

January Beyond 50: Strategic Plan

Connect • Engage • Grow

Beyond 50 Plan Goals and Actions 2021

Happy New Year! The Beyond 50 Plan is a continuous action plan for five years. Although it does not have year-end demarcations, we set these action items for 2021 to advance the total five-year plan. These were presented at the November Parish Assembly.



Expand and Increase Support for Existing Parish Ministries

- Complete and fund renovations of classrooms and offices with new furnishings and lighting.
- Fund and install IT and media upgrades in school/administration building, including, but not limited to, televisions and computers.
- Fund and hire Parish Ministries Director (PMD) to coordinate all parish ministries and the many aspects of the Beyond 50 Strategic Plan (As identified in 2021 parish budget).
- Fund the new initiatives of all Nativity of Christ ministries, including, but not limited to, Sunday School, Youth & Young Adults, Adult Education, Mommy & Me, VIPs, Choir, Visitation, GEM, and Greek Folk Dance.
- Complete study for small hall/pavilion and finalize detailed plans.

Develop and Increase Financial Resources

- Enhance and fund stewardship materials to emphasize personal sacrificial giving.
- Improve and fund Beyond 50 Campaign materials.
- Create and fund Planned Giving materials for parishioners to include the church in their estate plans.

Expand and Continue Service to the Poor and Needy

- Continue to fund and support St. Vincent de Paul sack meal programs.
- Continue to fund and support homeless hygiene kits.
- Provide funding for Nativity volunteer shirts.
- Further engage Nativity youth, VIPs, and other parish ministries in philanthropic work.

Initiate New Church Membership Growth Strategies

- Continue Welcome Ministry activities (via Zoom if necessary) and create baskets and materials for new and prospective parishioners.
- Continue Narthex Greeter training, determine the most effective ways to identify visitors, and obtain the necessary materials.
- Continue hand delivery of gift bags to our parishioners who remain isolated during the pandemic.
- Complete campus ADA accessibility study and implementation plan and fund elevator installation and related improvements.
- Finalize detailed plans for enhanced Narthex, new entry, drop-off, and walkway.
- Continue development of the Spread the Word/Hospitality Ministry and obtain initial materials.

Enhance and Improve Internal Operations

- Formalize good governance materials and training of volunteers.
- Hire and fund consultants to train church leaders on leadership, supervision of volunteers, and create job descriptions for volunteer positions.

COVID-19 Related Projects for Potential Consideration

- Research solar panel and other sustainable energy options (Develop and Increase Financial Resources).
- Complete study on the potential for additional covered outdoor activity areas, such as a covered pavilion structure over the back patio (Enhance and Improve Facilities).
- Create and review possible real estate development opportunities to support parish ministries and/or generate financial resources (Expand and Increase Support for Existing Parish Ministries/Develop and Increase Financial Resources).

Enhance and Improve Facilities

- Fund ongoing maintenance projects (e.g., parking lot resealing, garbage area enhancements, etc.).
- Complete plans and fund renovation of the small kitchen.

February Beyond 50: Strategic Plan

Connect • Engage • Grow



Vision

To create a welcoming spiritual and physical environment
to live the Orthodox Christian Faith

Mission

To keep, practice, and proclaim the Orthodox Christian Faith

Key Words

Connect • Engage • Grow

Goals

Initiate New Church Membership Growth Strategies
Expand and Increase Support for Existing Parish Ministries
Expand and Continue Service to the Poor and Needy
Enhance and Improve Internal Operations
Develop and Increase Financial Resources
Enhance and Improve Facilities

Condensed Timeline

2018 & 2019: Planning and Approvals by Parish Assemblies

2019: 2020 Action Items Presented at Parish Assembly (January 2020 Word)

2020: 2020 Action Items Implemented (March, April, September, October, December 2020 Word)

2020: 2021 Action Items Presented at Parish Assembly (January 2021 Word)

2021: 2021 Action Items Initiated

2021: Parish Ministries Director (part-time) hired as of February 1*

Capital Campaign

The Capital Campaign to raise the money to implement the Beyond 50 plan was scheduled to start in March 2020. We were going to personally visit parishioners but then COVID entered our lives. We are grateful that we have had over \$200,000 in cash and in-kind donations to the plan, without doing any fundraising, so we could implement the 2020 actions. We are anticipating talking to each of you, virtually, to discuss your commitment. We will update you next month.

