

Our Lady of the Sierra

Oakhurst, California



Parish Strategic Plan 2025-2028



Our Lady of the Sierra

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Introduction

the Process and People Behind the Plan

In the Spring of 2024, Our Lady of the Sierra’s Pastoral Council agreed to create a strategic plan for the parish. Members met several times, going through a series of intentional steps to create the plan.

The first step was learning. They listened to presentations by their Pastor on the mission of the Catholic Church based on the three-fold office of Jesus Christ as Priest, Prophet, and King. They also received training on what comprises a strategic plan, including the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, how to conduct a SWOT* assessment (page 4), and how to write goals, objectives, and actions.

The second step was visioning. They revisited the vision and mission statements created in the past, and decided to update them, given the current needs of the Catholic Church in the United States in general, and of Our Lady of the Sierra Parish in particular.

The third step was assessing and setting priority areas. A 13-item survey was created based on the three-fold mission of the Church. The leaders, representing the various constituencies of the parish, filled out the survey, tabulated and analyzed the results, and from their analysis, identified strategic priority areas for the next three years.

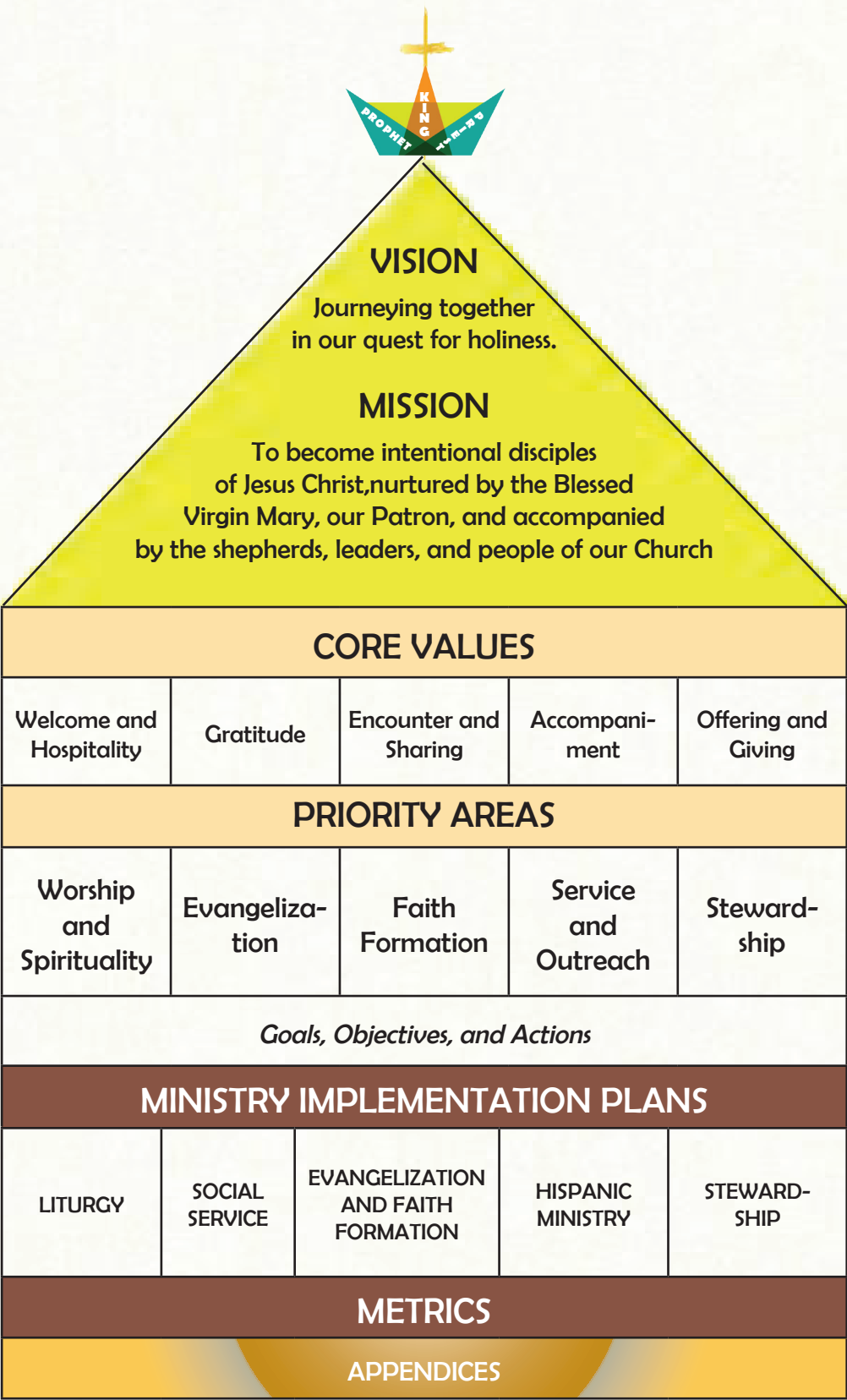
The fourth step was creating the parish plan. A core group created the parish strategic plan, comprised of goals, objectives, and actions for each of the identified priority areas. This plan was to apply to all parishioners, ministries, and the three mission churches of the parish. The plan is intended for the next three years, spanning July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027.

