



# 2024-2029 Pastoral Strategic Plan

## St. Benedict Catholic Church

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## Introduction

St. Benedict Catholic Church is a welcoming and vibrant family of believers who recognize the face of Christ in all and responds with love and service. Our growing community is made up of members from all walks of life and we value our diversity. Our motto, “Where all are welcome” stems from the belief that every person is a treasured child of God.

Founded in 1985 in Chandler, Arizona, St. Benedict parish moved to its present location in Ahwatukee in 2004. Twenty years later, we built our permanent worship place which was dedicated on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Beginning with just a handful of members, we now serve over 2,500 parish families and are continuing to grow. Our parishioners come mainly from the Phoenix/Ahwatukee, Tempe, and Chandler areas. Along with St. John Bosco Catholic School, we offer community involvement opportunities for everyone, including liturgical ministries, outreach, volunteer groups such as St. Vincent de Paul and Knights of Columbus, and year-round parish life activities.

It is in St. Benedict community’s best interest to have a well-considered, holistic process for improvement and growth. The parish staff, ministry leadership and the parish community’s feedback and suggestions were integral in developing this 2024 Pastoral Plan as a vision for the goals and intentions of this parish over the next 5 years.

This document is the first of a series of concerted efforts to conceptualize and fully realize these commitments within the next 5 years. Additional documents include a Project Roadmap and Project Plan templates which will serve to guide the various activities, events, and projects to fulfill the intent of this Pastoral Plan.

## Mission & Vision Statements

### Mission Statement

St. Benedict is a diverse and joyful blend of families, couples, singles, youth, and seniors. We invite you to join us as we celebrate the Eucharist and God’s gift of faith within our community. We are a vibrant and welcoming Catholic Church community that recognizes God’s presence in all through our love and service.

### Vision Statement

Build the Kingdom of God, individually and as a community by fostering discipleship and thanksgiving through:

- The celebration of Eucharist and other sacraments
- Prayer and lifelong Catholic formation
- Service with and for one another and the greater community

# Master Plan

This master plan is designed to focus on all domains of St. Benedict Catholic Church operations. **Vision** will cover the outlook and intentions that the parish leadership has for St. Benedict's continuing development. **Facilities** will present the parish's current progress and future goals for building and improving facilities. **Evangelization, Sacramental, Liturgical. And Ministerial Life** will look at ways we can uphold the vibrancy and longevity of this community.

## Vision

To further develop as a dynamic community, we need to identify collective priorities which will guide our development as we continue to grow. Some important priorities for St. Benedict Catholic Church are Integration, Communication, and Community.

### Integration

Between the Parish & St. John Bosco Catholic School

A key priority for the St. Benedict community is the improved synchronization of school and church operations. We believe this will support a positive environment for the spiritual, educational, and personal growth of our parish families. Key priorities include communication, creation of a master calendar that lists both parish and school events, event management and scheduling, and safety guidelines.

Future St. Benedict Senior Living Community

We will ensure that once construction is complete, the Senior Living Community will operate in a manner consistent with the goals, missions and values of St. Benedict and the Diocese of Phoenix. The Community will minister to the elderly and sick with dignity and respect, offering compassionate care and encouraging a sense of belonging and connection. Although St. Benedict will not oversee day to day operations, there will be some involvement in major decisions.

### Communication

Recognizing the importance of clear and effective communication, we intend to take intentional steps to enhance our connection with all members of the parish. To achieve this, we will strive to maintain and improve the following:

1. Building and planning updates
2. Regular financial reports
3. Two-way communication – listening to community voices & feedback
4. Social media

## Community

Our parish is a community bound by faith, prayer, and liturgy. Recognizing the importance of deepening our connection with one another and our broader Phoenix community, St Benedict includes several community-oriented parish priorities throughout this Pastoral Plan:

- Community Engagement & Partnership
- Senior & Homebound Outreach
- Diocesan & Papal Coordination

## Facilities

In line with the parish vision for a vibrant and purposeful community life, we are committed to fully realize and effectively communicate current and future plans. This comprehensive project encompasses the introduction or enhancement of key spaces within our community, including:

### Parish Facilities

- Parish hall
- Parish kitchen
- Courtyard
- Outdoor space (gathering, prayer, walking)
- Teen center
- Multi-purpose space (meeting rooms, events)
- St. Vincent de Paul pantry
- Family-friendly landscaping
- Permanent office space
- Religious Education classrooms
- Childcare
- Technology
- Sustainability/Solar
- Covered Parking

### St. John Bosco Facilities

- Campus improvements
- Resource center
- School gym

## Security

Out of concern for the safety of our parish and school community, we are committed to enhancing security measures. Some initiatives include the installation of security cameras, the installation of a dedicated Safety & Security Ministry to oversee and implement safety protocols and exploring onsite security options inspired by the noble tradition of the Porters of St. Joseph.

