**

- a. Revising our Mission Statement to include the name of St. Therese and her Little Way into the statement.
- b. A Plan for an annual Family Feast on the nearest Saturday or Sunday to the feast such as an old-fashioned family picnic, tailgate, or party with food, games or pot luck, etc.



## STRATEGIES

- D. As a Lifelong Learning and Social Justice Community, to realize that to grow as God's people we need to continue to learn more about the faith, and to strive to live the call to justice and peace by

### **1. Continued development of the Catechetical Formation Process and Programs through**

- a. Recruitment of more families and individuals to the program of whole community catechesis.
- b. Testimonials and experience of those already involved
- c. Dialogue on current church and social justice teachings as part of lifelong faith formation
  - i. Arrange for discussion or speakers on various topics
  - ii. Collaborate with other parishes on various programs
  - ii. Promote existing programs at other parishes

### **2. Promotion of the Parish Library through**

- a. Display in places other than the lobby
- b. A section on the website, newsletter and bulletin dedicated to the parish library
  - i. Regularly feature the parish library
  - ii. Highlight new acquisitions in the bulletin, newsletter and website



### **3. Answering the call to Justice and Peace through**

- a. Researching, learning and promoting new ways of social justice that assist in living out the call to justice and peace – some examples follow:
  - i. Promoting all aspects of Respect Life womb to tomb; e.g. capital punishment with programs like For Whom The Bell Tolls, and post-abortion with programs like Project Rachel
  - ii. Promoting Fair Trade (coffee, clothing, chocolate, etc.)
  - iii. Promoting fair employment policies
  - iv. Promoting peace efforts – e.g. Peace Pole, International Peace Day, Cluster Prayer Service for Peace, etc.

### **4. Outreach to the community through**

- a. Continued hosting and learning about programs and organizations that care for the underserved such as Sharing Sunday
- b. Caring for the poor through our established programs like St. Vincent de Paul collection and meal program, Advent and Lenten giving and others
- c. Participation in civic and other sponsored activities including CROP Walk, Food for Families, Second Harvest, River Clean-up
- d. Researching a program that would serve as a sistering project outside of the parish community



## STRATEGIES

**E.** As a Prophetic Community we believe we are Church with reverence for the past and a willingness to pioneer new ways of being Church by

**1. Responding to the priest shortage with increased collaboration between clergy and laity by**

- a. Continuing to be active in District 12, cluster and collaborative efforts.
- b. Continuing to be open to lay ecclesial leadership
- c. Continuing to recognize and affirm the grace and call to marriage and single life
- d. Continuing to grow as a vibrant parish that has responded well to the leadership of a Parish Director with Assisting Priests.
- e. Welcoming retired priests and religious to be part of our community

**2. Encouraging women and men to answer the call to leadership in the church**

- a. Continuing efforts to promote religious vocations and priesthood.
- b. Providing training for lay presiders
- c. Encouraging participation in formation opportunities through the John Paul II Center, St Clare Center, and other programs



**3. Promoting the Little Way of St Therese as a means of being Church now and in the future**

- a. Providing education on “The Little Way of St. Therese”
- b. Promoting ways of living “the Little Way” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through
  - i. Homilies, reflections, talks
  - ii. Short articles in bulletin, newsletter, and on website
  - iii. Prayer cards giving parishioners information on living “The Little Way”

**4. Creating a gathering space that is the center for community sharing, welcoming and hospitality by**

- a. Considering renovations to our worship space, gathering and hospitality areas with the purpose:
  - i. to promote community among the assembly
  - ii. to welcome new parishioners and visitors
  - iii. to have a more accessible area for our heritage items, library acquisitions, and other items that would acquaint the parish with its history, charism, activities and organizations
- b. Continuing to provide space for those with physical limitations and for young children and families



ST. THERESE

---



## VI Resources

Parishioner Survey January 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Spring 2008 "Living our Faith" in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
2008 General Observations and Recommendations

Thoughts and Concepts on Planning by members of the St  
Therese SPCCommittee

VII Consolidated Statistical Information from our January, 2008  
Parish Survey



## **Consolidated Statistical Information**

**There were 336 responses to the survey.**

**Not all questions were answered on all response sheets**

**Not all responses ranked five choices; containing from one to four choices.**

### **Question 1: How long have you been a member of St. Therese Parish?**

<b>Less Than One Year</b>	27
<b>One to Five Years</b>	34
<b>Six to Fifteen Years</b>	77
<b>Over Fifteen Years</b>	182
<b>Not a Member</b>	8
<b>No Response</b>	8



**Question 2: What is your age group?**

Under 18 years	19
18—35 years	15
36—55 years	86
55—70 years	107
71 Plus	109

**Question 3: Which Mass do you typically attend?**

5:00 pm on Saturday	74
8:00 am	75
10:00 am	164
Varies	22
No Response	1



**Question 4: Why do you prefer St. Therese for weekend Masses?**

Parishioner were asked to rank their top five (One highest) from among the following:

- a—Reverent, meaningful, and participative liturgy
- b—Welcoming, friendly community
- c—Reflections on the Word
- d—Music
- e—Convenient location
- f—Size of parish
- g—Convenient Mass times

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>a</b>	87	45	42	32	31
<b>b</b>	84	54	72	72	16
<b>c</b>	58	51	51	39	21
<b>d</b>	36	42	42	49	38
<b>e</b>	42	22	26	27	39
<b>f</b>	21	29	30	41	59
<b>g</b>	22	20	26	23	32

**Question 5: Do you participate in any activities at St. Therese besides attending Mass?**

<b>Yes</b>	180
<b>No</b>	110

**Reasons for a response of No:**

<b>Time</b>	56
<b>Distance</b>	15
<b>Transportation</b>	11
<b>Family</b>	28



**Question 6: Why do you prefer St. Therese as a parish?**

Parishioners were asked to rank their top five (One highest) from among the following:

- a— Welcoming atmosphere
- b— Mission statement
- c— Christian Formation program
- d— No School
- e— Raises my consciousness of stewardship
- f— Ministry and pastoral expertise of Parish Director

<b>a</b>	151	29	27	14	8
<b>b</b>	21	32	53	47	40
<b>c</b>	147	25	33	56	50
<b>d</b>	9	20	17	25	31
<b>e</b>	27	48	55	47	40
<b>f</b>	81	61	40	25	19

**Question 7: What could the parish do better to serve you and your family?**

<b>Change the Mass Times</b>	13
<b>More for Senior Parishioners</b>	54
<b>More for Children and Youth</b>	59
<b>More family functions</b>	56
<b>More Adult Formation</b>	73
<b>More Community Outreach</b>	70



**Question 8: What do you think is the greatest need of St. Therese Parish?**

<b>More people involved in ministries</b>	110
<b>Balanced budget</b>	84
<b>Well-maintained buildings and grounds</b>	23
<b>More opportunities for community building</b>	70
<b>More offerings to enhance spirituality</b>	61

**Question 9: What steps do you take to stay informed on parish life?**

<b>Read the bulletin regularly</b>	295
<b>Access the website regularly</b>	32
<b>Involvement in parish committees</b>	65
<b>Call staff members when I have a question</b>	76