



# *Pastoral Plan for Parishes and Schools in the Northland*

*Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph*



*Final Report  
May 2007*



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
II. PARISHES IN THE NORTHLAND.....	2
III. CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE NORTHLAND .....	3
IV. CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION, KEARNEY.....	4
V. CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD, SMITHVILLE.....	5
VI. HOLY FAMILY PARISH, KANSAS CITY .....	9
VII. HOLY TRINITY PARISH, WESTON .....	13
VIII. ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PARISH, KANSAS CITY .....	16
IX. ST. ANN PARISH, EXCELSIOR SPRINGS.....	17
X. ST. CHARLES BORROMEO PARISH, KANSAS CITY .....	18
XI. ST. GABRIEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH, KANSAS CITY .....	20
XII. ST. JAMES PARISH, LIBERTY .....	21
XIII. ST. PATRICK PARISH, KANSAS CITY .....	24
XIV. ST. RAPHAEL PARISH, KANSAS CITY .....	25
XV. ST. THERESE PARISH, KANSAS CITY.....	26
XVI. NEW PARISH IN THE NORTHLAND.....	28
XVII. ST. PIUS X HIGH SCHOOL, KANSAS CITY .....	29

## I. INTRODUCTION

How will the Catholic Church carry out its mission in the Northland for the next 20 years? Parishes in the Northland have a rich history of bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to the people, and through Christ, ministering to people of all ages. The Northland is characterized by both rapid growth and change. The purpose of developing a pastoral plan at this time is to give parishes in the Diocese a long-term road map to follow for developing parishes, schools, and all the related ministries.

The primary objectives of the pastoral planning process are:

1. Develop a long-range strategic plan for parishes and schools in the Northland of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Make specific recommendations to guide future real estate purchase, construction of new churches and parish facilities, opening new schools, reconfiguration of parishes and schools, if and where needed.
2. Follow a clear process that consults with pastors, principals and parish leaders, working toward consensus and support for the final plan.
3. Plan for the number, location and size of parishes to serve the Northland for the next 20 years.
4. Plan for the number, structure and physical location of Catholic elementary schools needed in the next ten years.
5. Study population demographics in the community, demographic trends within parishes, enrollment patterns and demographics for Catholic schools, and related data to understand the makeup of the population to be served in the present and future.
6. Consider future needs for St. Pius X High School.

The process involved extensive data collection, listening, consultation at many levels in the process to review and refine a final plan. The plan was submitted to Bishop Finn for his approval after extensive input and discussion of the many stakeholders involved. The expectation is that this plan will guide decision-making in the Northland of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph for many years to come.

## II. PARISHES IN THE NORTHLAND

### Assumptions

The plan was developed based on several assumptions. These assumptions were tested and determined to be reasonable for the purposes of this plan.

- a. Free market forces are at work when people choose parishes. Many reasons affect their choice, resulting in overlapping patterns of parish attendance. Some of the more important factors are: pastoral leadership, quality of programs and ministries for children and adults, intentional evangelization, adequacy of facilities, availability of Catholic schools, tradition/history with the parish, and demographics.
- b. Parishes with real potential to grow to 500 registered households or more can plan on having a pastor for the foreseeable future.
- c. The number of active priests in ministry in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph will continue to decline for the future. Diocesan priests in active ministry declined from 79 to 64 in the last ten years. The average age for active priests is 54.4.
- d. Small parishes may not have a full-time priest when neighboring parishes are near enough to serve the community.
- e. New parishes that might be opened in the Northland will have demographic potential to justify a full-time pastor.
- f. It is pastorally and personally counter-productive to expect a priest to celebrate four or more Masses on a weekend. However, when pastorally necessary, Canon Law permits a priest to celebrate the Mass up to five times on a weekend which includes weddings and/or funerals. The desirable situation is for a priest to celebrate no more than three Masses on a weekend. Larger parishes might require a priest to celebrate Mass an additional time; perhaps a Saturday evening vigil.
- g. Parishes in the Northland will tend to be larger in the future.
- h. It may not be possible for a small parish to independently develop a full range of quality ministry due to fewer people and less financial capability.

### Recommendations

1. A total of 13 parishes will be needed to serve the Northland over the next 20 to 30 years. This assumes some reconfiguration through establishing new parishes and changes to existing parishes.
2. The Catholic Church in the Northland will need to build four churches in the next ten years, and perhaps up to seven churches in the next fifteen years or more. New sanctuaries and ancillary facilities should be designed as part of a master plan with options for further expansion if it becomes necessary.
3. Clear communications are critical at the parish level, and must be adapted to the concerns and situations unique within each parish community. Parishioners need to understand the rationale and case for particular recommendations. They need to know how decisions in the past are connected with future directions. A genuine effort must be made to listen and inform so there is broad consensus about a long-range plan for the Northland.

### III. CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE NORTHLAND

#### Assumptions

- a. Catholic schools generally have a regional service area, reaching a population wider than the host parish.
- b. Wherever feasible, parishes should sponsor a Catholic school at their parish site. When this is not feasible, every parish should have some kind of sponsorship of Catholic schools.
- c. Catholic schools must be excellent in quality of programs and, in the minds of parents, be competitive with public schools in the area. In order to succeed in an environment crowded with high quality public schools, Catholic schools must highlight their Catholicism as it is their chief distinguishing characteristic.
- d. School capacity is greatest in developed areas where population is stable and mature. In order for these schools to achieve full enrollment, they must reach outside of their geographic area and reach beyond parish boundaries.
- e. Catholic schools are generally not available or located in areas of the Northland where growth is greatest.
- f. The model for funding Catholic elementary schools throughout the Northland has been a “tithing” model. A “tithing model” of funding versus a tuition-based model does not necessarily produce more enrollment. Depending on the execution of the model and quality of communications and marketing, the tithing model has potential to be negative or positive for drawing enrollment and securing overall support.

#### Recommendations

1. Catholic elementary schools should be located on parish sites to foster strong identity and collaboration between parishes and schools.
2. The Northland will need to expand the availability of Catholic schools, particularly in larger population areas where growth is occurring. At least one new Catholic school will need to be opened, another expanded, and possibly another downsized to balance the capacity of schools with the school-age population.
3. Marketing of Catholic schools should be developed at a higher level, and become a natural part of every Catholic school being manifested at multiple levels from within the institution. Catholic education in the Northland will benefit from collaboration in marketing and sharing of expertise.