**See Parish Council article for more details. We are so excited that the goals of Church Membership Strategies, Support for Parish Ministries, and Expand Service to the Poor and Needy will now be overseen by a staff member who can help complete the action items that are a major part of the plan.*

February Beyond 50: Ministries Director

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Hello to all from the Parish Council. As we remain apart, we hope and pray that everyone continues to be healthy and safe. And as disappointed as many of us are at the current circumstances, we are pleased to share some exciting news!

Since the inception of the Beyond 50 Strategic Plan, one of the primary goals has been to hire a full-time Parish Ministries Director. The position was part of the 2020 Parish Budget, but was never filled. That goal was recently reaffirmed, and the position formally included in the Parish's 2021 budget, which was approved at the most recent Parish Assembly. Ideally, the candidates would have been Orthodox seminarians, or, at a minimum, individuals with a theological education and/or training. For a variety of reasons, however, that has proven to be more than challenging. As a result, and in order to maintain momentum on this critical role, we have identified an individual from our very own Parish to fill the position on a part-time, interim basis as we continue to consider the best long-term options.

Please welcome Mary Mellas as Nativity of Christ's new Parish Ministries Director!

Please welcome Mary Mellas as Nativity of Christ's new Parish Ministries Director! Mary is married to John Mellas. It's very possible that you've already seen her, either chanting with her husband at evening services, working as a greeter in the Narthex, or serving in other volunteer capacities. Mary has an impressive background in event planning, communications, photography, graphic design, music, and working with youth. We are deeply grateful that Mary has accepted this challenge, and we look forward to working with her as we continue to develop and define this role. Mary will start her new position on February 1. Please join us in welcoming her as she begins this very important role on behalf of our community.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me or Father John with questions and/or comments.

In Christ's love –

Steve Rouman

Parish Council President

March Beyond 50

Connect • Engage • Grow



We are excited! We hope all of you are excited! We are excited that we are expanding and improving to “Connect • Engage • Grow” in our faith. Mary Mellas, our Parish Ministries Director, has already made a difference in her first month. You can see the upgrade in communications that will continue to improve.

What is the strategy for growing our ministries through the Beyond 50 Plan?

We have exhibited in these first 14 months how the Beyond 50 Plan intertwines programs and capital improvements to grow ministries. While implementing our specific action items to improve ministry programs, communications, and inclusion, we also have been implementing capital projects action items that enhance these ministries.

Every Beyond 50 goal has both program and capital project action items to achieve the goal. One cannot happen without the other.

How do I help fund the Beyond 50 Plan?

The Beyond 50 Plan will be funded through the Beyond 50 Capital Campaign. As we have communicated previously, we have had generous donors who have pledged and funded the campaign in the past year, which enabled us to complete program enhancements and capital projects to advance our ministries.

Many parishioners have told us they are able to give more to the campaign due to the amount of money they have NOT spent in the past COVID year, resulting in extra money to help. Many parishioners have reassessed their values and priorities during this COVID year and have become closer to God and their faith through our Church.

We planned to start the campaign a year ago in March 2020. We all know what happened then. Personal interaction with parishioners is important to the success of the campaign. We will start contacting some of you to discuss the Beyond 50 Plan and Campaign by Zoom until we can meet in person again. If you are ready to discuss your commitment, please contact Father or Vicki Kalabokes at vkalabokes@gmail.com. We will be reaching out to all of you one at a time. That will take some time.



The Strategically Minded Parish *Chooses to Act, Not to React*

The Beyond 50 Plan continues to be implemented according to schedule. We have not let COVID stop us from continuing to execute the plan. We remained focused on our goals and have carried out our action plans to achieve those goals.