## Evangelization, Sacramental, Liturgical, Ministerial Life

*"...go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."* –Matthew 28:19

The long-term prosperity of the St. Benedict community depends on our ability to attract and welcome new parishioners, bring back those who have left, and better serve the existing community. The key areas that will be the focus of this plan are:

### Evangelization and Sacramental Life

#### Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA)

We are focused on enhancing the OCIA program to better meet the needs of those embarking on their journey with the Catholic faith. Our commitment involves the strengthening of guidelines, sessions, and content, aiming to make it a more effective and supportive experience for individuals seeking to embrace the Catholic faith. This development will emphasize ongoing training for volunteers and the deepening of spiritual development for all those involved.

#### Ongoing Formation Classes

The parish is committed to integrating ongoing formation classes, including Bible study sessions for youth and adults, catechesis, faith formation, and sacramental preparation. We intend to provide more online resources, classes, and group sessions to deepen the prayer life, spiritual knowledge, and engagement of our community members across different age groups.

Another formation opportunity for the parish is the integration of Core Team for Teens, a dedicated youth ministry program that plans and implements events, fostering a welcoming and supportive environment for teenagers in the parish, and guiding them in their faith formation journey and prayer life as they prepare to enter adulthood.

#### Sacraments

An important priority is strengthening the guidelines and practices surrounding the sacraments, with a special emphasis on catechizing parents involved in their children's sacrament preparation. This initiative aims to deepen the community's understanding of and relationship with the sacraments, fostering a more meaningful experience for all parish members.

## Guest Speakers

Speakers can bring fresh perspectives, diverse experiences, and specialized knowledge of the sacramental life of a parish, offering our community a broader understanding of the faith. St. Benedict intends to reinstitute the speaker series, in which a series of sessions can help our community to reflect and pray on various facets of the Catholic faith. With a focus on liturgical seasons like Advent and Lent, these sessions will aim to provide enriching insights and reflections on the spiritual significance of these sacred traditions.

## Door to Door Visitations

We look forward to building a stronger, more engaged parish community through meaningful interactions, home visits, and personal invitations to relevant faith formation activities. Volunteers will be reaching out to get to know families better, offering camaraderie, praying together, and sharing information about the diverse faith formation opportunities available.

## Liturgical Life

### Spanish Mass

As our parish grows in membership, our records indicate our demography is changing. A recent need assessment we conducted indicated that we consider developing ways to reach out to the Spanish speaking population in our parish community. We will work with the Diocese to explore the possibility of starting weekend Spanish Mass and Spanish ministries.

### Liturgical Training

The parish is dedicated to enhancing liturgical training, ensuring that our worship experiences are spiritually enriching and reflective of our Catholic traditions. With this commitment, we will be implementing strong standards and regular training sessions for liturgical ministers. These sessions will focus on deepening their understanding of the liturgy, emphasizing reverence, and fostering a sense of shared responsibility.

## Ministerial Life

### Ministry Fair

With so many wonderful ministries that define our parish community, we look forward to hosting a Ministry Fair to highlight the many opportunities for involvement and service



within our faith community. This event will provide parishioners a platform to explore and learn more about the various ministries that contribute to our vibrant parish life.

## Develop New Ministries

Inspired by the diverse gifts and talents among our parishioners, we will expand our outreach by adding new ministries to provide meaningful opportunities for involvement and spiritual growth within our community.

## Ministry Goals and Vision

A key opportunity for ministerial development lies in establishing clear goals and vision. Through parish support and collaboration, we aim to assist each ministry in defining its purpose and objectives, fostering a shared sense of direction within our faith community. Key focuses for development will include determining ways to attract more volunteers and the implementation of regularly scheduled ministry leadership meetings.

## Measure the Growth of Ministries

To learn and adapt as our ministries and membership grow, we are committed to measuring and analyzing ministries' growth and activity.

## Additional Initiatives

- Retreats, conferences, guest speakers
- Small church community
- Term limits for ministry leaders
- Ministry information center

## Visitations for the Sick and Homebound

We will continue visitations for our sick and homebound parishioners, embodying our commitment to the care and support of others. Through these visits, we aim to cultivate a sense of solidarity through prayer and ensure that no member of our parish feels alone during times of illness or confinement.

## Mental Health

In line with the Diocese of Phoenix Office of Mental Health Ministry, we seek to accompany those with mental health needs in our parish and school community in a Catholic, sustainable, ethical, and meaningful way. The focus of this ministry is education, accompaniment, and advocacy. While this is not intended to serve as a substitute for treatment or counseling with a qualified professional, we intend to provide literacy in mental health to promote the reduction of mental illness stigma, encourage conversations around mental illness, and create a safe environment for individuals to share and seek help surrounding their mental illness. Our mission is to help create

pastoral environments where people living with mental illness can meet, share their experiences and their Catholic faith with others, and grow spiritually in their relationship with God.