The fifth step was writing ministry-specific implementation plans. The members of the Pastoral Council, who are leaders of parish ministries and mission churches, now wrote implementation plans for their own ministries. They suggested that these plans be updated yearly.

The picture below show the members of the Pastoral Council in action.



Plan-at-a-Glance



Envisioning

OUR VISION

Journeying together in our quest for holiness.

OUR MISSION

To become intentional disciples of Jesus Christ,
nurtured by the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Patron,
and accompanied by the shepherds, leaders, and people of our Church.

OUR CORE VALUES

Welcome and Hospitality

We strive to welcome all as Christ, respect the dignity and differences of others, and create a hospitable parish community.

Gratitude

We thank the Jesus and Holy Spirit for our Roman Catholic tradition and the rich heritage of our parish, and are grateful to the Father for allowing us to create new and innovative expressions of faith in action.

Encounter and Sharing

We desire frequent encounters with Jesus to listen to Him, learn from Him, and strive to be like Him, so that we in turn can joyfully share our stories about Him with others.

Accompaniment

We seek to be accompanied by the Blessed Mother, the angels, and the saints in our journey, drawing inspiration from them on how to accompany others in their own journey of faith.

Offering and Giving

To reciprocate Jesus' offering of Himself to his Father, we likewise give Him our gifts of time, talent, and treasure, and in so doing we offer ourselves to Him as stewards of his creation, and particularly, of our parish.

Assessing and Prioritizing

Methodology

A Parish Survey was created to assess the parish leaders' view of their ministry or group through the lens of the three-fold mission of the church. Before administering the survey, the respondents received training on terminology, including the theological concepts of *Priest*, *Prophet*, and *King*. They also discussed the values of the 5-point Likert scale, gauging their assumptions of the *whole ministry's* or *group's* perceived practice of the actions embedded in each survey item. The values on the scale were: 1 – Very Weak; 2 – Weak; 3 – Moderate; 4 – Strong; and 5 – Very Strong.

The completed surveys were collected, tabulated, and analyzed. The SWOT Analysis is presented in Table 1 below:

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES tHREATS (swot)

STRENGTHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Camaraderie and friendships♦ Fellowship encouraged and practiced♦ Faith formation of families♦ Social services for the elderly♦ Training of liturgy ministers	OPPRUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Utilization of profesional expertise of of retired professional adults♦ Abundance of Catholic tourists from California and other states♦ Diocesan certification ministry specialization opportunities
WEAKNESSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Lack of development of individual and group spirituality♦ Insufficient liturgical catechesis and adult faith formation♦ Insufficient understanding of stewardship	THREATS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Vulnerability to outside threats and natural disasters♦ Non-existence of a Parish Safety and Emergency Plan♦ Dividers in Parish Hall unsubstantial and frail - a threat to safety