Under the goals of **Expand and Increase Support for Existing Parish Ministries** and **Enhance and Improve Internal Operations**, we continue to finish renovations with new furnishings. Father John and Rebekah can fulfill their roles in our spiritual and ministerial growth in newly renovated and now newly furnished offices instead of using old tables and furniture.



**FATHER JOHN'S NEW OFFICE,
RENOVATED AND WITH NEW
FURNISHINGS**



REBEKAH'S NEW OFFICE DESK

The kitchen ceiling and cabinets have been installed as part of our **Facilities Improvement**.

Nativity of Christ Parishioners Give Over Half Million Dollars in 2020

Under the goals of **Increasing Financial Resources** and **Increasing New Church Membership Growth Strategies**, we have been successful in starting to get our Parish self-sufficient through the sacrificial giving of our parishioners. **Sacrificial giving** is the act of love to show God how important He is in your life. A **sacrifice** means giving up something you value. An **offering** means giving up something to please someone.



**COMPLETION OF THE KITCHEN CEILING BY
VOLUNTEERS L. TO R. JOHN MELLAS,
GEORGE SOTIRAS, ANDONI KOCOLAS,
DEMETRIUS KOKALIS, NICK KOKALIS AND
GEORGE KOKALIS**

Our parishioners gave \$304,995 in Stewardship and \$206,059 to the Beyond 50 Plan. That is a total of **\$511,054 in 2020**. If we know our parishioners are sacrificing and giving to the Church to cover all our expenses then we will continue to be secure financially. We encourage all parishioners to give sacrificially to show their appreciation to God and the importance of God's House to their spiritual growth. Then we can have fundraisers for the fun of community engagement and to provide monies to cover those unexpected costs, not because we need them.

As we are in the holiest part of our liturgical year, now is the time to think about your sacrificial thanks to God both through Stewardship and the Beyond 50 Plan.

2020 January WORD



NATIVITY OF CHRIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

BEYOND 50

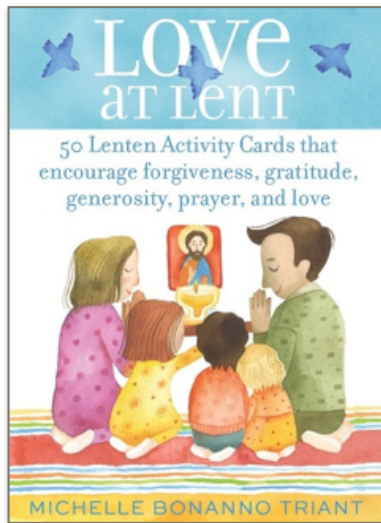
Beyond 50 Plan Continues to Meet Its Goals and More!

Goal: Increase Help to the Poor and Needy.

Ministry Lead: Community Outreach Ministry

The **Sack Meals Project** for St. Vincent de Paul have been helping homeless people for over a year now! We have received many thank you notes from those we are helping. This is so gratifying as Orthodox Christians to be able to assist in this way. We have made over 3,000 meals!

The **Lenten Community Outreach Project** provided furnishings and basic necessities for a family Nativity adopted that is transitioning from homelessness. The family was composed of a mother and her two young sons. The Nativity community met the true meaning of Lent by buying over 68 items on the housing list, from bedding to lamps to kitchen supplies, and went to the new apartment to set it up on Saturday, April 17. In addition \$2,000 plus additional monies were donated for large furnishing items.



Goal: Expand and Support Parish Ministries.

The hiring of the **Parish Ministries Director, Mary Mellas**, has already shown why it was necessary. Hopefully, you have noticed the coordination of the Parish Ministries, the streamlining of communications with weekly Ministries Updates and Youth Activities Updates using Constant Contact and the consolidation of announcements of the services so everyone is clear when they are. In addition, the notice for services is very clear on the accessible service books, the meaning of the current service, and how to light a candle virtually. Ministry leaders now have assistance in all aspects of their ministries and can spend time on the big picture. Mary is standardizing all graphics and communications of the church and is creating logos and standards for each ministry. She also helps the ministry develop fliers that are consistent and professional.