## IV. CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION, KEARNEY

### Observations

- a. The parish has 506 households. It appears to have grown 35% over the last five years; however, Mass attendance has grown at a slower rate.
- b. Annunciation Parish conducted a capital campaign in 2002 and raised \$1.1 million in pledges and gifts. The parish purchased five acres adjacent to the church site along with the Knights' Hall. The church will be expanded and renovations will be complete in 2007.
- c. The expansion of the church and extension of the narthex will increase seating capacity to 375. With this new capacity, the short-term need for more worship space will be met.
- d. The site is adequate for all long-term needs of the parish. A master plan has been drawn showing possibilities for a future church sanctuary with seating capacity of 1,000, administrative offices and a parochial school.
- e. When outstanding pledges are collected, the parish will have a remaining debt of about \$600,000.
- f. There is overlap in attendance patterns between St. Ann Parish, Excelsior Springs, and the Church of the Annunciation, Kearney. There is also some overlap with St. James Parish, Liberty.
- g. The existing church building could be expanded to the east, which could allow for the existing sanctuary to be expanded to 500 to 600 seats and provide additional space for education. This could be a permanent solution or an interim step prior to construction of a new sanctuary.
- h. A formal agreement is in place between St. James Parish and Annunciation Parish to make Catholic school education available and affordable for families who want a Catholic education.

### Recommendations

1. It will likely take five years or more for the parish to complete the collections from the most recent capital campaign and reduce the debt. When the time is right, a careful study will be needed to determine if a new sanctuary is necessary or whether further expansion of the current church will meet the need.
2. The parish should consider creating classroom space designed for early childhood programs. This may be part of new construction if current facilities do not offer space. When facilities become available, a preschool program should be opened as part of an early childhood center. Establishment of such a program would be a precursor to opening a school. A study is needed to determine the need for an early childhood program and the type of program that would be successful.
3. A Catholic school could be a possibility sometime in the future. The demographics and finances of the parish are not sufficient to construct or operate a school at this time.

## V. CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD, SMITHVILLE

### Observations

- a. Church of the Good Shepherd had 443 registered households at the end of 2005. In the last 15 years, parish registered households grew 206%. There is a clear growth trend in parish membership. Based on current trends, the number of registered parish households is expected to exceed 600 by 2010.
- b. The parish is emerging as a suburban church and its transformation and growth will continue at a rate commensurate with the vision of parish leaders, financial resources, and adequate facilities.
- c. Opening another parish in the general area of Church of the Good Shepherd is not anticipated now or in the future. Church of the Good Shepherd will be the northern most parish serving the Northland, and in particular the area north of I-435 and along the US 169 corridor.
- d. Population in the area north of I-435 is expected to increase from 7,250 in 2000 to 10,400 in 2020, an increase of 44%.
- e. The Church of the Good Shepherd draws most of its membership from Smithville and the surrounding area. It also has a significant membership from the rural areas of Platte and Clay Counties to the north, some from Platte City and some from the North Oak corridor south of I-435.
- f. Church seating capacity of 200 is too small for the present membership. Mass attendance exceeds 800 at the three Masses of a typical Sunday. The parish will be in a growth mode for a very long time.
- g. The parish has just over 9 acres of land. The church was built in 1980, and the hall and kitchen were added around 1990. Deferred maintenance has accumulated on the buildings, due in part to the expectation the parish would move or build.
- h. A capital campaign was conducted in the parish in 2002-03. As a result the building fund has about \$600,000.
- i. Expenses incurred thus far (approximately \$165,000) in an attempt to plan for new facilities on the current site are small in light of the full cost of a complete plant and the strategic concerns about the site.
- j. A capital campaign feasibility study was completed in June 2006 by the Church Development Foundation. The study recommended for “Good Shepherd to conduct a campaign and ask the parish for a three-year financial commitment to raise funds for a clearly defined master plan.” The consultants also concluded, “the amount generated from a three-year pledge period to be in a range of \$800,000 to \$1.1 million”.
- k. There are many younger families in the parish. The closest Catholic schools would be St. James, Liberty, or St. Charles Borromeo, Gladstone. Very few families from the area have children enrolled in Catholic schools.

## Recommendations

1. The final master plan for the parish should include the following:
  - Sanctuary with seating capacity of 800 with options for expansion to 1,000
  - Dedicated classroom space for adult and youth programs
  - Multi-purpose center/parish hall
  - Early childhood center and Catholic school
  - Rectory
  - Parish office space for current and future staff
  - Meeting rooms
2. Serious consideration should be given to a building at a new site for the Church of the Good Shepherd. Building on the current site has the following deficiencies:
  - The existing site is only slightly more than 9 acres and would not be able to accommodate the addition of a school or any day care facilities.
  - The site topography and shape are such that the following will not be easily accommodated and will be costly: expanded parking, soft and hard play areas, access for the elderly, and access to and from a new church. Fitting on the current site will necessitate a number of design compromises and limit future options.
  - The best long-term solution will be construction of a new sanctuary rather than modify the current church. The project design formerly presented and approved by the parish would not result in a view that would indicate this is a Catholic Church or identify clearly the main entrance.
  - US 92 borders the front side of the property. Neighboring frontage will likely develop as retail and commercial. Also, the eventual expansion of US 92 will take away some of the valuable frontage from the site.
  - The existing facility, although in pretty good shape on the interior, would need to have at minimum a new roof, exterior siding and fascias, additional windows required by the city, and major renovation and demolition of existing electrical and mechanical systems to tie into a new worship center. These costs are unknown at this time.
  - The project was bid three times and even with numerous attempts at value engineering and various types of construction, the cost of the project could not come close to the approved budget and amount of money that the parish could raise. It is unfortunate a sizable amount of money was spent on design, however the design cost is relatively small compared to the total project cost and strategic interests of the parish.
  - Selling the existing site and building would seem more practical than demolition, new construction and major site work associated with trying another time to develop a cost effective solution to the existing site. Proceeds from the sale of the site should be a significant contribution to the cost of building a new facility at a different site.

