



ST. JOHN & SYLVIA OUR LADY OF DIVINE MERCY SHRINE

2023 – 2029 STRATEGIC PLAN



“Go up into the Country: bring timber, build the house that I May take
pleasure in it and receive my glory, says the LORD.”

Book of Haggai 1: 8



Photo Album



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Book of Haggai 1: 8



Acr onyms

- PPC – Parish Pastoral Council
- DC – Development Committee
- PFC- Parish Finance Council
- SCC- Small Christian Community
- PW D- People Living with Disabilities
- CMA- Catholic Men Association
- SW OT –Strengths, W eaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Foreword from the Parish Priest

It is my great joy and honour to present to you this six-year Strategic Plan 2023-2029. Herein lies the dream and vision of our Shrine. I sincerely thank the Parish community for daring to dream of the future that we desire for our Parish and Shrine. The feedback we received from parishioners, Small Christian Communities, Church/Devotional Groups & Associations and Outstations was so rich in content and vision. Special thanks to the Strategic Plan Committee that collated these views and grouped them under five SMART objectives: Spiritual Growth Initiatives, Relevant Infrastructure to serve our needs, Promotion of the Family and Religious Vocations, Children & Youth Empowerment, and Active Participation of Men in our Parish. In these objectives and goals, the Acacia Community has defined her unique identity as both a Parish and a Shrine.

The more important task of implementing these objectives and goals now begins. By God's own working, the launch of this Strategic Plan coincides with the Pope's initiative to promote a lived experience of the Synodal Church resting on the three pillars of Communion, Participation and Mission. In union with the Universal Church, we commit to promote a more inclusive community, embrace a collaborative approach to our ministry and nurture our baptismal call to be "sent out" in the encounter of our brothers and sisters. Dear Acacia Family, I invite us to own this Strategic Plan from the onset, so that together we may witness to the realization of this dream and vision. Let us be courageous to leave the safety of the shore, venture into the deep sea of God's unfathomable love (Luke 5:4), confident in God's promise that God goes before us (Deut. 31:8). May Our Lady of Divine Mercy intercede for all pilgrims to this Shrine!



Yours in Christ,
Fr. Ben Asuka,
Parish Priest
Sts. John & Sylvia
Parish, our Lady of
Divine Mercy Shrine

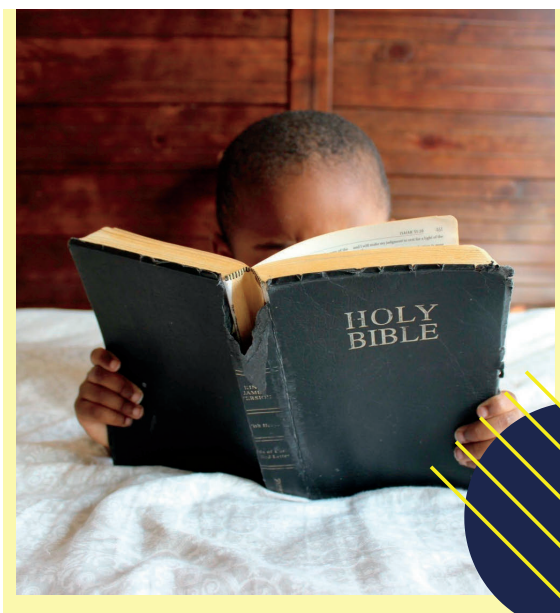
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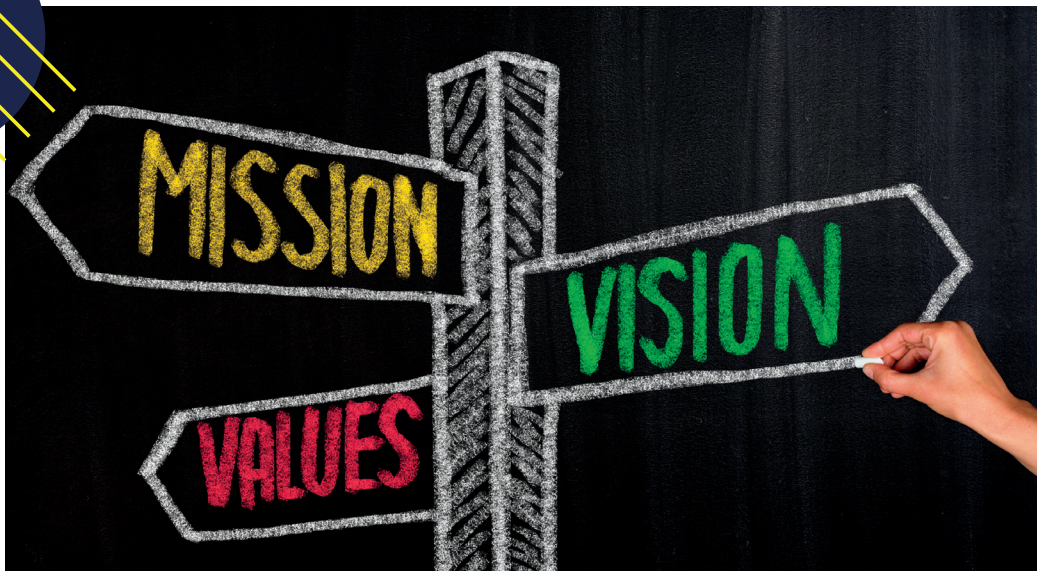
In the year 2013, the family of the late John Kariuki, filled with the desire to support God's work, donated 2 acres of Land to the then St. Monica Noonkopir Parish. At the time, St. Monica was struggling with congestion due to the population explosion within Kitengela. An idea was then hatched to build another church on the donated land: a decision that had the full support of the family. This was the first step towards the beautiful Journey of St. John & Sylvia Parish.