Every family with children in the Parish received 50 cards for family Lenten activities (**Love at Lent**) to incorporate the true meaning of Lent into their daily Lenten activities.

Goal: New Church Membership Growth Strategies:

Ministry Lead: Welcoming Ministry

The **Welcoming Ministry** has, indeed, been very welcoming. Not only have they held virtual receptions, but they have also been involved in helping new Orthodox Christians who have now or will be baptized/chrismated into our faith become active in our Parish. Five new Parishioners became Orthodox Christians in April!

Goal: Enhance and Improve Facilities

The sanitary, beautiful, long-lasting **stainless steel countertops** have been installed in the main kitchen!



Christos Anesti!

**Beyond 50 Plan has accomplished So much!
(BUT we still have so much to do!)**

Every month, we tell you how the Beyond 50 Plan is moving forward and how we have been able to accomplish many of the action items of the goals. Now, we need serious contributions of time and donations from parishioners to continue this momentum. We can't continue to make the key strides of the plan without major personal and financial support from the community.

For us...

to sustain all the great programs for the poor and needy that we have been successfully implementing for 16 months, **WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!**

to continue to support, enhance, expand, and improve the ministries, **WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!**

to increase the hours of the Parish Ministries Director so she can attend and also direct leadership development training for our volunteers as well as oversee all the ministries, **WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!**

to continue making the physical and IT improvements to enhance our ministries, **WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!**

to continue making capital improvements to enhance membership growth and improve internal operations, **WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!**



NATIVITY OF CHRIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

BEYOND 50

Do not wait for us to come to you, please contact Father Kocolas to pledge your sacrificial amount so the Nativity of Christ will be able to grow in the next four years and beyond. We have pledge sheets in the Church Office.

You can make a one-time pledge and payment or spread it out over the four years left of this Beyond 50 Plan.

A pledge of \$1,000,000 could be spread to \$250,000 a year.

A pledge of \$400,000, could be spread to \$100,000 a year.

A pledge of \$200,000 could be spread to \$50,000 a year.

A pledge of \$100,000 could be spread to \$25,000 a year.

A pledge of \$80,000 could be spread to \$20,000 a year.

A pledge of \$40,000 could be spread to \$10,000 a year.

A pledge of \$10,000 could be spread to \$2,500 a year.

Please discuss with your family and contact Father John for more information.

Beyond 50 Plan Results Enforces Purpose of Plan

As you may have seen over the first year and a half of the five-year Beyond 50 Plan, the plan keeps us focused on our priorities and does not let us drift off into random projects. Any great new ideas can be addressed in the next five-year plan for 2025-2029. Right now, we need to stay focused on what the Parish planned to accomplish in these five years, and we have been successful in doing that.

This will be my last Word article addressing the Beyond 50 Plan, as God has a different path for me right now. Bringing my expertise in nonprofit management, administration, fundraising, and accounting to help the Church has been a highlight of my life and it has been gratifying to watch the positive results.

Unfortunately, I will not be able to meet with every parishioner one-on-one to discuss their involvement with the plan; something I planned to do starting March 2020, with a team of trained parishioners, that was initially interrupted by COVID.

The Beyond 50 Plan is part of my psyche. It is so exciting that we were able to develop such a fantastic plan. What we did was different than normal plans, as we combined ministry goals with the physical facility improvements that would help that ministry. We did not separate the ministry from the tools and environment it needed to succeed. This may have confused many of you but I hope now you have seen how it works to enhance the ministries, by giving them the materials, IT, and physical facility improvements they need.

We need to make you aware of a very important fact: While we are proud of what we have accomplished thus far in improving ministries, feeding the poor and needy, and welcoming new parishioners to our community, we have not spent one dollar on improving the actual Church where we worship Jesus Christ. That is a very important part of the plan, and we need to prioritize improving God's House to make it more welcoming, improving religious services and processions, enhancing the personal needs of parishioners and guests, and making it more functional for Sacraments.