3. A new site should have at least 20 usable acres and preferably 25 acres in the immediate area of Smithville. Smithville should remain the central focal point of the parish.
  - 3.1 Criteria for a new site should be drawn up and agreed to prior to a formal site search. Criteria should specify useable acreage, geographic bounds (such as within the Smithville School District), access to primary roads, visibility, etc.
  - 3.2 The search process should utilize the many networks and contacts the parish community has in the area. The process should be undertaken prayerfully, trusting the Lord to provide an ideal place.
  - 3.3 Using the criteria, possible sites should be evaluated for their strengths and weaknesses.
  - 3.4 The parish should be kept informed of the process.
4. The parish should move ahead with a capital campaign when the following steps have been accomplished:
  - 4.1 Bring together a comprehensive plan for the future in a written document. Communicate the plan to the wider parish community. Seek support from key stakeholders.
  - 4.2 Communicate the reasons to study alternative sites. Prayerfully seek God's providential guidance to select the best property for the long run.
  - 4.3 Rework the master plan around a new site if a site can be identified.
  - 4.4 If a new site is the direction the parish will move, help people grieve the loss of the current site which represents all the memories and history of the parish.
  - 4.5 Finalize a master plan and develop a cost and budget for each phase.
  - 4.6 Communicate the final plan in the context of a process for discussion, feedback and decision.
  - 4.7 Develop a timeline for implementing/executing the master plan.
  - 4.8 Establish a clear understanding with the Diocese for a plan with Diocesan support and communicate the endorsement of the Diocese to the parish community.
  - 4.9 Undertake a capital campaign. Adjust the master plan based on the funding available.
5. As long as Good Shepherd Parish does not have a school, the parish should enter into a formal agreement with nearby parishes which have (or will have) a school. This will make Catholic school education available and affordable for families who want a Catholic education until such time as Good Shepherd Parish has its own school.
6. The demographics and finances of the parish are not sufficient to construct or operate a school at this time. A Catholic school should be considered a real possibility sometime in the future, after a school has been established at Holy Family Parish. Therefore, a school should be part of a master site plan and the parish site should be suited for a school, which the current site is not.
7. The parish should be a full participant in a professional market study for new Catholic schools in the Northland. Participating in the study should be Holy Family Parish, Church of the Good Shepherd, Holy Trinity Parish, St. Charles Parish, St. Therese Parish and persons living in the Platte City area and select parts of Platte County. The study is needed in the near term to guide planning decisions.

The market study should follow a process of forming an initial vision and preliminary plan for new schools, conducting survey research, and analyzing survey results in light of demographics and other information. The primary objective will be to evaluate the enrollment potential and interest in new Catholic schools, particularly new schools proposed for Holy Family Parish and a new site in Platte County. The study will seek to:

- Assess potential enrollment among parents for new Catholic schools
- Determine who will be served depending on the location of new schools
- Measure the level of interest in Catholic education in the wider region
- Evaluate the impact new schools could have on existing schools
- Identify parent expectations
- Be a collaborative effort of Northland parishes

## VI. HOLY FAMILY PARISH, KANSAS CITY

### Observations

- a. Holy Family Parish had 942 registered households at the end of 2005. There is a clear growth trend in parish membership. Based on current trends, the number of registered parish households is expected to reach 1,200 to 1,500 in the next five years.
- b. Mass attendance peaked at 1,200 to 1,300 about the year 2002 and has not shown much increase since. This may reflect facilities reaching their capacity. Capital improvements on the current site would create a short-term solution to a long-term problem.
- c. The church seats 500. Three Masses are offered on the weekends. Mass on Sunday is full and requires overflow seating. Ancillary facilities need to be expanded (larger classrooms/meeting rooms, larger parish hall, etc.) While the current site is attractive, it is not adequate to accommodate a growth plan.
- d. Holy Family will be the only parish located in the “North Oak Corridor”, the area within I-435 and north of Barry Road. By 2020, the population in this area on the Clay County side will grow from 22,400 to 36,700, an increase of 14,300.
- e. The population to the west on the Platte County side between the county line and I-29 will grow from 22,400 persons in 2000 to 34,000 in 2020, an increase of 11,600. Both Holy Family Parish and St. Therese Parish serve families in this area.
- f. The population living in the area between I-435 and I-35 is projected to grow to about 17,000 by 2020, an increase of 12,400 over a 20-year period. Eventually, a new parish may be established between Holy Family Parish and St. James Parish, Liberty.
- g. Holy Family Parish was established in 1980 and the church was dedicated in 1982. The parish hall addition was completed in 2000. Even with the recent development of facilities on the site located on 96<sup>th</sup> Street, parish leaders saw the need to secure a larger centrally located site to more effectively serve the area for the future. In 2003, the parish purchased 60 prime acres located at 106<sup>th</sup> Street and Woodland Avenue.
- h. The new site on 106<sup>th</sup> street is strategically located for easy access in the wider region. Woodland Avenue has convenient exits on US 152 and I-435. Eventually, a new east/west connection will be built.
- i. Parish debt has been reduced from over \$2 million to \$660,000 as of August 2006. Over the past fifteen months, the parish has been able to repay more than \$1.4 million against the debt as a result of the capital campaign for debt reduction.
- j. The distribution of Holy Family parishioners overlaps most significantly with St. Therese Parish, St. Charles Borromeo Parish, St. James Parish and a few who go to Church of the Good Shepherd.
- k. Holy Family Parish has a long-standing relationship with St. Charles Borromeo Parish to provide Catholic education for parish families.

## Recommendations for Parish

1. The current site and facilities are not adequate to serve the growing community long-term for these reasons:
  - Holy Family Parish will be the only parish inside the I-435 Beltway and it must respond to the current and projected population. Growth in parish ministries is restricted by lack of facilities. Mass attendance seems to have reached a plateau and is not likely to grow without a larger sanctuary.
  - The acreage of the current site is not sufficient to build a new church for 1,000 or more. The only option to remain here is to expand the existing church.
  - The existing church could be expanded; however, seating may be expanded from 500 to 800. In the end, the site and church would still have serious limitations.
  - The site will not support a Catholic school. It will not meet the needs for parking, hard and soft play areas and athletic facilities.
  - Sale of current facilities should yield significant capital to help fund new facilities.
  - The lake is attractive but a liability. The lake, stream and adjacent tall grass area have been classified by the City as a Natural Wildlife Preserve. As a result nothing can be done to this area.
  - The existing site has fill dirt that will have to be removed and replaced for any related construction activity. The site drainage and adjacent storm management facilities are severely inadequate.
2. Add a fourth Mass time to better serve more people short-term and provide a bridge for moving to a new church long-term.
3. Relocate the parish to the new site at 106<sup>th</sup> Street and Woodland Avenue.
4. The first priority would be to build a large sanctuary along with ancillary facilities for administration and parish programs. The second priority would be to build a school facility with gym and other facilities. Serious consideration should be given to building both concurrently. Study the feasibility of both to determine if a school can be part of the first phase, or if it needs to wait.
5. The size and scale of a new church depends upon plans for a new parish east of I-435. Assuming a new parish will someday be established between Holy Family Parish and St. James Parish, build the new church for 1,000. Allow for the possibility of expansion to 1,200.
6. As part of a master plan to relocate the parish, it is suggested the current parish site and facility be sold and property vacated when new facilities are ready at the new site. Proceeds would be used to reduce debt and fund the new facility.
7. The parish should begin planning for a capital campaign no later than January 1, 2008 with the campaign to follow in the last half of the year. Move ahead when the following steps have been accomplished:
  - 7.1 Review the existing master plan and revise as appropriate. Communicate original plan as well as revised plan to the wider parish community. Seek support from key stakeholders.
  - 7.2 Clearly articulate and communicate the limitations of the current site in light of the plan and vision for the future.