Table 1: SWOT Analysis Summary

Parish Strategic Priorities for 2024 – 2027

After discussing the SWOT Analysis above, the Pastoral Council identified the following strategic priority areas for 2024 to 2027:

1–WORSHIP AND SPIRITUALITY

3–FAITH FORMATION

2–EVANGELIZATION

4–OUTREACH AND SERVICE

5–STEWARDSHIP (includes Buildings & Grounds and Safety/Emergency Plan)

Priority #1: Worship and Spirituality

Goal 1: Nurture group and individual spirituality.

Objective 1.a. Encourage organizational groups to embed worship, prayer, and faith formation into their regular meetings and activities.

Actions:

1. Give examples of prayer and faith formation exercises that groups and ministries can embed into their regular group/ministry meetings and events.
2. At Pastoral Council meetings, have leaders share the spiritual and faith formation activities they have embedded into their group ministry meetings and events

Objective 1.b. Provide opportunities to all parishioners to form prayer partner and small prayer groups. Offer pastoral guidance in the formation of these groups.

Actions:

1. Conduct seminars on “Prayer Group Spirituality” to share examples and ideas on how to plan, organize, start, and sustain prayer groups.
2. Conduct parishwide “prayer rallies” and “Eucharistic Processions” to pray for special purposes and petitions.

Objective 1.c. Encourage all parishioners and ministry leaders and their members to participate in Eucharistic Adoration, recollections, retreats, and other spiritual and formation events.

Actions:

1. Create a brochure of spiritual formation opportunities to include a yearly schedule of Adoration, recollections, retreats, and special spiritual events.
2. Disseminate this information through various media and announcements after mass, at meetings, and gatherings.

Objective 1.d. Create opportunities to involve working parishioners, families, and children in worship outside of Mass.

Actions:

1. Schedule and implement early evening Eucharistic Adoration on special feast days to enable young families and children to experience Eucharistic Adoration.
2. Schedule and conduct special days like “Parent’s Day,” “Grandparents’ Day,” “Pets’ Day” “Children’s Day” that combine worship and prayer with event celebration.

Priority #1: Worship and Spirituality (Continued)

Goal 2: Provide liturgical catechesis.

Objective 2.a. Provide opportunities to learn how liturgy can increase one’s individual spirituality and improve each ministry group’s understanding and practice of liturgy.

Actions:

1. Learn how to pray the liturgy. For example, liturgy becomes evangelizing when it forms men and women to use their bodies aright to worship God. Silent and verbal responses are acts of prayer and worship.
2. Learn the matter of liturgy (language of materials signs, spaces of contemplation, images that trigger the imagination, decorations that heighten and enhance, not distract prayer and worship).
3. Participate in liturgy that is initiated by prayer (e.g. preparing for Mass, discovering the fruitfulness of silence, praying the Scriptures according to the mind of the Church).
4. Learn how every culture is taken up in the act of worship, and how cultural participation must be marked by embodied solidarity with the Church. e.g., Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration.

Objective 2.b. Provide opportunities for liturgy ministers to increase their knowledge and practice of liturgy.

Actions:

1. Invite ministry leaders and parishioners to enroll in the Basic Catechist Certificate course offered by the Diocese of Fresno, which is the baseline course for specializations in liturgy and other areas of faith formation.
2. Conduct ongoing training on the content and procedures of a specific liturgical ministry as a prerequisite to serving in that ministry.
3. Invite liturgical ministers to serve as speakers in other ministries to share their spiritual insights and experiences as liturgy ministers.

Priority #2: Evangelization

Goal 3: Evangelize the community of faith.