Our family has given sacrificially for the Beyond 50 Plan. Please join us in supporting the plan. Before someone contacts you to give through the Beyond 50 campaign, please discuss the most you can give with you family. It will be for the assurance that the Church will be here to serve our next generations, as it has served us.

With Love in Christ,

Vicki Kalabokes



September Beyond 50

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For the past year and a half our classrooms have been rarely used due to the pandemic, but we took advantage of this time through the goals and funds of the Beyond 50 Plan. Old, stained carpet was replaced with luxury vinyl; the walls all received a fresh coat of paint; bright, blue chairs were purchased for the littlest students, and, most recently, televisions were purchased and installed in each classroom to enable teachers to strengthen their lesson plans through diversified teaching mediums.

All these renovation efforts of the Beyond 50 Plan came to life on August 15 as we celebrated the Dormition of the Theotokos and resumed in-person Sunday School. Our energetic teachers and joyful students enjoyed a clean, safe, and welcoming classroom environment to learn and grow in our Orthodox faith. It was truly a fulfillment of the vision and mission of our Beyond 50 Plan that we continue to implement in 2021!

As we continue to pray for the health of Vicki Kalabokes, I pray we are also able to share her enthusiasm in supporting the goals and objectives of the Beyond 50 Plan. Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, may we connect, engage, and grow as a community!

In Christ,
Fr. John



October Beyond 50

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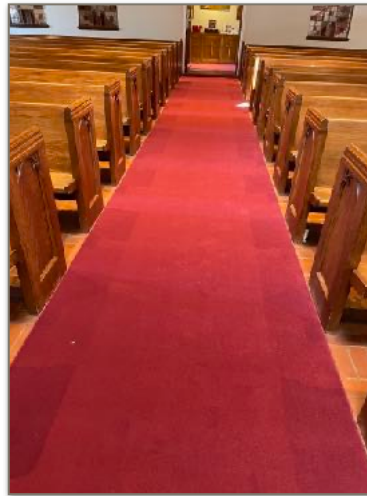


As we pursue our Beyond 50 Plan, we continue to see improvements and enhancements to both our ministries and facilities. As very evident from Fr. John's *Parish Profile: A Five-Year Review*, every single component of our facilities have received tremendous renovations and enhancements. The area receiving the least amount of attention so far has been our place of worship. Through the donations of the Beyond 50 Plan, new carpets were installed this month, which truly enrich the space where we gather in to worship our Lord. We pray this is the first of many enhancements to God's house.

BEFORE



AFTER



November Beyond 50: Strategic Plan

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On Tuesday, October 19 we hosted Thomaida Hudanish, the Metropolis of San Francisco's Missions & Evangelism Director, for a special presentation on sharing our faith in the world today. She answered the question "What are some practical tips for sharing our faith?"

- Evangelism happens through building trusting relationships. People who get to know us will see that the way we live is different from the rest of the world.
- It should come from gratefulness and humility. We don't share our faith to boost attendance numbers, we share it because we are grateful for our own relationship with Christ, and want others to know Him as well.
- You don't need to know all the answers or be a theology expert. People want to hear your story, about your personal journey to faith.
- Acts of service can be evangelism. Is your neighbor sick? Offer to pray with them, bring them a meal, or invite them to Church.

- We are here to offer support, but Christ is ultimately the one who changes a person's heart. You might just be one small step on a person's journey to faith.
- Wait for people to ask you questions. Don't overwhelm them with information. There will be a proper time and place.

Thomaida encouraged each of us to participate in the following exercise to strengthen our own convictions in the faith:

- Write down three images that come to mind in relation to your faith.
- Write down three things that people outside of the Orthodox Church know about your faith.
- Write down three things that you feel that only people who are Orthodox know, understand, or feel.
- Write out your story, why you're Orthodox. This will give you more confidence when sharing your faith even if you don't share every detail.



December Beyond 50

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Upgrades

As part of the Beyond 50 action plan to enhance and improve facilities, the upstairs workroom and downstairs small kitchen had upgrades this fall. New cabinets and new appliances will serve the parish for many years to come.

BEFORE



AFTER

