

Effectiveness of parish Staff Structure  
St. Thomas the Apostle Parish  
June 3013

This report is the result of the study on Parish Staff Structure effectiveness commissioned by the Pastor and Pastoral Council. The purpose of the report is to communicate our evaluation of staff structure and recommendations.

This committee was formed to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the current Pastoral Staff organization and distribution of responsibilities in supporting the needs and coordinating the activity of parish life.
- Provide a written report and recommendations based on the findings of this committee, to the Pastor and Pastoral Council.

In December 2012, the committee sent out separate surveys to parish staff and ministry leaders. Of the 14 surveys sent to parish staff, 11 surveys were completed and returned. Of the 33 surveys sent to ministry leaders, 12 surveys were completed and returned.

The ministry leader survey included questions regarding:

- Responsiveness of parish staff
- Alliance of their ministry to the Long Range Plan, vision and mission statements of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish
- Effectiveness of pastoral staff guiding the ministry leaders

The parish staff survey included questions regarding:

- The responsibilities of each staff person and the demands of their job
- Areas of duplication or conflict with other staff members
- Areas of pastoral need
- Demands of their position that might prove difficult to handle

The returned surveys were all reviewed by the committee.

**The major issues raised by the ministry leaders were:**

- Chain of command
- Pastoral leadership, guidance and direction
- Communication (has been improving)

In February 2013, follow up interviews were scheduled with parish staff to obtain clarification and additional information. Staff members expressed their views of the past and present staffing structure, their job responsibilities and expectations, and the strengths and concerns of the environment they are working in.

**The major issues raised by pastoral staff were:**

- Positive energy
- Staff feel supported by one another
- Beginning to list job responsibilities

- Assistance in establishing spiritual goals
- Ability to discuss spiritual direction of the areas of ministry they are responsible for
- Inconsistent job performance feedback / no formal evaluations
- Micro managing
- Key players should have a reasonable expectation of reaching Father and be able to contact him for issues that need to be handled in an urgent manner
- Requirement that staff must attend Mass each weekend at St. Thomas rotating the Mass they attend. (If you do not already know the staff person, you will not recognize them as a staff person, during a church service. If you approach a staff person about business, this is not appropriate during their worship time. **This is only required of certain staff** and is disruptive to family life and scheduled activities during their off time. Half of the staff members mentioned this during their interview, so it is a concern.)
- Connecting staff positions, goals and functions with the Long Range Plan
- Scheduling procedures for meeting space. It is difficult to find out what space might be available for your meeting.

#### Recommendations:

- Common faith identity should be determining the priorities and goals of ministries and their heads, if we are to remain a healthy Catholic community of faith.
- Need to support our parish mission and vision statement and Long Range Plan based on collaboration between financial and ministry needs.
- Establish, by a committee that includes the individual staff person, clearly defined roles and responsibilities for their position. Set clear priorities so they are known to the pastoral supervisor and the staff member. Establish written procedures for job functions – enabling them to be shared with ministry leaders and staff.
- Create a one page performance goal and priorities document for the next 12 months for each staff member.
- Schedule monthly meetings between the staff person and their direct supervisor to determine progress and any modifications to the current plans and goals. This process will help with the perception of micro-management.
- Schedule regular annual performance evaluations. (If a person has not been evaluated, they cannot set new goals based on formal observations.)
- Document any corrective discussion or issues that come up with a staff member. ( It should not be left to the employee to determine if the discussion was about a serious matter, nor should they be surprised if some action needs to be taken.)
- Establish a written procedure for all existing ministries and programs and a procedure for initiating new programs – including all individuals involved.
- Father to meet monthly with all staff members individually to discuss pastoral issues, planning and concerns.
- Reconsider the mandate for certain staff members to attend three services a month at different Masses.

## Possible Thematic Concerns – 2013

- Decisions governing the parish should be based on the pastoral needs of the parish, directing the finances toward these goals
- Staff job descriptions should align with the Long Range Plan, and parish vision and mission statements
- Communication
  1. Weekly meetings
  2. Reviews and Evaluations
  3. Monthly individual meetings with staff
  4. Documentation of discipline or remedial discussion