Objective: Promote, develop, and implement opportunities to lead parishioners into a deeper personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Actions:

1. Teach and demonstrate *lectio divina* as a way of listening, meditating, responding, and praying to Jesus Christ.
2. Form small Bible sharing groups to enable parishioners to witness and share their faith with others.
3. Encourage full and active participation in the Eucharistic Liturgy through singing, responses, and an enhanced internal focus in the Mass.
4. Continue to make every Mass a more intentional evangelization effort through catechesis of the Mass and calls to conversion, repentance, and greater sense of prayer.
5. Promote a vibrant prayer life for the community by increasing awareness of community prayer such as daily Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, the Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, and prayer groups in our parish.
6. Encourage frequent Confession/Reconciliation and provide more opportunities at different times and days if needed.
7. Provide retreat opportunities within the parish in the languages of major cultural groups.

Goal 4: Reach out to inactive Catholics, non-Catholics, and spiritual seekers. (Spiritual seekers include those who do not see the necessity of religion but seek to follow God.)

Objective: Educate parishioners in recognizing opportunities to reach out, invite, and welcome inactive Catholics, non-Catholics, and spiritual seekers to explore the Catholic faith.

Actions:

1. Develop and offer classes on basics of what Catholics believe and practice to equip parishioners to explain our Catholic faith in love and charity.
2. Align all facets of our parish ministries and their mission towards greater welcoming evangelistic efforts, including volunteers, personnel and staff.
3. Promote and expand opportunities for people interested in becoming members of the Catholic Church to explore our faith.
4. Engage Christmas, Easter, and Ash Wednesday Catholics with books, CDs, DVDs and other resources, as well as the Catholics Returning Home series,
5. Engage new converts and “re-verts” to the Catholic Faith (RCIA, Catholics Returning Home and more) in ongoing learning and active participation in the parish community.

Priority #3: Faith Formation

Goal 5: Form the faith of all ages.

Objective 5a. Foster an encounter with the person of Jesus and enable the experience of intimacy with him using four critical actions: invitation, welcome, listening, and service.

Actions:

1. Invite formation learners to encounter Jesus through prayer and worship.
2. Warmly welcome them individually to liturgical encounters with Jesus, making them feel accepted and valued participants of the liturgy.
3. Elicit responses from learners and listen intently to them as Jesus listened, in order to hear and discern their innermost aspirations and needs.
4. Guide learners to provide service to the Church where they can encounter Jesus in Word and Eucharist, or in the person of the poor, the elderly, the needy, and the vulnerable.

Objective 5b. Provide systematic instruction by engaging in long-term and short-term faith formation curriculum planning, using effective instructional strategies, and utilizing formal and informal assessment to inform instruction.

Actions:

1. Engage in short-term and long-term planning to guide systematic instruction and assessment.
2. Use catechetical curricula and resources approved by the diocese and the Pastor to ensure that faith formation content is in concert with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.
3. Seek instruction and modeling of teaching and assessment strategies that will heighten the effectiveness of input delivery, practice, and application.

Objective 5c. Embed a process of accompaniment and sharing experiences, to foster development of interpersonal relationships, connecting faith and life experiences, love of God, and love of neighbor.

Actions:

1. Accompany learners while they are learning how to pray and how to participate in the liturgy.
2. Inspire married couples and families to share their experiences of faith and application of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. Encourage faith sharing by witnessing wordlessly as well as with words. Enable witnessing that is consonant with Jesus as He is presented in the Gospels.

Priority #4: Service and Outreach

Goal 6: Provide service as an instrument of the new evangelization.

Objective 1a. Ministry as a Group: Engage in formation of members on their individual spirituality and on Catholic social teaching on the new evangelization.

Actions:

1. Learn about Mother Theresa's teachings on service, applying her famous quote, "*Service flows from prayer,*" "*Prayer is action in love, love is action in service.*"
 2. Provide time to ministry as a group to learn what the Catholic Church teaches about social service. Use resources such as the USCCB's "Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching," *Catholic Social Teaching and the New Evangelization*.
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Objective 2b. Planning Events: Plan service events that are pro-active and outward focused.

