

# *the* Beacon of Hope: Light it Up!

## The Vision Planning Process for the parishes of St. Gabriel and St. Bridget

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Dear Parishioners,

As most know, our Linked Parishes of St. Gabriel and St. Bridget began a process of vision planning last winter. We teamed up with the Architectural Firm of Chameleon Architecture who helped facilitate and guide us through this process. From the perspective of many, especially that of the parishioner led Collaboration Team, this process has been energizing and successful thus far. Many parishioners offered a great deal of time, thought, insight, and prayer that has provided the Collaboration Team with the substance from which a visionary plan can be made.

On the next page, you are invited to look at a pared down close-to-final draft of what will be the main focus of all activity and ministry within the shared life of our two parishes for the next five years. While it all needs deeper reflection, explanation and measurements for success, most of it should come as no surprise. This reflects what God is asking us to do as was articulated through parishioner engagement during this process. The Collaboration Team enthusiastically believes that working this plan will invite wider parishioner engagement, promote growth, and (most importantly), it will truly set up our two parishes in such a way that we will be much more outwardly focused – we will become *the* Beacon of Hope within our counties. Please spend some time looking over our two goals and the numerous objectives/tasks associated with each. We invite any questions, comments and concerns you might have. We especially invite and hope you will talk about it with other parishioners and share it with others outside our parishes. Our Lord needs YOU to help 'light it up!'

Specifically regarding St. Gabriel, there has been much time spent on the question of the 1926 building (i.e. the gym/old school), and by *much time*, it is acknowledged that 20-years has been spent on this question. Although, not all that time has been spent on the 1926 building alone. In fact, over the last 20-years, other needs have been prioritized: demolition of Annunciation Hall, Parish Office relocation/renovation, the 2001 school addition, and most recently the church renovation and HVAC addition. However, in 1997 a master plan for facilities was conducted for St. Gabriel, and it was concluded by the parish that the 1926 building should be torn down and replaced. The same was concluded again in 2011 during a feasibility study for the Renewing the Heart of St. Gabriel Campaign. Throughout these plans/studies and all the years in-between, it is crystal clear that there exists a deep pride and love for all the 1926 building has been for St. Gabriel Parish and its school. This current Beacon of Hope Planning Process has certainly further confirmed that abiding pride and love. However, the Collaboration Team has heard both the past and current wisdom as it regards the 1926 building. The building itself is no longer effectively enhancing the mission of our school. Nor is it able to offer our parish community a viable space in which we can gather as a parish and enjoy socially the Grace of being a part of Christ's Body. Based on past planning processes, the ongoing costs of upkeep, the immense costs of future renovation, and *the current voice of the parish once again expressed in this planning process*, the Collaboration Team understands and concludes that the 1926 building is a liability to our mission of St. Gabriel Parish and its school. The time has come to begin anew.

It is our team's goal to work with Chameleon Architecture in providing them with mission-based suggestions provided by the parish throughout this process in order to dream up a building design that at once **inspires, enhances our parishes' mission, and memorializes the deep love and pride for our old school building.**

Once we have finally drafted a 5-year plan and an electronic design of what a new school addition/community space could look like, we will formally roll it out. Please be on the lookout for further communication when this will happen over the next couple of months. In the meantime, please continue to keep the Collaboration Team in Prayer.

Sincerely,

The Collaboration Team

Fr. Dustin Boehm, Doug Biehl, Marvin Geisting, Jane Jolliff, Josh Marszalek, Kathy Ramey, Tony Talbert, and Barb White