- 7.3 Use the pre-campaign time to communicate how decisions are being made and to inform parishioners about plans going forward.

## Recommendations for School

8. Building a Catholic elementary school is a second priority after building a new church. The timing will depend on the outcome of a market study/enrollment study and an assessment of capital fundraising potential. It is clear a new church should be funded before a new school.
9. The parish should be a full participant in a professional market study for new Catholic schools in the Northland. Participating in the study should be Holy Family Parish, Church of the Good Shepherd, Holy Trinity Parish, St. Charles Parish, St. Therese Parish and persons living in the Platte City area and select parts of Platte County. The study is needed in the near term to guide planning decisions.

The market study should follow a process of forming an initial vision and preliminary plan for new schools, conducting survey research, and analyzing survey results in light of demographics and other information. The primary objective will be to evaluate the enrollment potential and interest in new Catholic schools, particularly new schools proposed for Holy Family Parish and a new site in Platte County. The study will seek to:

- Assess potential enrollment among parents for new Catholic schools
  - Determine who will be served depending on the location of new schools
  - Measure the level of interest in Catholic education in the wider region
  - Evaluate the impact new schools could have on existing schools
  - Identify parent expectations
  - Be a collaborative effort of Northland parishes
10. Based on the outcome of the market study, open a new school at the new Holy Family Parish site beginning with pre-kindergarten and primary grades, adding new grades each year. Open additional classes in lower grades as enrollment demand dictates.
11. In the first phase of construction at the new site, include classroom space designed for early childhood education with pre-kindergarten and extended day programs. It could meet a real need in the region and develop a reputation for quality Catholic education. This should be a strong feeder for a Catholic school. Before launching a program, thoroughly study the market and determine the interest for such a program and the type and breadth of programs that could be offered.
12. It is very possible a new school at Holy Family Parish will compete with existing schools, in particular St. Charles Borromeo School. Plan in collaboration with St. Charles Borromeo Parish to avoid any negative impact on the finances of St. Charles Parish or the reputation of their school. (*see recommendations under St. Charles Borromeo Parish*).
13. While the new school may open with only one class per grade depending on the outcome of the market study, plan for two classes per grade with a master plan that could allow for further expansion; three and four classes per grade someday if necessary. It is possible this will be the only new school opened in the Northland.

14. When a school is opened at Holy Family, establish formal agreements with other Northland parishes (e.g., Platte City, Church of Good Shepherd) to make Catholic education available to non-parishioners. The agreement would specify admissions priority, financial support, and other terms. Maintain the agreement with St. Charles Borromeo Parish, and rewrite the agreement when the time comes to open a new school at Holy Family.

## VII. HOLY TRINITY PARISH, WESTON

### Observations

- a. Holy Trinity Parish had 233 registered households at the end of 2005.
- b. The church in Weston has seating for 140 persons and is close to capacity at the 10:30 a.m. Mass. The chapel in Platte City has seating for 120 persons and is near capacity at the 9:00 a.m. Mass. The parish maintains five Mass times between the church in Weston and the chapel in Platte City.
- c. Platte City grew by almost 1,000 persons from 2000 to 2005, an increase of 25%. The population is estimated at 4,900.
- d. The population west of I-435 (not including Platte City) is projected to grow by 3,000 persons from 2000 to 2020, reaching a population of 5,597. The direction for new development is south of Platte City.
- e. Weston has an estimated population of 1,644 for 2005, almost unchanged since 2000. Weston has a stable population base. New housing is developing in the area.
- f. The Catholic population of Platte City is distributed between Holy Trinity Parish and St. Therese Parish, with a few attending Church of the Good Shepherd, Smithville. Approximately 150 households with Platte City addresses are registered at St. Therese and presumably support that parish.
- g. The church in Weston is a lovely building with historic significance. The physical structure has been maintained in good condition, and capital expenses seem to be funded readily by the parish as the need arises.
- h. The membership of Holy Trinity Parish is distributed between the Platte City area and the Weston area, with some parishioners in rural areas. The Catholic community shares an identity with the same pastor, participates together in one religious education program, and shares commonality with other programs and activities of the parish. Weston is the administrative center of the parish.
- i. A gift of 19.8 acres of land was made to the Diocese with the condition that a church be built on the property. The site is located on 136<sup>th</sup> Street, just west of Highway N.
- j. St. Therese is the closest and only Catholic school option. A number of children from the Platte City area are enrolled at St. Therese School. The school is full with waiting lists.

### Recommendations

1. Long-term, a parish should be established in the Platte City area. A permanent facility south of Platte City would appear to be centrally located to the projected population.
2. Development of the new parish should be under the direction of the pastor for Holy Trinity Parish. There should be close collaboration between Holy Trinity Parish and the growing Catholic community in Platte City.
3. Conduct a thorough study of the donated site as a precursor to master planning a new parish. Determine if the site is suitable for development of a parish, school and all support facilities.

4. Communicate with the donor of the site the long-range plan for the parish. By keeping the donor informed, it will hopefully be possible to make adjustments to the plan should it become necessary. If the site is not suitable, work with the donor to explore other options.
5. The following steps are recommended in forming a new parish:
  - 5.1 Set up a leadership structure to plan for the future of the Catholic church in the Platte City area.
  - 5.2 In consultation with the aforementioned leadership structure, survey the Platte City Mass station community about a name for itself. Present a list of names to the Bishop in order of preference. Petition the Bishop for canonical erection as a “parish” (C515) or “quasi-parish” (C516), each by law (C518) having its own distinct territory.
  - 5.3 Develop a strategic pastoral plan for Holy Trinity Parish with a special emphasis on developing a vision to serve the growing Platte City area. The plan should build the base of ministry and expand programming in the Platte City area. A larger base of engaged and committed parishioners is the first step toward gathering the resources necessary to build a new facility.
  - 5.4 As part of the strategic plan, develop a financial projection. Delineate separate budgets for Platte City and Weston.
  - 5.5 If necessary, lease additional space to implement the plan.
  - 5.6 Establish a timeline for implementing the plan.
  - 5.7 Implement a plan for ongoing evangelization and outreach to the Platte City area. Make contact with existing and new households.
  - 5.8 Introduce more programs that specifically serve Platte City parishioners. Plan and coordinate with Weston.
  - 5.9 As growth occurs in the new parish, an overwhelming consensus should emerge that new facilities must be built. Further develop plans for the parish in response to the need and with vision for the future.
  - 5.10 Based on a master plan and good communications with the parish community, launch a capital campaign.
6. Thought should be given to initially constructing a multi-purpose parish center on the new site. This would be a precursor to eventual construction of a church. The first buildings to be constructed should be part of a master plan for a church and school.
7. At an appropriate time, move the administrative center for Holy Trinity Parish and its base of operations to the new site. This does not mean the rectory has to be in Platte City. Nor does this mean an office could not be maintained in Weston if there is an ongoing need. The church, rectory, parish hall and other facilities in Weston should be retained and used as needed.
8. Preserve Holy Trinity Church in Weston long term. Continue to offer Mass on a weekly basis, and at an appropriate time in the future consider a change to fewer Masses on a weekend. It is expected that over time larger Mass attendance will be drawn to the Platte City location, especially when facilities become available.
9. If the Platte City community is originally designated a “quasi-parish” (C516), at the appropriate time give the Platte City community the canonical status of “parish”. One pastor will serve the parochial entities in Weston and Platte City.

