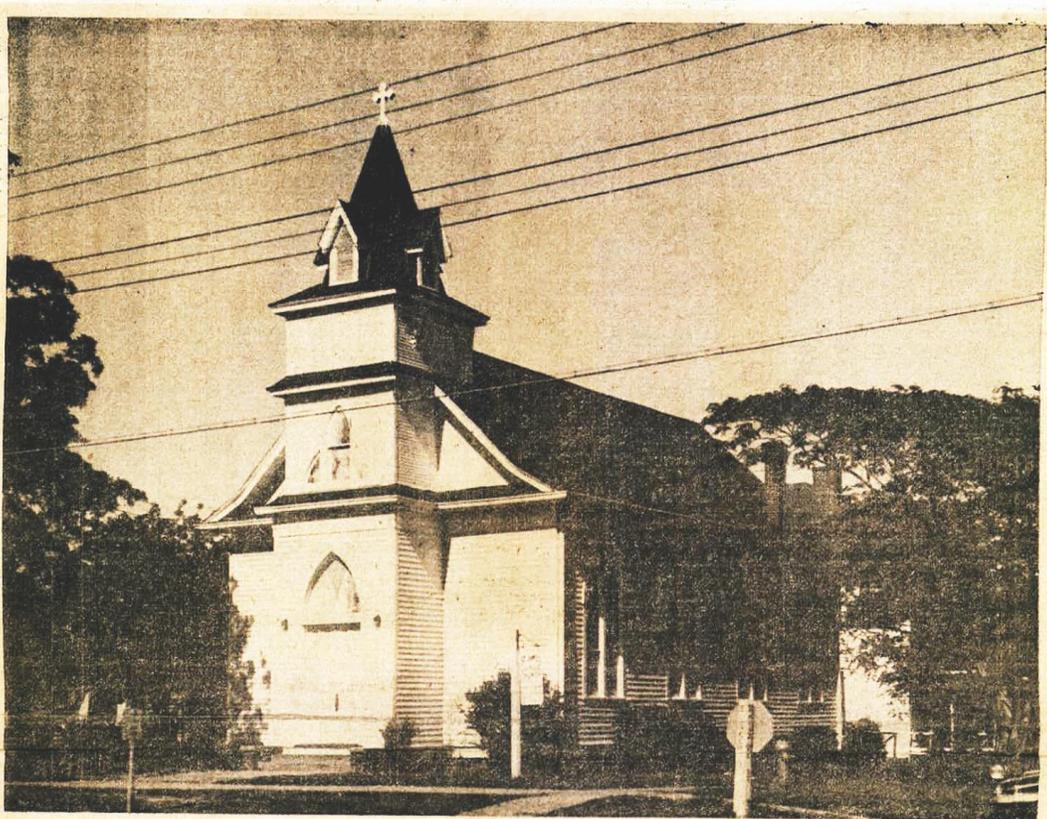


# St. James the Greater Catholic Church

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## NEXT GENERATION PARISH PLAN 2019

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—Tribune Photo

### *Saint James Catholic Church*

The Saint James Catholic Church at 207 South Green Street in Tupelo has a long and colorful history.

The first Catholic services were held in this city in 1878 at the home of Mrs. Hammah Long Cosby. One room, with an altar, was used as a chapel and mass was celebrated once or twice a year or as often as a priest could come from Columbus or Aberdeen.

In 1912, through the efforts of the Rev. Sylvester Yoerg, O.B.S., then pastor of the Catholic Church of Columbus, and the faithful Catholics of this section and their friends of every denomination, the Saint James Catholic Church was built and has served the Catholics of Tupelo since then, with only three pastors. The Rev. Mr. Yoerg, Father Robert and the present Rev. Maurus McGrath.

History and tradition reveal, however, that Catholics were in Lee County as early as 1736, since roseries and crucifixes were found on the battle field of Ackia and on the banks of Kings Creek, where a battle was fought by the French and Indians.