The groundbreaking ceremony and Mass were conducted on 8th February 2015 and presided over by the then SMA Superior Father Thaddeus. Through the concerted efforts of the parishioners and friends within and without, the construction of the House of the Lord kicked off and was concluded with the Consecration of the Church on 18th July 2021 by his Eminence John Cardinal Njue, Archbishop Emeritus of the Archdiocese of Nairobi in the presence of His Lordship the Bishop of the Diocese of Ngong, Right Reverend Bishop John Oballa Owaa. To crown the day, Sts. John & Sylvia Church was dedicated as a Parish and the Shrine of Divine Mercy under the leadership of Rt. Rev. Father Ben Asuka. The Parish consists of St. Oscar Matali, St. Cecilia Enkasiti and Sts. John & Sylvia Outstations.

The parish has continued to grow in leaps and bounds both in faith and population. Being a young parish, the journey is still long as the leadership seeks to acquire the necessary facilities and resources to serve its faithful. This then requires a concrete plan in order to channel the scarce resources to prioritize programs that meet the Parishioners' needs in the short and long term. It is for this reason that the Parish priest put together a small team of Parishioners to steer the process that would culminate in a six-year strategic plan with the ultimate goal of delivering a great place of peace and worship for all people from all walks of life.

In preparing this strategic plan, the team sought the views of all stakeholders in the Parish through the various groups and individuals. Questionnaires were shared and responses were provided. Discussions were held with various groups as well as individuals. The team also reviewed the Diocese of Ngong's mission and vision statements as well as values in order to ensure that this strategic plan is aligned with the service delivery areas of the Diocese





Chapter 1 Strategic Direction



A community of prayer and fulfilled life witnessing the infinite love and mercy of God.



Transforming lives through evangelization, spiritual renewal and integral human Development.



- Integrity: we strive to uphold honesty and strong moral principles in our lives and service to humanity

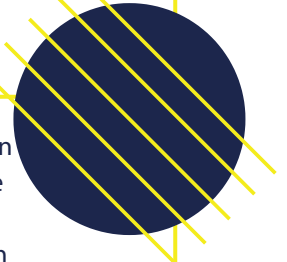


- Inclusion: We are dedicated to building a community that embraces diversity.
- Collaboration: We believe in partnering with like-minded individuals, groups, or institutions in transforming lives
- Professionalism: We commit to conducting the affairs of the church with competence and dignity.
- Care for the planet: We will strive to conserve our environment
- Compassion: we believe in being humane in our service to the community

- Provide a platform for ongoing faith formation
- Create an enabling environment for nurturing a variety of vocations in life
- Acquire and enhance the necessary infrastructure to provide service to humanity



Chapter 2 Situation Analysis

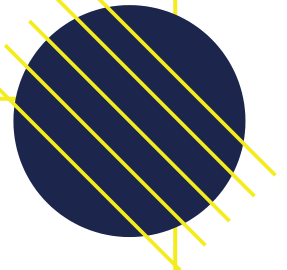


In the quest to put in place a responsive strategy, it was important for the Parish to scan both the internal and external environment to identify the strengths to leverage on, the opportunities to maximize on, the weaknesses to improve on and the threats to mitigate. The Parishioners were extensively engaged as individuals and groups through questionnaires, interviews and discussions. The responses were very helpful in carrying out this exercise. These are outlined below:



- Lack of essential amenities in the outstations (electricity, internet).
 - Little understanding and knowledge of the Catholic faith, structure, and governance
 - Use of many new songs by the choir unknown to the Parishioners and sometimes very loud accompaniments
 - Over-reliance on volunteers and communication creates a lack of continuity.
 - Overreliance on the goodwill of the parishioners in technical services and supplies may compromise quality
 - Gender imbalance in participation and leadership in SCCs and other groups
 - Lack of policy and regulations in Church groups membership and leadership
 - Lack of enough priests (clergy)
 - Low dissemination of information on the existence of the online church platforms
 - Low quality of online content
 - Lack of enforcement of SCCs' 7 steps of Bible sharing
 - Insufficient information and updates on the Church website
 - Unhealthy competition between the men and women in the church
 - Parishioners' burnout in contributions
 - leaders/members dominating SCC fellowship sessions and sometimes imposing their own interpretations
- Existence of an active liturgical group
 - Presence of SCCs' 7 steps of Bible sharing
 - Good music instruments and motivated choir
 - Availability of water (parish borehole)
 - Existing men's and women's caucus
 - Existence of a residential association that ensures controlled Development in the area
 - Highly skilled and experienced parishioners in various professional fields
 - Committed and focused Priests
 - Existing Church groups
 - Existing programs
 - Supportive parishioners
 - The diverse and cosmopolitan parish community

Chapter 2 Situation Analysis



- A community yearning for God
- Adequate available land for purchase and goodwill of the seller and neighborhood
- Income-generating opportunities towards self-sustainability
- Strengthening of the family unit
- Existence of website and social media Church accounts in evangelization
- Partnering and networking with other existing institutions, media, caucuses, and individuals
- Rapid population growth in Kitengela
- Job creation with the growth of the Parish and Shrine
- Presence of other Churches in the neighborhood
- A significant youthful population



- Negative influence from the Protestant Churches, Sects and social media
- Upcoming structures and facilities in the neighborhood that could threaten the serenity of the shrine's environment
- Domestic animals from the nomadic community destroying the fence and the trees
- Parishioners' and neighboring communities' over-dependence on the church for financial assistance
- Inability to raise required resources in time
- Adverse changes in the macroeconomic variables
- Negative effects of climate change



Strategic Interventions

Based on the results of the SWOT analysis the Parish classified their needs into five key objectives below:



- Strengthen relevant programs for spiritual growth
- To expand the infrastructure for the implementation of an enhanced masterplan
- Promote family values and inclusion of diverse vocations
- To empower the youth through holistic programs
- To enhance Men's active participation in the Church

The strategic objectives cut across all the three goals outlined in chapter 1. In crafting these strategic objectives, the Parish has made a deliberate effort to deliver a holistic strategic plan that provides diversity and embraces technology as a modern way of evangelization. The church recognizes the family as the greatest pillar in faith and as such strategic components that address all groups, age and gender have been taken into consideration. This strategic framework provides input for annual operational plans. It is expected that the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) shall drive the annual operational plans that feed into the strategic plan by order of prioritization



Strategic component	Description	Timeline	Responsibility	Indicators
Objective 1	Strengthen relevant programs for spiritual growth.			
Enhance catechesis	Continuous catechism/follow up on sacraments and refresher programs for adults/couples, church groups, embrace virtual classes, visits to SCCs by Priests et al	2023-2029	Priests and Catechists	Number of parishioners who have received various sacraments, attendance and participation in SCCs, and faith activities
Increase liturgical resources	Recruit additional catechists, facilitate their training, develop/acquire liturgical materials	2023-2026	Parish Priest/PPC	Number of catechists employed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Certification acquired ● List of materials in use ● Catechism curriculum in place
Strengthening spiritual sessions in various groups	Implement the existing SCC 7-step guideline, Develop standard operating procedures/guidelines for other church groups, facilitate formation of new devotional groups, Novenas Scheduled trainings	2023-2024	Priests, Catechists & Parish Pastoral Council, Chairs of the Church groups and SCCs	Number of SOPs developed, Number of SCCs implementing the 7-step guideline, Number of Trainings, Number of new devotional groups and Novenas organized
Improve participation during liturgical celebration	Install smart screens, sufficient pamphlets with songs, prayers and readings, engage skilled communication personnel, orientation of	2023-2025	Liturgy Chair and PPC, Parish Choir Chair	Number of installed screens, Sufficient pamphlets, a vibrant communication personnel proportion of Parishioners participating actively in liturgical celebrations

