

Benefits of Parish Strategic Planning

1. Forces parish to focus on its mission
2. Answers the question: "What do we wish to *become*?"
3. Identifies a *preferred future* for the parish
4. Builds community consensus
5. Identifies long term trends and indicators of parish activities and performance
6. Mobilizes volunteers
7. Produces a written plan for the five-year development of the parish with agreed-upon goals and measurable objectives
8. Improves stewardship giving
9. Often documents and substantiates necessary capital improvements
10. Consultant brings critical objectivity and professionalism to the process
11. Transforms parish thinking and decision making from "reactive" to "proactive"
12. Analyzes parish activities, priorities, funding methodologies in light of biblical-patristic teaching.

The Services of Stewardship Advocates

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“Well done good and faithful servant.”

The Parish Strategic Plan



Stewardship Advocates

Helping Parishes to Fulfill Their Mission



Fr. Anthony Scott is a priest of 32 years' experience including 18 years of full-time national and international fund raising experience in the Orthodox milieu. He is professionally trained in all aspects of *nonprofit institutional development*, having completed over 30 courses of study. In the past six years he served 75 Orthodox institutions in all jurisdictions—metropolises, dioceses, parishes, seminaries, missions, schools, organizations, humanitarian agencies, numerous SCOBA-sponsored charities, foundations, trusts, etc.

He is the editor of Good and Faithful Servant: Stewardship in the Orthodox Church, published by SVS Press in 2003. He is the publisher of "Orthodox Philanthropy", an occasional newsletter on best practices of Orthodox parish development and fund raising.

Fr. Anthony holds an bachelor's degree in English Literature from the University of California at Berkeley and a Master of Divinity degree from St. Vladimir's Seminary where he also served as Chief Advancement Officer for 12 years. During that time he directed a \$22 million capital campaign. All told, Fr. Scott has raised \$80-\$90 million in the Church.

He is the author of numerous articles on stewardship, strategic planning, board development, annual giving, etc. The story of his pilgrimage into Orthodoxy was published by Light and Life Press in the book, Journeys to Orthodoxy, ed. Thomas Doulis.



Parish Strategic Planning

When we have not identified a *preferred future* then we are handed a default future—not of our own choosing and often highly undesirable. Yet how many parishes actually pause to consider where they have been, where they are going and how they will get there? The beleaguered parish priest, overwhelmed with daily tasks and having received no training at seminary in this essential tool of *nonprofit institutional development* strives his best just to keep the parish moving forward and spiritually developing. Very few laity have a keen awareness of this process nor its application in the highly complex environment of parish life.

The Service

- 1) The Strategic Planning Process takes four to six months to complete. The Parish Strategic Planning Steering Committee receives notebooks with documentation specifying the tasks, calendar, objectives, etc., relative to the process.
- 2) Well before the visit of the consultant, he is mailed all documentation relating to parish activity—budgets, a description of activities and programs, parish council minutes, any previous planning documentation, stewardship data, etc. The consultant carefully reviews this material before coming to the parish.
- 3) Parish input is received through personal interviews, focus groups and a mailed questionnaire.
- 4) The consultant comes to the parish every month for 2-3 days to facilitate various activities, monitor progress and meet with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. When the consultant is not on site, he is available by phone, fax and email.
- 5) A full review is conducted of parish activities, priorities, values, trends, staffing, information management, communications, financing, ministries, programs and possible capital needs.

- 6) The consultant returns to his office to write the draft of the strategic plan, based on the information received. He returns to the parish to present the draft of the plan for full review by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Parish Council. The report summarizes the findings, identifies trends, parish challenges, parish strengths and offers specific recommendations on how to better fulfill the mission of the parish. The consultant receives the input of the review and makes any necessary changes to the Strategic Plan.
- 7) For a period of 30 days following the delivery of the final Strategic Plan the consultant is available for phone, fax and email support to assist with implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the cost of the service?

A: The service is offered at a flat rate, plus expenses. Expenses typically include, air travel, accommodations, car rental, meals, printing, etc. Contact Fr. Anthony for a written proposal.

Q: How do we convince decision makers in the community that this is necessary?

A: Invite Fr. Anthony to present the service to the leadership of the parish or the entire parish. There is no fee or cost for the visit. Fr. Anthony introduces himself, makes a brief PowerPoint presentation, provides referrals if requested and answers questions. It is respectfully requested that the meeting has a single purpose agenda.

Q: What are the responsibilities of the parish?

A: Recruit a capable Strategic Planning Steering Committee, complete all tasks on schedule, provide secretarial support to the committee and to the consultant for communications, minutes, reports, etc.