10. Long-range, a school could be a possibility for the parish site in Platte City. A school can be considered when the parish has an established presence at a permanent site, the number of active households provides a sufficient pool of school-age children, and the parish has the financial ability to manage a school. A new school would serve Platte City, Weston, and the surrounding area. Until a school is formed, a formal agreement should be established with other parishes to make Catholic school education available and affordable for families who want a Catholic education.
11. The parish should be a full participant in a professional market study for new Catholic schools in the Northland. Participating in the study should be Holy Family Parish, Church of the Good Shepherd, Holy Trinity Parish, St. Charles Parish, St. Therese Parish and persons living in the Platte City area and select parts of Platte County. The study is needed in the near term to guide planning decisions.

The market study should follow a process of forming an initial vision and preliminary plan for new schools, conducting survey research, and analyzing survey results in light of demographics and other information. The primary objective will be to evaluate the enrollment potential and interest in new Catholic schools, particularly new schools proposed for Holy Family Parish and a new site in Platte County. The study will seek to:

- Assess potential enrollment among parents for new Catholic schools
- Determine who will be served depending on the location of new schools
- Measure the level of interest in Catholic education in the wider region
- Evaluate the impact new schools could have on existing schools
- Identify parent expectations
- Be a collaborative effort of Northland parishes

## VIII. ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PARISH, KANSAS CITY

### Observations

- a. St. Andrew Parish has about 600 households. It has been growing, attracting younger families through the school and attracting some of the new populations coming into the growing parts of Kansas City east of the parish toward Liberty and as far north as the Oak Creek corridor around Holy Family Parish. The parish has a strong base of households in Gladstone and the established areas of Kansas City.
- b. Average weekend Mass attendance is in the high 600s. With a seating capacity of 400 in the church, there is room for growth in the present church.
- c. A new Catholic school was built and opened in 1999 with capacity for two classes per grade. Based on a class size of 25 per grade for PreK through grade 8, the school has a capacity of about 550 children. Current enrollment is 251.
- d. The school has elected to keep class sizes smaller, preferably around 20 students. Average class size in 2006-07 for K through 7<sup>th</sup> grade was 16 students. Kindergarten has had a steady enrollment of 29 for the past three years, with an average class size of 14 to 15.
- e. The school will depend on families moving into the area or traveling from other parts of the Northland to reach full enrollment. The school will not fill its classes without drawing a larger market share.
- f. Most parish children are enrolled in the school. The religious education program has an enrollment of only 66 children. Infant baptisms have dropped below 20 to an average of 16 annually for the period 2002 to 2005. This is smaller than the five-year period before.
- g. The parish has paid off \$2.1 million in debt. A debt of \$2.5 million remains from construction of the school. The parish plans to fund debt repayment through operating funds and tithing of parishioners. The parish feels it is doing well paying off the debt.

### Recommendations

1. Refurbish the current church as needed.
2. Market the school and continue to build up the pre-school. Work to reach full enrollment in kindergarten and first grade.
3. Open a dialog with neighboring parishes to look at ways to collaborate in planning programs and sharing resources.

## **IX. ST. ANN PARISH, EXCELSIOR SPRINGS**

### **Observations**

- a. St. Ann Parish has 572 registered households. There is a growth trend over the last ten years. However, there is no real indication of growth trends in Mass attendance.
- b. Excelsior Springs is projected to grow 8% to 12% over the next 20 years.
- c. The maximum seating capacity of the church is 450. The church is not filled to capacity on a typical weekend with three Masses. The church should be large enough for growth in the future.
- d. There is overlap in attendance patterns between St. Ann Parish and Church of the Annunciation, Kearney. There is also some overlap with St. James Parish, Liberty.

### **Recommendations**

1. There may be a need for the parish to expand space for meetings and multi-purpose use. An assessment of parish ministries could be conducted with staff and leaders to determine current and future needs.
2. A formal agreement should be established between St. James Parish and St. Ann Parish to make Catholic school education available and affordable for families who want a Catholic education.

## X. ST. CHARLES BORROMEO PARISH, KANSAS CITY

### Observations

- a. St. Charles Borromeo Parish is one of the three largest parishes in the Northland with about 1,400 parish households. The population of St. Charles Borromeo Parish is stable and aging.
- b. The number of infant baptisms declined from 90 to 100 in the early 1990s to 40 to 48 since 2003, a drop of about 50%. First Communion and confirmations have not dropped as much, although the change in number of infants may still be working its way up into the elementary school years. St. Charles Borromeo Parish has always had more funerals than any other parish, a reflection of its size, mature population, and tradition of pastoral responsiveness.
- c. St. Charles Borromeo parishioners live in 30 different zip codes and St. Charles Borromeo School families live in 18 different zip codes. People are drawn back to the parish for many reasons.
- d. The immediate neighborhoods around St. Charles Borromeo Parish are changing from ethnically homogeneous to more diverse. New immigrants and a growing Latino population are noticeable.
- e. Holy Family Parish grew out of St. Charles Borromeo Parish. A strong cooperation continues between these parishes, particularly with enrollment and operational support for St. Charles Borromeo School.
- f. The parish celebrates five Masses on a typical weekend, and at least one of them is standing room only.
- g. Between 2000 and 2005, St. Charles Borromeo Parish raised \$1.8 million for improvement of parish and school facilities.
- h. St. Charles Borromeo School has had solid enrollment with double classes per grade. K to 8 enrollment was 439 at the start of the 2006-07 school year, plus 101 in preschool. The school will open a full-day kindergarten next year and already shows signs of rebounding from a low enrollment of 36 in 2006-07.
- i. Even though the parish has been actively improving facilities, school buildings will require a significant capital investment to maintain them in excellent condition over the long-term.
- j. St. Charles Parish buildings have been grandfathered and are currently exempt from current city code requirements. However, major renovations, exterior upgrades or additions to the facilities could trigger required compliance with code, increasing the cost of renovation. The Diocese has found that conducting a major renovation can actually cost more than demolishing the existing facilities and constructing a new school on the same site.