## Other Areas of Focus

### What We are Doing Already

Our parish is actively engaged in numerous community initiatives, including the St. Vincent de Paul Pantry, Refugee Resettlement Ministry, Knights of Columbus, Family Promise, Legion of Mary, and Scouting programs. These initiatives reflect our commitment to serving those in need and fostering a sense of community. As we continue these efforts, we are dedicated to enhancing the membership and effectiveness of each initiative.

### Promoting our Identity

We are committed to enhancing public relations and marketing efforts, aiming to elevate our visibility, engagement, and positive image within and beyond our community. We intend to actively advertise our community engagement initiatives and increase our media presence both online and in local newspapers. This initiative is crucial to letting those inside and outside the community know who we are and what we are about, emphasizing our mission, values, and the virtuous deeds we do in our broader community.

### Events for All

While the main work of St. Benedict Parish is to deepen parishioners prayer life through the liturgy, sacraments and ministries, the parish intends to introduce more events catering to diverse interests and age groups within our community. From fun & affordable social activities to informal gatherings to special events, we aim to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone. These events provide opportunities for fellowship, laughter, and building connections outside of traditional church activities.

### Neighborhood Engagement & Partnership

Our parish is committed to strengthening ties with our neighbors through enhanced community engagement and partnerships. We aim to be an active and supportive presence in the neighborhood, fostering connections, and addressing shared concerns. To enhance engagement, we will collaborate with those outside the parish community by engaging in programs that already exist in the neighborhood and the Diocese, coordinating events with other churches, and being good neighbors by serving the greater community.

## Collaborating with Other Churches and Organizations

We look forward to initiating and participating in collaborative events such as service and community projects with other churches within our Deanery. Through partnerships like the Valley Interfaith Project, we can pool resources, share insights, and collectively address the needs of the community. In addition, we intend to promote our collaboration with these outside groups, especially by inviting our parishioners to participate. Together, we can make a more significant impact and embody the spirit of Christian solidarity.

## Serving our elderly/homebound community

To provide compassionate care and support, our parish is focusing on initiatives to serve our elderly and homebound community members. This includes organizing regular visits, helping with basic needs, praying together, and ensuring they feel connected to our faith community.

## Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

In efforts to streamline and enhance parish operations, all St. Benedict ministries and organizations will need to have a Standard Operating Procedures in place with a focus on efficiency, communication, and clarity. We aim to improve collaboration among our dedicated staff and volunteers. Procedures will include instructions for meeting space use, specific safety procedures, and equipment usage guidelines.

### Other SOP Priorities

- Collaboration with other schools and parishes
- Rental of parish facilities

## Frequent Meetings and Information Exchange

Embracing the spirit of communion and collaboration, we will continue to cultivate more community meetings and information exchange sessions. We will continue to provide opportunities for open dialogue, sharing updates, and fostering a deeper sense of community engagement.

## Qualitative Metrics

In the interest of being responsive to the St. Benedict faith community, we continue to take and analyze feedback from our parishioners, ministry leaders, and staff. Through this thoughtful examination, we aim to enhance the spiritual journey, strengthen community bonds, and ensure that our parish remains a place *“where all are welcome”*.

## Finance

Maintaining a strong financial transparency and accountability continues to be our priority. We will strive to maintain a complete financial report that includes assets and debt, repayment schedules, and detailed expenditures.

## Acting on “Laudato Si”

Aligning with Pope Francis' call to care for our common home, our parish is dedicated to taking concrete steps inspired by the "Laudato Si" encyclical. This involves implementing eco-friendly practices like a recycling program, offering water refill stations, community clean-ups, promoting sustainability, and raising awareness about our responsibility to protect the environment. By embracing these principles, we seek to be faithful stewards of God's creation.

## St. Benedict Youth Ministry

Our parish is excited to revitalize and enhance our youth ministry, focusing on creating a vibrant and engaging environment. We aim to inspire our young members to deepen their faith through volunteering, fun social events, and active participation in the life of the parish. By nurturing a sense of purpose and community among our youth, we hope to empower them to be active contributors to the Church and society.

## Young Adults

Recognizing the unique needs and interests of young adults in our parish, we intend to offer dedicated events for them. These gatherings aim to create a space for fellowship, prayer, spiritual growth, and the formation of meaningful connections. By catering to the diverse needs of young adults, we aspire to build a supportive community that accompanies individuals on their unique journeys of faith and life.