Actions:

1. Select evangelization themes derived from Biblical stories of Jesus' pro-active and outward-focused social service mission, e.g., feeding the hungry, healing the sick, etc.
 2. Contact persons in need personally via telephone or making a home visit (always observing the safe environment guidelines of the diocese).
 3. Give witness to Christ by our personal lives through our example (wordless), the words we use in conversation (words), and the stewardship we share (time, treasure, talent).
 4. Warmly welcome participants individually, making them feel accepted and valued participants of the event.
 5. Embed "share-talk" activities that will give ministry members an opportunity to listen intently to their participant-partner as Jesus listened, in order to hear and discern their innermost aspirations and needs.
 6. When appropriate, invite participants to witness by sharing testimonials about their faith journey.
 7. Refer possible returning Catholics, "nones," and inquirers to the appropriate ministry, e.g. Initiation Ministry (RCIA), sacramental ministries.
 8. Invite event participants to parish spiritual and pastoral events.
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Objective 2c. Collaboration. Collaborate with other ministries to seek their cooperation in integrating and executing the actions listed in Objectives 1a and 1b above.

1. Use members who are also members of other ministries to serve as resources and liaisons between their primary and secondary ministries e.g, A Prayer Warrior who is also a Social Service member could help embed worship and prayers into the social service agenda.
2. Pro-actively seek to collaborate and offer help, rather waiting to be asked,

Priority #5: Stewardship

Goal 7: Practice stewardship as a gift, and share time, talent, and treasure

Objective 5a. To receive God's gift gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, and return them with increase to God.

Actions:

1. Have ministry leaders examine their practice of stewardship by filling out a Time, Talent , and Assessment. Use the results of the assessment to further develop the Stewardship Plan. <https://charlestdiocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Time-Talent-and-Treasure-Assessment-2.pdf>
 2. Create a Stewardship Ministry, whose primary responsibility will be stewardship cultivation and annual stewardship initiatives.
 3. The Stewardship Ministry, should consist of five or more members: the pastor, a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a representative from each of the primary ministries. Stewardship should permeate all the other committees.
 4. After selection of Stewardship Ministry members, engage them first in spiritual formation and learning. For example, they can study as a group the USCCB's pastoral letter on stewardship - *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*.
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Objective 5b. Accompanied by the Core Strategic Team, guide the new Stewardship Council to create their stewardship plan.

Actions:

1. Begin by first having members learn and understand the Parish Strategic Plan.
2. Guide them in planning, writing, and publishing their plan.
3. Present the stewardship plan to the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council.
4. Have them begin implementation of the plan, accompanied by the Strategic Plan Core Team.

STRATEGIC PLAN for 2024-2027

FAMILY EVANGELIZATION AND FAITH FORMATION K-12

i. Our Identity

Family Evangelization and Faith Formation (FEFF) is a parish ministry managed and implemented by a group of trained certified catechists, who teach young people in the parish about the Catholic faith. This includes preparation for the sacraments of Reconciliation (Confession), Eucharist (Holy Communion), and Confirmation. FEFF classes are open to all young people in grades Kindergarten through Grade 12. We aim to guide our students to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and to form in mind, heart, and action the basic tenets of the Catholic faith. We intend to involve families in spiritual and faith formation, and encourage them to rely on the Catholic Church to accompany them in their lifelong journey of faith. Parishioners, parents, and the outside world see us as dedicated to this goal, worthy of their trust, and in need of their support, cooperation, and assistance.

ii. Parish Strategic Priority Areas

1. Goals as Recipients of Parish Services. We gratefully accept the services provided by the parish as outlined in OLS Priority Areas 1 - 5, and goals, objectives, and actions specified under each goal. We will add objectives and actions specific to our ministry. We will insure that these are always in synchrony with those stated in the Parish Strategic Plan.
OLS Goal #1: Nurture group and individual spirituality.
OLS Goal #2: Provide liturgical catechesis.
OLS Goal #3: For the faith of all ages.
2. Goals as Givers (Stewards) of Parish Services. We desire to share the gifts of time, talent, and treasure as outlined in OLS Goals, as well as our specific goals as an association.
OLS Goal #6: Provide service as an instrument of the new evangelization.
OLS Goal #7: Practice stewardship as a gift, and share time, talent, and treasure.

iii. FEFF Ministry Goals

Our ministry-specific objectives and actions are specified on the pages that follows.