The Rev. Mr. Yoerg cared for the parish here until Father Robert came as resident pastor in 1919, and served until 1952 to be replaced by the present pastor.

Early members of the church included: C. W. Troy, Will Kelly, Mrs. T. T. Bonner, Mrs. Van Mitts, Mrs. M. K. Armour, Mrs. Frank Stanton, Mrs. D. E. McCarthy and Mrs. Crosby, all deceased, and Mrs. Maggie Jones, Miss Kate Troy, Mr. and Mrs. Phil Parobo, Mrs. Katherine Bossong and Mrs. Nora Mentzel.

The parish limits of St. James include at present seven Northeast Mississippi counties. There are at present seven churches in the eight missions attended by the priests of St. James. Father Maurus is assisted in the outside mission work by two other Benedictine Fathers from St. Bernard Abbey, St. Bernard, Alabama, which institution has cared for these missions since the coming of Father Robert in 1919.

**HOLY MASS IS OFFERED AT ST. JAMES EACH SUNDAY AT 7:00 AND 9:00 A. M. WEEK DAY MASS AT 6:30 A. M.**

# *Our Humble Origin*

Dear Parishioners:

As you read this letter, you are a member of the Seventh Generation of our Parish. Our founding was in 1878.

From this truly humble beginning as a mission church that only celebrated the Sacraments two or three times per year, we have been Blessed to become one of the largest, most active and most multi-cultural parishes in the Diocese of Jackson.

What was unimaginable even two or three generations ago is now our daily life of faith and service: Masses celebrated in English and Spanish each Sunday; six lay staff members who have devoted themselves to the service of the church and our children; full and vibrant Sunday faith formation classes; meals prepared for the home-bound adults and children in need, and Wednesday evening LifeTeen and CYO programs that gather and inspire our teenagers.

Although we are justifiably proud of what the Parish has become, we cannot stand still. The spiritual needs of a growing Catholic community in Northeast Mississippi are evolving and our Parish must adapt. Our Envisioning Team reflects the diversity of our Parish. It devoted the last six months to developing a Next Generation Plan that offers a Vision for our Parish, adopts values and priorities and recommends future goals.

The Plan is intended to strengthen the Parish. It continues to make us servants of the Lord Jesus—Whom we meet each day in our community among the people most in need.

This document is largely based on a survey of Parishioners completed in January 2019 and follow-up interviews conducted by Stewart Marquina, a consultant with the Catholic Leadership Group. Three hundred and seventy-three members of the Parish completed the survey, which is officially called the Discipleship Maker Index (DMI).

The Envisioning Team developed the Next Generation Plan based on the Data from the DMI and with the assistance of Dennis VanAuken, a Consultant with the Catholic Leadership Institute. The Envisioning Team also prayed, reflected, developed working groups and, above all, sought the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The Envisioning Team Members sincerely believe that the Next Generation Plan builds on our strengths, outlines ways for our campus to become an even greater center of service and honors the Baptismal call of the Laity to assume their place as church leaders while allowing the clergy to be available to serve and support our families, children, and community.

Early in our deliberations, the Envisioning Team Members adopted a Mission Statement: *“To Love God, serve His people, and become a united community in Christ.”* We hope and pray that the values and priorities described below will ensure that Saint James remains a Next Generation Parish worthy of this Mission Statement.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Fr. Tim Murphy

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is the Next Generation Plan?**

It is a “Path Forward” for our St James Parish and includes our Parish’s Vision, Mission Statement, Values, and Priorities.

## **Why are we doing this?**

Under the guidance of Bishop Joseph Kopacz, we are responsible to assure that our Catholic faith in Northeast Mississippi remains strong. The Next Generation Plan will help direct and define the future of our parish community.

## **Who decided what our future should be?**

As you recall, earlier this year all the members of Saint James were strongly encouraged to participate in a parish-wide survey. The results of the survey were entered into a “Disciple Maker Index.” A database that summarized the responses and views.