	Parishioners on new songs			
Enrich targeted thematic faith formations	Facilitate seminars, retreats, recollections, workshops,	2023-2029	Parish Priest/Catechist, Chairs of Church groups	Number of retreats, recollections and other programs for the Shrine
Community Outreach & evangelization	-promote acts of mercy (Visits to children's homes, home for the elderly, prisons etc) -Provide bursary to needy families through the Kuza Elimu Fund -	2023-2029	PPC	#Of children receiving bursaries # No of children's homes prisons, home for the elderly, etc visited
Objective 2	To expand the infrastructure for the implementation of an enhanced masterplan			
Acquisition of additional space	Procure additional 4 acres of land through fundraisers	2023-2029	PPC, PFC, DC	Purchase agreement and Title deed
Develop a comprehensive master plan	Engage all the relevant professionals	2023-2024	PPC, DC committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of meetings conducted with the professionals ● Number of professionals engaged ● approved comprehensive master plan
Put in a place a prayer garden	Engage all relevant professionals to come up with the layout, install the stations of the way of the cross, construct the grottos, concrete benches and fountain, landscaping	2023-2029 Let's kindly review this: I doubt if this is achievable by 2026)	Priest, PPC, DC, Liturgy Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A comprehensive layout ● A functional prayer garden
Complete the Children & Youth Centre	Procure appropriate furniture and equipment suitable for children and	2023-2024	PPC, PFC & DC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Functional Offices ● Child and youth friendly facilities)

	youths as well as offices, establish a canteen			
Establish an outstation at Kimalat	Construct a semi-permanent prayer house	2023-2029	PPC, Chair Enkasiti	Functional prayer house
Improvement of Matali outstation	Replacement of benches, improved toilets and expansion of the church, provision of a basic solar solution	2023-2029	PPC, Chair Matali Acacia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refurbished furniture ● Expanded church ● Functional solar system
Construct a multipurpose parking	Ground layout, construction and landscaping	2024-2029	PPC, PFC & DC	Functional parking in use
Completion of the St J&S Church	Procure pews for the first floor, Procure and install acoustic material, Install solar power, construct washrooms for PWDs, install additional confession boxes	2023-2029	PPC, PFC & DC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of pews in use ● Reduced number of complaints on echoes ● Functional washrooms
Pastoral Care of the Stony Athi Outstation	Transfer of pastoral care of this community from Kisaju to Sts. John & Sylvia parish	2023	Priests, Acacia & Kisaju PPCs & Stony Athi city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approval from the Diocese ● Incorporation of Stony Athi outstation into the STs. John & Sylvia Parish PPC Regular pastoral activities
Objective 3	Promote family values and inclusion of diverse vocations			
Pastoral programs	SCCs, Family days, targeted retreats and recollections	2023-2029	Parish priest, PPC	Number of pastoral programs Number of families participating
Marriage	promote couples for Christ devotion groups, marriage counseling, seminars, dating.	2023-2029	Parish priest, PPC	Number of couples participating Number of programs implemented

	Promote programs that encourage Christian values in bringing up children promote positive use of technology in parenting organize seminars/talks on parenting styles Set up a Family-life Commission	2023-2029	PPC & Family-Life Commission	Number of programs implemented Functional Family Life Commission
Promotion of Priestly & Religious Vocations	(Sensitize & Encourage vocations to priestly & Religious Life Set up a vocations group	2023-2029	Parish priest, Sisters and Vocations Group	Number of participants interested/enrolled in these vocations Functional Vocations Group
Inclusivity	Incorporate single parents/widows/widowers/the divorced and people living with disabilities in church leadership and programs Promote a support group for PWD's and their caregivers	2023-2029	Parish priest, PPC	Number of programs implemented Number of PWDs included in church leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A support group for singles, widows & widowers • Support groups for PWDs and caregivers
Objective 4	To empower the youth through holistic programs			
Pastoral programs for the spiritual growth of the youths	Youth mass, youth catechism, youth choir, targeted recollections & retreats Community service	2023-2029	Priests, Youth Coordinators and PPC	Number of youths involved Number of programs implemented
Psychosocial programs	Sporting activities, youth	2023-2029	Youth Coordinator	Number of youths involved Number of programs implemented

	forums/seminars, counseling, exchange programs, rites of passage, relationships and dating		s and PPC	
Career and Economic DC	Mentorship, career advice, internship/employment opportunities, soft vocational skills transfer, innovation hub	2023-2029	Youth Coordinators and PPC	Number of youths involved Number of programs implemented
Objective 5	To enhance Men's active participation in the Church			
Pastoral programs	Dedicated day for men to animate mass, targeted recollections & retreats, Establishment of Parish CMA	2023-2029	Parish Priest and Men council	Number of men involved Number of programs implemented Functional Parish CMA
Psychosocial programs	Sporting activities, Men caucus/seminars, counseling/therapy programs (mental health), regular medical checkups.	2023-2029	Men council	Number of men involved Number of programs implemented
Financial empowerment	Financial literacy, mentorship, soft skills transfer, networking (employment/business)	2023-2029	Men council	Number of men involved Number of programs implemented