PRIORITY #1: WORSHIP AND SPIRITUALITY

Objective #1: To continue to grow CATECHISTS individually and as a group in (a) spirituality and faith formation, (b) participation in parish wide worship and spirituality activities.

ACTIONS	RESOURCE NEEDS	PERSON(S) RSPNSIBLE	TIME FRAME
1. Support the individual spirituality of members by actively encouraging their participation in parish liturgy and worship activities such as Adoration, retreats, and other liturgical events.	Flyers, Sing-up Forms	Pastor Ministry Coordinator	0/24/2024-05/10/25
2. Plan prayer and worship as a group outside regular class days, such as Mass/recollection time to prepare for the new school year, catechist Adoration hour on Holy Thursday, Catechist Stations of the Cross, etc.	Priest - Mass Celebrant Calendar	Pastor Ministry Coordinator	0/24/2024-05/10/25
3. Encourage catechist participation in parish wide worship and spirituality events, such as the National Eucharistic Revival small group study, retreats sponsored by other ministries, special parish wide feast day celebrations, etc.	Sign-up Forms Calendar	Pastor Ministry Coordinator	0/24/2024-05/10/25

PRIORITY #4: SERVICE AND OUTREACH

Objective: To plan and implement service and outreach activities that flow from Jesus' teachings and examples in the gospels.

ACTIONS	RESOURCE NEEDS	PERSON(S) RESPON-SIBLE	TIME FRAME
1. Include in every Gospel lesson, possible service and outreach opportunities that flow from Jesus' teaching and example.	Lesson Plans	Ministry Coordinator Catechists	10/24/2024-05/10/25
2. Engage families in giving time during Mass, i.e. serving as greeters, ushers, gift offerors, choir members, and after-Mass cleaners.	Lesson Plans	Ministry Coordinator Catechists	10/24/2024-05/10/25
3. Encourage FEFF families and students to participate in the social service activities of the parish.	Lesson Plans	Ministry Coordinator Catechists	10/24/2024-05/10/25

PRIORITIES #2 & 3: FAMILY EVANGELIZATION AND FAITH FORMATION

Objective: To facilitate family encounters with Jesus Christ at home, in Sunday class, and at church.

	RESOURCE NEEDS	PERSON(S) RSPNSIBLE	TIME FRAME
ACTIONS AT CHURCH			
1. Provide a monthly family gathering that focuses on the Word and the Eucharist, and includes practice of the gestures, responses, and songs of the Mass.	Once Sunday/ month use the of sanctuary	Ministry Coordinator Catechists	10/24 - 6/25
2. Train and schedule families as gift offerors and ushers (basket collectors).	Training Hand- book	Ministry Coordinator	10/24 - 6/25
3. At Mass, have families sit together with Catechists and volunteers.	Mass Atten- dance Form	Ministry Coordinator	10/24 - 6/25
4. Invite families to come to Adoration on the First Thursday or First Friday of the month.	Adoration Sign up Form	Hispanic Catechist	10/24 - 6/25
ACTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM			
5. Curriculum (adapted according to age group): a) Word-Sunday Gospel; b) Eucharist; c) Liturgical Catechesis; d) Basic Catechism; e) Singing (sung responses, f) song of the Sunday Mass)	\$\$ Curriculum Materials	Ministry Coordinator Catechists	9/15/24
6. Systematic Instruction: a) lesson sequence, b) strategies, c) differentiated Instruction; d) discipline and behavior management	\$\$ Professional Literature	Ministry Coordinator Catechists	10/24 - 6/25
7. Assessment and Attendance Monitoring: A) Assess students 2X per year on meaning and memorization of Basic Catholic prayers.; b) Observe students individually 2X per year on participation and behavior during Mass; c) Report #a and #b to parents.	Assessment Profile	Ministry Coordinator Catechists	10/24 - 6/25
8. Provide hospitality service at family gatherings.	\$\$ Hospitality Volunteers	FEFF Assistant	10/24 - 6/25
9. Provide bible sharing and catechesis for parents of children attending Sunday classes.		Ministry Coordinator	10/24 - 6/25
ACTIONS AT HOME			
10. Do assigned family activity at home.	\$\$ H Home Activities	Parent/ Guardian	10/24 - 6/25
11. Pray together as a family at home.			
ACTIONS DURING SUMMER MONTHS			
12. Plan and implement vacation Bible School.	\$\$ Materials Hospitality	Pastor Ministry Coordinator	10/24 - 6/25
13. Plan and implement summer family mystagogy.			