This data allowed the Envisioning Team to analyze and prioritize needs and concerns of parishioners from different ages, genders, ethnicities, marital and family statuses.

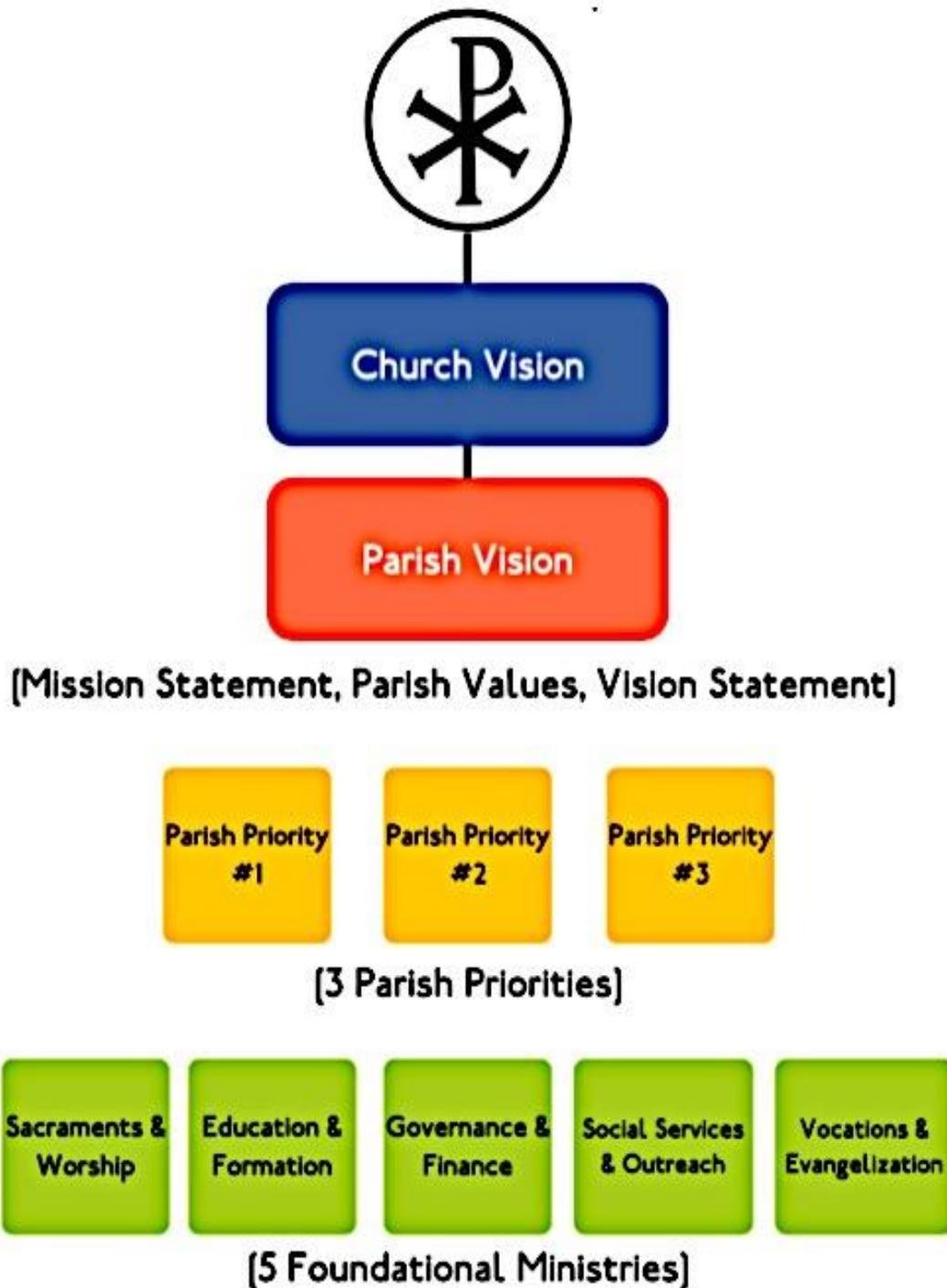
## **Can you tell me more about this Envisioning Team?**

The Envisioning Team is a cross-section from our parish who dedicated many weekends and hours to develop the priority plan. The Envisioning Team members are Katie Daniels, Mike Gusmus, Robin Haire, Michelle Harkins, Fr. Tim Murphy, Luis Del Rio, Mary Frances Strange, Mike Tapscott, Raquel Thompson, Candice Vincent, Aidee Zuniga, and James Hayes.