## Recommendations

1. Conduct a professional engineering audit of the school buildings to determine the full extent of long-term building needs and to anticipate all maintenance projects. Identify deficiencies in meeting code requirements, energy efficiency, marketability, and so on. Use the study to construct a step by step plan for maintaining and improving the facility. Make improvements consistent with long-term enrollment projections. *(See Recommendation #4 below.)*
2. Continue the strong cooperation with Holy Family Parish to sponsor St. Charles School. Work at marketing and recruiting to sustain full enrollment in two classes per grade.
3. Work collaboratively with Holy Family Parish in planning for a new school at the new Holy Family Parish site. Annually monitor enrollment trends at St. Charles and make adjustments to number of classes as necessary.
4. The parish should be a full participant in a professional market study for new Catholic schools in the Northland. Participating in the study should be Holy Family Parish, Church of the Good Shepherd, Holy Trinity Parish, St. Charles Parish, St. Therese Parish and persons living in the Platte City area and select parts of Platte County. The study is needed in the near term to guide planning decisions.

The market study should follow a process of forming an initial vision and preliminary plan for new schools, conducting survey research, and analyzing survey results in light of demographics and other information. The primary objective will be to evaluate the enrollment potential and interest in new Catholic schools, particularly new schools proposed for Holy Family Parish and a new site in Platte County. The study will seek to:

- Assess potential enrollment among parents for new Catholic schools
- Determine who will be served depending on the location of new schools
- Measure the level of interest in Catholic education in the wider region
- Evaluate the impact new schools could have on existing schools
- Identify parent expectations
- Be a collaborative effort of Northland parishes

As an outcome of the study, honestly evaluate the impact a new school would have on enrollment and plan accordingly. There should be ample time to plan for a size transition as a new school emerges at Holy Family. The magnitude of that transition will be better understood after more planning and a market study.

5. Open a dialog with neighboring parishes to look at ways to collaborate in planning programs and sharing resources.

## **XI. ST. GABRIEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH, KANSAS CITY**

### **Observations**

- a. St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish is stable with about 800 registered households. The average number of infants baptized the last three years was 17. The number has hovered between 17 and 26 for the last ten years.
- b. With a seating capacity of 650, St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish is the largest church in this area of the Northland. Weekend Mass attendance is typically around 1,000 persons. With four Mass times, attendance may approach half the seating capacity.
- c. The parish is located in a mature area of the Northland and in Kansas City, where the population has become more diverse and changed over the past decades. There is a noticeable cultural shift in the neighborhoods with greater numbers of Vietnamese and Hispanic persons living in the area.
- d. As older families leave the area, the housing turns over to younger families and offers attractive starter homes.
- e. While the parish has an older demographic, the school and other youth programs are retaining an interest among young families.
- f. St. Gabriel School has 277 students enrolled for 2006-07 in preK-8<sup>th</sup> grade. K-8 enrollment is 198 with an average class size of 18. There are two classes of kindergarten with about 15 per class, and two classes of first grade with about 14 per class. Other grades are single classes.
- g. The early childhood learning center is a strong program and a valuable service to the community.

### **Recommendations**

1. Given the capacity of Catholic schools in this area of the Northland and given that the facility of St. Gabriel School is not large enough to sustain two classes per grade through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, limit enrollment to one class per grade, even if it creates a waiting list. The school should market to fill every class and seek to be the best small school it can be with one class per grade. Reasons are:
  - There are over 1,100 seats in Catholic schools in this area of the Northland.
  - Adding a second class of 1<sup>st</sup> grade dropped class size to 14 in 1<sup>st</sup> grade. This raised the cost of Catholic education for the parish and long term could put pressure on the school budget.
2. The school should research why families leave the school, and give particular attention to the retention of students as part of an overall marketing plan.
3. Open a dialog with neighboring parishes to look at ways to collaborate in planning programs and sharing resources.

## XII. ST. JAMES PARISH, LIBERTY

### Observations

- a. St. James Parish had 1,600 households at the end of 2005. There is a clear growth trend in parish membership. Based on current trends, the number of parish households is expected to reach 1,900 in the next five years. The parish will most likely grow to be more than 2,000 households.
- b. The parish is impacted by the growth of Liberty and the Shoal Creek Valley, the largest growth areas of the Northland. Shoal Creek Valley, an area between I-435 and I-35, is projected to grow 12,500 persons from 2000 to 2020. The area east of I-35 including the City of Liberty is projected to grow 9,100 persons from 2000 to 2020. Together the population of these regions was 37,000 in 2000 and is projected to be more than 58,000 by 2020.
- c. The seating capacity of St. James Church is 600. The church is at capacity and parking overflows, even with five Masses on the weekends. Mass attendance exceeds church capacity at two times on Sunday mornings. Average weekend Mass attendance is around 2,300, the second largest attendance in the Northland. There is evidence people are discouraged and turned away from worshipping or participating at St. James Parish due to crowding.
- d. The church site has 32 acres which provides adequate space for the future. The location is excellent to serve Liberty and growth areas of northeastern Kansas City.
- e. St. James School enrolled 385 students for 2006-07. All but 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades are two classes per grade. Over 100 children are on the waiting list for pre-school for 2007. The pool of school age children is growing as evidenced by a large religious education program (442 in 2005-06), children receiving first communion averages over 100, and the Liberty School District continues to grow tremendously.
- f. The parish is beginning a minor capital campaign and hoping to raise \$500,000 for a building program. The building program will add classrooms to the school, expand parking and improve traffic flow, expand cafeteria, add restrooms and add exterior play area for pre-kindergarten. The construction budget is \$1.47 million.
- g. The parish has a modest debt of \$300,000. After construction and fund raising, the debt is projected to be \$970,000. The parish should be able to pay off this debt in less than five years given the recent history of debt repayment.
- h. The parish needs more facilities at every level: multi-purpose space, religious education, administration, worship, school, gathering space, and meeting space.