Rationale for 2024-25 FEFF Calendar

- The Family Evangelization and Faith Formation Ministry has two calendars:
- 1. FAMILY CALENDAR. The 2024-25 Family Calendar that specifies 27 sessions, 25 for the prescribed *Finding God* and sacramental curricula, and 2 additional sessions for safe environment and Stations of the Cross. The Diocese of Fresno requires 54 hours per calendar year of instruction, to which the OLS Family Calendar is compliant: (120 X 27) \60 = 58. The Family Calendar is updated whenever there is a change in the schedule.
 - 2. CATECHIST CALENDAR. The 2024-24 Catechist Calendar consists of catechist formation and professional development days, Diocese of Fresno Congress, social/fellowship days, and parish wide recollection days. The Catechist Calendar is updated whenever there is a change in the schedule.

Dates	ACTIVITIES	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
09/28 Sat	10:30-12:00 PM Catechist Preservice: <i>Finding God</i>	Master Catechist
10/11-13 Fri-Sun	Diocese of Fresno Congress; 10/13 Youth Day	Prog Ldr, Catechists
12/08 Sun	01:00-02:30 PM Catechist Inservice <i>Finding God</i>	Prog Ldr, Pastor, Catechists
12/20 Fri	:00-10:00 PM Catechist Christmas Social	Prog Ldr, Pastor, Catechists
01/04 Sat	09:00 AM-2:00 PM Catechist/Parish Recollection	Pastor, Adult Faith, Liturgy
02/16 Sun	9:30-11:15 AM Catechist Inservice	Prog Ldr, Pastor, Catechists
03/01 Sat	6:00-10:00 PM Catechist Spring Social	All Religious Education Staff
04/05 Sat	09:00 AM-2:00 PM Catechist/Parish Recollection	Pastor, Adult Faith, Liturgy
04/17 Thu	Holy Thursday Adoration Hour (TBA)	Prog Ldr, Catechists
06/08 Sun	01:00-02:30 PM End-of-Year Reflection/Evaluation	All Religious Education Staff

In-Person or Zoom meetings during the week for individual training and preparation.