Chapter 4: Monitoring & Evaluation

The strategy formulated is for a period of six years. The success of this strategic plan can only be guaranteed if regular monitoring and evaluation are carried out in order to track the milestones achieved periodically.



- The Parish Pastoral council under the leadership of the Parish priest bears the overall responsibility of implementing the strategy. They have to ensure that milestones are tracked at all times and corrective measures are put in place to address any delays or obstacles. The PPC has to ensure that each strategic component has been assigned to a group or individual from whom they should receive regular implementation reports.



- The PPC shall conduct a review of the operational plans semiannually. During these reviews PPC will receive feedback on progress made in the implementation of the operation plans, highlight any challenges faced, and any support required on the implementation of the plans. These reviews will also inform the operational plan for the following year.
- The outcomes of such reviews shall also be shared with the parishioners as a way of promoting accountability to the stakeholders.
- The strategic monitoring tool outlined below shall be used to analyze the implementation of the operational plans.

strategic component	Activity	OUTPUT		Timeline	Responsible	comments	support required
		Expected	Actual				
functional Youth Centre	Acquisition of chairs.	100	20	Dec 2022	Development	delayed contribution	more funding

1.1. Risks and mitigation

1.1.1. Assumptions



- The Parish will continue enjoying the goodwill of the Parishioners
- The existing conducive County by laws will continue
- Population explosion causing unforeseen strain

Chapter 1: Financing the Strategy

1.1.1. Assumptions



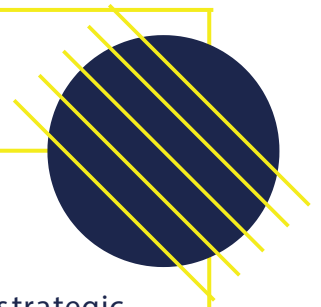
The strategic planning committee recognizes that this is a very ambitious strategy and places a huge responsibility on the PPC to mobilize resources for effective implementation. However, the parish enjoys good will from parishioners, friends and partners. Hence opportunities for funds mobilization are numerous.

It is expected that an annual budget will be prepared together with the Annual operational plans. The Finance and DC committees will play very critical roles in ensuring that the strategy is costed especially for strategic objective 2 where huge capital investment is required.

In the past, various strategies have been employed successfully to raise funding from parishioners and partners. We expect that the following will be enhanced in order to source the required funds:

- Conduct targeted fundraisers for annually prioritized projects
- Appeal for financial support from Parishioners through pledges
- Identify potential partners and develop funding proposals
- Seek partnerships with existing Parish suppliers through their corporate social responsibilities
- Promote adopt-a-project strategy by various groups/individuals
- Invite volunteers /probono services from professionals/organizations in delivering certain training, workshops, or other required services towards the implementation of the strategy
- Promote donations in kind based on an established list of items needed in setting up facilities or service delivery
- Consider short-term and long-term income-generating activities that can sustain the operational costs of the Parish as approved by the PPC

Chapter 6: Conclusion



“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” Proverbs 29:18. This strategic plan provides a road map to achieve the vision desired by the Community of St. John & Sylvia Parish. It is a beautiful and appealing strategic plan.

However as stated by Winston Churchill, “However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.” Without monitoring the plan, it will remain just that; a plan. This strategic plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains true to the vision.

The PPC will play a very key role in ensuring that this strategic plan is translated into yearly operational plans for each of the outstations. The same will be cascaded to the various church groups as well as the small Christian communities. It is important that the PPC owns the strategy and walks the journey with the Parishioners.

Taking note that strategic plans are more often seen as strange and complex documents, the strategic team will be at hand to support the dissemination and rollout of the strategy in the first six months. The team will support the Outstations in prioritizing the strategies and translating the same to the annual operational plans. The team will gradually transfer content ownership to the PPC and the leadership of the outstations for smooth implementation. All leaders and parishioners are expected to understand what is expected of them and the role they should play. The PPC is expected to embrace a strong performance management culture which will guarantee the success of this strategic plan.

Lastly, timely implementation, monitoring, and reporting are very critical for the success of this plan.



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