## Recommendations

1. Provide additional parish facilities by building seven rooms for library/computers, youth, pre-school, kindergarten and homerooms. Expand the cafeteria and complete other renovations. It will be better to build all the classroom space needed in one project because construction costs will be less and the need for space is pressing. By fall 2008 the school will enroll two classes for every grade.
2. The next major phase of facility expansion should be construction of a new church and conversion of the existing church to provide for parish needs. The parish should plan to complete a major capital campaign by 2009, and realize a new church in the next five to seven years.
3. The size and scale of the new church depends upon plans for a new parish west of I-35. Assuming a new parish will someday be established between St. James Parish and Holy Family Parish, build the new church for 1,200. If possible, allow for expansion to 1,500.
4. Before launching capital fundraising, develop a comprehensive strategic pastoral plan that brings together goals for the parish, development of the school, projection of staff needs, projection of finances and master facility plan. Consider updating the plan “Project 2010” and making it part of a comprehensive plan for the parish. The basis and case for all facility planning and fund raising should be a compelling and visionary pastoral plan for the future of the parish and school. The plan should communicate a total vision for the parish. This can be an effective tool to build ownership and excitement for the future, as well as ensure that quality ministry will be developed and funded on a scale proportional to the population the parish serves. As part of a comprehensive strategic plan, professional architects should be engaged to advise the parish on a master plan for the property.
5. The parish should move ahead with a major capital campaign for the church when the following steps are accomplished:
  - 5.1 Bring together a comprehensive plan for the future in a written document through an effective planning process with good communications and involvement of all key stakeholders. Build ownership and excitement for the vision in the wider parish community.
  - 5.2 Make sure the strategy for immediate fundraising does not conflict with long-term funding goals.
  - 5.3 Communicate the rationale for a major building program.
  - 5.4 Develop a timeline for implementing/executing the master plan.
6. Build into the master plan facilities space for an expanded early childhood center providing a range of programs. This will serve a real need in the community and provide a solid source of students for the school. A study may be needed to determine the scope and scale of programs that would be viable.
7. Build into the master site plan a long-range option for expanding the school by another 10 or 12 classrooms. Construction would not be considered in the short-term, but more like 15 years in the future. These classrooms allow for the possibility of expanding the school to three classes per grade if the need arises. The need to grow will depend on whether a new school opens in the Northland, population growth and market demand. This expansion should go forward only after a professional enrollment market study is

completed. Including additional classrooms in the master plan does not commit the parish to building them.

8. Conduct a market survey of potential school families to determine why enrollment is not higher, perceptions of the school, and expectations of parents. A telephone survey methodology is recommended. Use the results of the study to craft a marketing plan and refine the school improvement plan.

## XIII. ST. PATRICK PARISH, KANSAS CITY

### Observations

- a. St. Patrick Parish has a stable number of registered households of about 820 to 850.
- b. St. Patrick School enrollment dropped from 287 to 185 over the past five years (2001 to 2006), a decline of 36%. A marketing committee is being formed and plans put in place to respond to the enrollment decline.
- c. The school is making changes to strengthen the pre-kindergarten program. The school is also eliminating infant and toddler care to better focus on early childhood education for pre-school children.
- d. The parish is landlocked and strategically located across from St. Pius X High School. The parish is easily accessed by the freeway system.
- e. While this is a mature older part of the Northland, there has been active redevelopment in north Kansas City.
- f. Many of the neighborhoods that are immediately surrounding St. Patrick Parish are populated with immigrants, African Americans, Hispanics, and in general, a diversity of people. These neighborhoods have gone through changes typical of other urban areas.
- g. The parish has recently raised \$900,000 to renovate the parish education center and provide new administrative offices. \$1.8 million will be spent to upgrade facilities.

### Recommendations

1. Look internally at marketing strategies, curriculum improvement, and fresh image to stem future enrollment losses and achieve full enrollment in lower grades. Fill lower grades in the next two years.
2. Strengthen the relationship with St. Pius X High School and identify ways to share resources and support one another. Take steps to improve the attraction rate to the high school, and identify ways to better serve students and their families.
3. Explore with St. Pius X High School ways to share physical facilities for the benefit of both institutions. Form a plan to develop land that could become common to both institutions.
4. Open a dialog with neighboring parishes to look at ways to collaborate in planning programs and sharing resources.

## XIV. ST. RAPHAEL PARISH, KANSAS CITY

### Observations

- a. St. Raphael Parish is comprised of 200 registered households. Typical weekend Mass attendance is around 300 with three weekend Masses. The church has a seating capacity of 300.
- b. The parish population is stable.
- c. The neighborhoods around St. Raphael Parish are generally nice starter homes.
- d. The parish was started in 1963 as a mission of St. James Parish.
- e. In 2005, the parish baptized 4 children, confirmed 8 children, gave First Holy Communion to 4 children and had a total PreK to 8<sup>th</sup> grade parish religious education enrollment of 28 children.
- f. The parish has been financially capable of caring for its facility, supporting a priest and carrying on a few parish activities. There is a small and committed core of parishioners.

### Recommendations

1. St. Raphael Parish leadership should develop a pastoral plan for the parish that provides for ministry through a period of transition.
2. Within the next five years, combine St. Raphael Parish with the neighboring parishes of St. James Parish and/or St. Gabriel Parish.
  - The territory of St. Raphael Parish can easily be served by St. James Parish and/or St. Gabriel Parish.
  - The nearby parishes can provide comprehensive parish and school ministries.
  - With fewer priests in the future, maintaining St. Raphael Parish when there are other ways to serve the ministerial needs of the people would not be the best stewardship of priest personnel.
3. St. Raphael Parish leadership should move to develop an ongoing collaboration with the pastors, staff and lay leaders at St. James Parish and St. Gabriel Parish. This will serve to build connections between St. Raphael faithful and parishes into which many of them may transition. An intentional plan for transition is necessary to bring about a new direction with dignity, sensitivity, celebration and hope. A series of meetings should be initiated in fall 2007.
4. The pastors of St. Raphael Parish, St. Gabriel Parish and St. James Parish should work with the Diocese in the near future to establish a definite timeline for the combination of St. Raphael Parish with its neighbors.
5. The parish leadership of St. Raphael should move quickly to determine the feasibility of constructing 202 housing on the parish site, which many people in the parish wish to investigate. Contacts with Catholic Charities should be initiated and community meetings begun. 202 senior housing can address a real need in the Northland. If it is constructed on the St. Raphael site, it could affect the disposition of the parish property.

## XV. ST. THERESE PARISH, KANSAS CITY

### Observations

- a. St. Therese Parish has grown to over 3,000 registered Catholic households and has an average weekend Mass attendance close to 4,000.
- b. Since 2001, the parish invested about \$16.5 million in building a new church, building a new school, acquisition of property, and other projects. The parish site is fully developed and further expansion is not possible.
- c. The church is the largest in the Northland with a seating capacity of 1,500. The school is the largest in the Northland with an enrollment capacity of 675 for grades K through 8. The school also has a full service early childhood center.
- d. Population south of I-435 extending over to I-635 and within Platte County was 56,400 in 2000. By 2020, this population is projected to grow to 81,300. A population base of over 80,000 is a lot for a single parish.
- e. Given a population increase of about 25,000 and with the assumption the population is 10.5% Catholic, there could be 2,600 more Catholics over 20 years. If St. Therese Parish were to serve all these new families, the parish could grow by another 1,000 households.
- f. There is minimal migration from parishes in Platte County to parishes in Clay County. St. Therese Parish is the primary parish for Platte County south of the airport.