FEFF Family Calendar 2024-25

SEPTEMBER 2024		MARCH 2025	
09/29 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Family Orientation	03/02 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 4 Session 2
OCTOBER 2024		03/09 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 4 Session 3
10/06 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM First Day of Instruction	03/16 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 4 Session 4
10/13 Sun	No Class (Fall Break Week)	03/23 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 4 Session 5
10/20 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 1 Session 1 Family	03/30 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 5 Session 1 Family
10/27 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 1 Session 2	APRIL 2025	
NOVEMBER 2024		04/06 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 5 Session 2
11/03 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 1 Session 3	04/13 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Holy Week Dramatization
11/10 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 1 Session 4	04/20 Sun	No Class (EASTER)
11/16 Sat	09:00-12:00 PM Conffrmation Retreat	04/26 Sat	9:00-12:00 PM Confirmation Retreat
11/17 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM SAFE ENVIRONMENT	04/27 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 5 Session 3
11/24 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 1 Session 5	04/29 Tue	7:00 PM CONFIRMATION
DECEMBER 2024		MAY 2025	
12/01 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 2 Session 1 Family	05/03 Sat	09:00-12:00 PM 1st Communion Retreat
12/08 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 2 Session 2	05/04 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 5 Session 4
12/15 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 2 Session 3	05/11 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 5 Session 5
12/22 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 2 Session 4	05/17 Sat	09:00-12:00 PM FIRST COMMUNION
JANUARY 2025		05/25 Sun	11:30 AM Mass; 12:30 Potluck/Celebration
01/05 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 2 Session 5	06/01 Sun	11:30 AM Baccalaureate Mass/High School, College, & Technical School Graduates
01/12 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Unit 3 Session 1 Family	JUNE 2025	
01/19 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 3 Session 2	06/29 Sun	11:30 AM Mass; 12:45 Family After Mass Deck Lunch and Fellowship; VBS Preparation
01/26 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 3 Session 3	JULY 2025	
FEBRUARY 2025		07/07 to 07/11	9:00-11:30 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
02/02 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 3 Session 4	AUGUST 2025	
02/08 Sat	09:00-12:00 PM 1st Comm & Conf Retreat	08/24	11:30 AM Mass; 12:45 Family After Mass Deck Lunch and Fellowship; VBS Preparation
02/09 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 3 Session 5		
02/16 Sun	No Class (Spring Break Week)		
02/23 Sun	09:00-11:15 AM Curr. Unit 4 Session 1 Family		

2024-25 Curriculum

Rationale

The curriculum for families and students – both sacramental and “regular” must match the parish’s and church’s new evangelization effort to focus on families. It must also inherently address the five components of the Parish Strategic Plan, which are: (1) Worship and Spirituality, (2) Evangelization, (3) Faith Formation, (4) Service and Outreach, and (4) Stewardship.

Current curricula recently used in FEF have elements of these requirements, but most do not inherently focus on the family. In addition, their Spanish component is either non-existent or weak. One recently used program (during Covid) called Family of Faith does focus on family, but presupposes that the bulk of the curriculum is taught at home by parents, not catechists. While this philosophy may serve the needs of home school families, it would be challenging for families whose children attend public school, and where both parents work.

For these reasons, a new curriculum has been adopted called Finding God, by Loyola Press, which intentionally focuses on family, addresses all the priorities of the Parish Strategic Plan, and has a quality bilingual (English/Spanish) component, where the Spanish component is just as strong as the English. In addition, it is organized into themes that are common across the grades. Concepts are developed in spiraling fashion, such that basic tenets of the Catholic faith are repeated in an age-appropriate manner vertically through the grades.

2024-25 FEF Instruction

Finding God instruction is systematic and consistent across the grades. The typical lesson follows this sequence:

- a. God’s Word (Scripture and Prayer)
- b. Explore
- c. Reflect
- d. Respond
- e. At Home

Two or three pages of the Student Book have a “QR Code” that enables the student, parent, and catechist to access multimedia resources (e.g. video, audio, text) that enables the learner to better understand or extend a concept under study.

The Parent Guide is simple and easy to follow and are both in English and Spanish. Instructions are scripted to ensure fidelity to the truths and concepts being presented. Families with Internet capability can also access additional resources available online. Because of the thematic nature of the curriculum, all students can gather together at the same time with at least one parent or adult for 30-60 minutes for “family catechesis.”

2024-25 FEF Assessment

Assessment is embedded into each unit. This year, assessment will be given priority by assessing each student one-on-one on essential prayers and basic concepts taught in each unit. Results will be filed in an individual “Cumulative Folder” to be passed on to the next catechist in succeeding years.