The Team was assisted by the staff of the *Catholic Leadership Institute (CLI)*, an organization based in Philadelphia, PA of former business executives all of whom are active Catholics. The Team used a systematic analysis presented by the CLI. This method has been adopted and used successfully by hundreds of parishes across the USA to develop their priority plans.



# Catholic Leadership Institute Leadership Model of Alignment



# St. James Leadership Model of Alignment



Church Vision

[Vision Statement]

Joyfully alive with Christ

[Mission Statement]

To love God, serve His people, and become a united community in Christ.

[Parish Values]

Welcoming Atmosphere

Offer an inviting environment and a well maintained facility.

Community Service

Mentor new parish leaders; support community programs and civic events.

Honesty & Integrity

Comply with Protection of Children requirements and communicate financial activities.

Growing in Knowledge

Support growth in faith and spiritual maturity; strengthen parental involvement.

[Parish Priorities]

Parishioner Engagement

Increase parishioner involvement, stimulate parish growth.

Faith In Action

Support community service and embrace the Beatitudes.

Shared Leadership

Honors the vision of the Second Vatican Council to empower the Laity; fosters collaboration among priests, lay ministers and parishioners.

## **Our Priorities for 2019 - 2024:**

Our Plan will focus on the following three pastoral priorities.

### **1. Parishioner Engagement:**

Parishioners must be inspired and motivated to join in and support parish activities, Sacramental Life and service to others. All parishioners are all called to active membership in the faith community. Research reveals the more you are engaged in your faith community, the more likely you will continue to grow in your faith and your relationship with Jesus Christ.

#### **Goal: Census**

- a. Complete a Time and Talent census by 02/26/2020
- b. Increase new registered households 90 -100 by 12/31/2021.

#### **Goal: Adult Self-Assessment for Parishioners**

This is a measure of church participation and spiritual interest.

- a. Create an Adult Self-Assessment for Parishioners within the next 12 months.

#### **Goal: Comprehensive Site-Use plan.**

- a. Complete a comprehensive Site-Use plan for existing buildings and assess need for projected new structures on the Saint James campus by May 31, 2020.

### **2. Faith in Action:**

Through our active faith, service and traditions, the Parish will become a strengthened, united Catholic community that promotes faith instruction and seeks to serve the larger community, especially its children. By our devotion to the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Parish aims to enrich family life and inspire active, educated and involved parishioners.

#### **Goal: Adult Education Participation Increase**

- a. Increase participation in our adult educational programs by 90 -100 people by May 31, 2021

#### **Goal: Childhood Education Center**

- a. Establish and open a non-profit licensed, Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) to serve 30-40 for three to four year old children by January 2022.
- b. Develop and submit all necessary proposals for licensure and accreditation for the ECEC within six to 12 months.

### **3. Shared Leadership:**

The role of the laity should be emphasized as envisioned by the Second Vatican Council.

The roles and responsibilities for leadership and staff positions should be structured so that the parish vision and mission remain constant during re-assignments of priests, deacons and the addition of staff and parishioners.