### Recommendations

1. In the next 10 to 15 years, a new parish is needed to serve Platte County and relieve St. Therese Parish as population growth continues. A new parish should be established at another site in Platte County and within the service area of St. Therese. The parish should be located with potential for reaching 800 households.
2. The new parish should open a school as soon as it is feasible to do so. There are two possibilities to meet this objective:  
**Option 1:** Open a Catholic school at a new parish site at the same time a parish is established.  
**Option 2:** Establish a parish at a new parish site. Open a school as soon as it is feasible to do so.
3. Under both options, there should be close collaboration between St. Therese Parish and the new parish/school. St. Therese Parish, in cooperation with the Diocese, could provide staff expertise, startup funding, and promotion of the new parish/school. St. Therese Parish would be the mother church of this new parish.
4. The parish should be a full participant in a professional market study for new Catholic schools in the Northland. Participating in the study should be Holy Family Parish, Church of the Good Shepherd, Holy Trinity Parish, St. Charles Parish, St. Therese Parish and persons living in the Platte City area and select parts of Platte County. The study is needed in the near term to guide planning decisions.

The market study should follow a process of forming an initial vision and preliminary plan for new schools, conducting survey research, and analyzing survey results in light of demographics and other information. The primary objective will be to evaluate the enrollment potential and interest in new Catholic schools, particularly new schools proposed for Holy Family Parish and a new site in Platte County. The study will seek to:

- Assess potential enrollment among parents for new Catholic schools
  - Determine who will be served depending on the location of new schools
  - Measure the level of interest in Catholic education in the wider region
  - Evaluate the impact new schools could have on existing schools
  - Identify parent expectations
  - Be a collaborative effort of Northland parishes
5. A site review committee should be formed to study the best site for a new parish. They should review the Tiffany Springs property and determine the advantages and limitations of using this site for a new parish/school. If the Tiffany Springs site does not satisfy the requirements for a parish/school, a search should be conducted to find a new site. If a site cannot be found with clear advantages over the current site, the Diocese should keep the current site. Concerns about the Tiffany Springs site would be:
- Street lay out is not ideal for a parish or school.
  - 20 acres is not typically enough property for a large parish and school.
  - The site is land locked by residential homes. It is common for residents to oppose large development in their back yard or through the political process place limits or cost on the master plan for the site.
  - Need verification that this is the best location or that a new location would be better. There may be a need to locate a parish west of St. Therese Parish rather than northeast of the parish.

## **XVI. NEW PARISH IN THE NORTHLAND**

### **Observations**

- a. There is a vast amount of land between I-435 and I-35 that is developing quickly. The population is expected to grow to 17,000. Additionally there is growth to the east of Liberty and west in Kansas City.
- b. St. James Parish and Holy Family Parish together have a projected population base of 94,000 persons. While some people will travel to other parishes, this is too large a population base not to have another parish.
- c. The area is the hottest growth area in the Northland at this time, and has a vast amount of undeveloped land that will sustain growth for several decades.

### **Recommendations**

1. A new parish should be established at a strategic site between St. James Parish and Holy Family Parish, perhaps in 15 to 20 years.
2. Secure a site with 30 to 40 buildable acres to allow for long-term development. The site of the new parish should be central to the development of the Shoal Creek Valley, accessible to I-435 and reachable from the growth areas of Liberty north of US291 and I-35. Its location should be strategically selected to take pressure off the parish populations of Holy Family Parish and St. James Parish. The property owned by the Diocese on 108th Street is within the target area for a new parish.
3. It is not likely a new school would be needed at this site if there are schools at the sites of Holy Family Parish and St. James Parish. The new parish should have an agreement with other parishes to provide enrollment and operational support for Catholic schools.
4. The timing of the new parish should be after St. James Parish builds a new church, after Holy Family builds worship space with supporting facilities, and after both parishes pay their debt down to manageable levels. This could be fifteen to twenty years, however the timeline should be reevaluated every three to five years.
5. When the time is right for a new parish to open, St. James Parish and Holy Family Parish could work together to plan and support a new parish. The parishes, in cooperation with the Diocese, could provide start-up funding and staff expertise, and promote the new parish. The new parish would be the offspring of these two existing parishes.

## **XVII. ST. PIUS X HIGH SCHOOL, KANSAS CITY**

### **Observations**

- a. About \$10 million has been invested in improving and expanding facilities. To the credit of the community supporting St. Pius X High School, facilities are up to date placing the school in a strong position to serve students and remain competitive.
- b. Enrollment was 425 in 2006-07. A larger enrollment would give the school more funds with which to improve and expand programs. The capacity of the building is between 550 and 600. It would be possible to add more classrooms if additional space was required.
- c. With expansion of Catholic elementary schools, the pool of future high school students will grow some over time.
- d. An analysis of enrollment shows a wide distribution of students from across the Northland. Schools like St. James, Liberty, which are some distance away, are sending 78% of their 8<sup>th</sup> graders to St. Pius X High School.
- e. The freeway system in the Northland provides good access to St. Pius X High School.
- f. In general, public high schools are viewed favorably and offer competitive programs. Several new public high schools have been or will be built. Martin Luther Academy, a new Lutheran High School, is planning to develop a K-12 school at a site on US 169 adjacent to Mount Moriah Cemetery. While there are relatively few private high schools to compete with St. Pius X, some new ones will emerge.

### **Recommendations**

1. The Northland does not have the population base or the number of Catholic elementary schools necessary to support two Catholic high schools. St. Pius X High School should remain as the Catholic high school of the Northland at its present location.
2. Every parish in the Northland should be a partner with St. Pius X High School in promoting Catholic secondary education.
3. St. Pius X High School should further invest in marketing and communications to continue enhancing its image and attract students and strong supporters. The high school also needs to draw more enrollment from public schools. Existing as it does, surrounded by public schools with quality programs, St. Pius X High School needs to promote its distinctively Catholic character among public school alternatives. This needs to be reflected in its marketing and its facility.
4. St. Pius X High School should take a stronger leadership role in the Northland by building closer ties with Catholic elementary schools, working more collaboratively to enhance Catholic education at the elementary and secondary level.
5. Strengthen the relationship with St. Patrick Elementary School and identify ways to share resources and support one another. Take steps to improve the attraction rate to the high school, and identify ways to better serve students and their families together.
6. Explore with St. Patrick Parish ways to share physical facilities for the benefit of both institutions. Form a plan to develop land that could become common to both institutions.