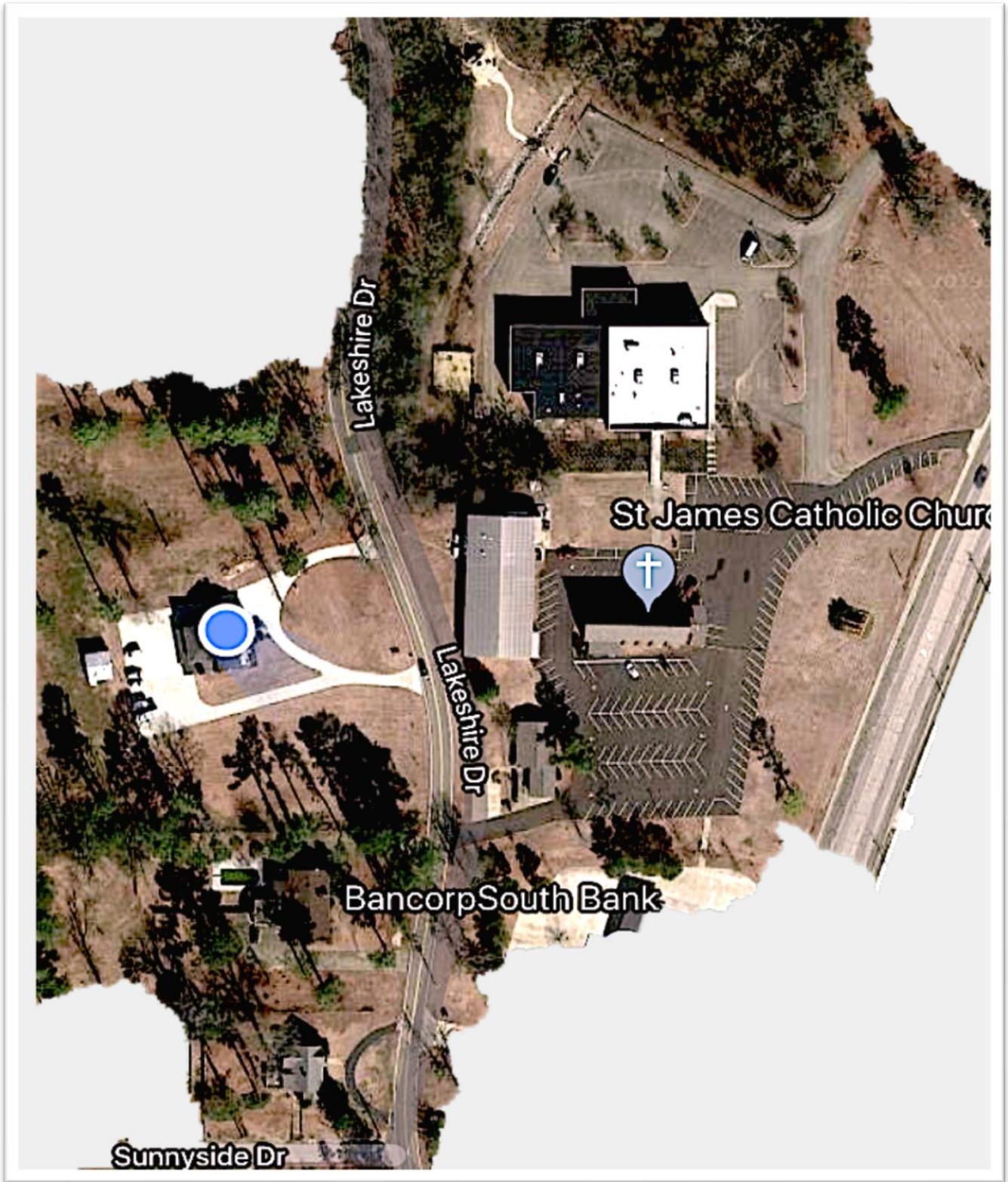
#### **Goal: Structure**

- a. Implement organizational chart with roles and responsibilities by 3/15/2020

#### **Goal: Lay Ecclesial Minister: as defined by Canon Law: the local Pastor**

- b. Recruit and hire an experienced, bi-lingual, Master's Level person to serve as our full-time Lay Ecclesial Minister 2023.

# ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH



Our Blessed Present