



Nativity

L i g h t i n g t h e W a y

Nativity Parish Technology Plan 2014-2017

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Introduction

Parish Mission Statement

We, the people of Nativity Parish, are called by God to be a welcoming community by loving unconditionally as Jesus did. We will accomplish this Mission by:

- building unity within our diversity;
- being challenged by the Word and nourished by the Eucharist;
- educating ourselves and others in the ways of the Gospel;
- serving, as Jesus did, our family, friends, enemies and strangers;
- creating justice within our community and the world at large.

Technology Vision

Technology is an important part of the future success of our Parish. Technology should help to achieve the mission of the parish while increasing the efficiency of everyday tasks. To achieve these goals staff must become familiar with them and utilize them in their daily work as much as possible

Background Information

Current Status of Technology

Over the last few years significant work has been done to document the technology in the Parish Office and assessing the needs of the parish staff. Work has been done to streamline various systems, and processes, as well as implementing new technologies such as Google Email and Docs.

How the Technology Plan was Created

- January 2014 - Surveys were distributed to Faculty, Parish Staff, School Families, and Students in grades 4-8 to help develop the overall themes and goals of the plan
- February 2014 - The Director of Technology in consultation with the Technology Steering Committee reviewed the survey data and worked to develop the goals and strategies of the plan. Initial findings were shared with the Faculty, Pastoral Staff and PTA to make sure we were on the right track.
- March - August 2014 - The writing of the plan and collection of supporting information and budget figures.
- Fall 2014 - Presentation of draft plan to PTA, Faculty, and Pastoral Staff
- October 2014 - Final draft presented for approval

Goals and Strategies for 2014-2017

Computer Upgrades - Complete

Review all current computers in the parish office and identify those that need to be updated to Windows 7 and that are slow or in need of replacement. Upgrade all computers to the latest version of Microsoft Office to ensure all staff can easily share documents and work together in the same platform.

Phone System - Complete

Upgrade the existing phone system to allow for a phone in each room on campus, including all classrooms and church, to provide for an additional layer of security and accessibility. The new phone system should be cloud based to allow for easy upgrades and to remove the burden of maintenance from Nativity's internal IT department to the phone hosting company.

Firewall/Antivirus

Install a central managed firewall, web filter, and antivirus software in the parish office to ensure users of the parish internet are not on inappropriate sites and to help protect the parish office from any incoming attacks on the computers or servers.

Wireless in Parish Center

Install a commercial grade wireless system throughout the parish center to support the needs to staff during the day and guests for meeting in the parish office. The system should be focused in the basement and first floor and extended to the 2nd floor if resources allow.

Development of an IT Budget

With the addition of the Director of Technology position in 2012, a specific IT Department budget was never created for the Parish Office or the School. Currently all technology expenses are part of the overall administrative budget for the Parish and a part of the School Admin Budget. However, it would be beneficial to have a dedicated Technology budget to better track technology expenses, recurring costs and see where the parish may save money over time.

New Server

The current parish center server is starting to show its age. The server was installed in 2005. The current server has Windows Server 2003 SP2, which will no longer be supported as of July 2015, installed is an Intel Xeon 2.8GHz with 2.79GHz, 2.00GB Ram and a 500GB hard drive. The parish is also at a huge disadvantage by only having one server. In the event that something happens to the current server, the parish center would be off line until a new server could be purchased and installed, it could be weeks before this process is completed. A new server would have a better processing power as well as a larger hard drive and would have the latest version of Windows Server installed. In addition to the purchase of the new server we would upgrade the existing server to the latest version of Windows so that it could serve as a redundant or backup server to help keep the parish office up and running even in the event that something happens to the primary server.

Updates to Parish Data System (PDS)

With the installation of the latest version of PDS there are several new features that we can implement to help ensure the safety of the data as well as make using PDS a little easier for staff.

The first update is to implement online registration. With online registration families can go online to register and make updates to their “PDS” file. Staff then reviews the information and can update PDS as needed but it would greatly reduce data entry time for staff when new families register at Nativity.

Review and update the PDS backup plans to make sure the data is backed up in the best possible way to ensure that the system is able to easily be recovered in the event of a disaster.

Staff Professional Development

Create access to or develop a series of technology self-help materials for members of the Nativity community, delivered through the Help Desk. Review data from the Help Desk to find common issues to add to the knowledgebase and improve the Help Desk self service features.

Create an approach for those among us who have become knowledgeable in some particular aspect of technology to readily share their expertise with others, either in person or via technology, as a way of augmenting the structured support provided by the Director of Technology.

Require mandatory training for all new employees on the technologies they will use the most.

Develop ways to better assess the support and training needs of employees as well as the effectiveness of approaches for meeting those needs and adjust strategies accordingly.

Continue efforts to improve staff confidence in the use of technology through additional professional development and setting aside dedicated time for staff to work on technology and improve their confidence.

Replacement Plans & Documentation

Develop a plan for replacing aging technology infrastructure such as wiring and switches to help minimize crisis purchases and major outages.

Refine replacement cycles for parish technologies to ensure that existing technologies are replaced with like or better tools and at appropriate times and in ways that are the most cost effective.

Continue the work to document all aspects of technology. How things are used, the network map, the replacement cycle, and when certain tasks/updates are carried out.

Policy Updates

Review, in a comprehensive way, all existing policies and procedures regarding technology and develop updates that reflect today’s circumstances and requirements, meet today’s needs and position us to take advantage of tomorrow’s opportunities. Strengthen the emphasis on legal, ethical, responsible, sustainable, and secure uses of technology.

Develop a clearer set of standards for hardware and software configurations on individual computers and for access to commonly held technology resources.

Continue our efforts to move away from isolated or rogue technology set-ups or data repositories towards a centrally supported and managed technologies and data environments that deliver a more reliable and secure service. Establish a process for reviewing software (online or installed) before purchase or widespread usage.

Create a clear set of expectations for users regarding maintenance of their parish owned technologies and offer the training and support needed for individuals to meet these expectations.

Automation

Work with the Maintenance Department and the Facilities Committee to look at ways to automate or remote control key facilities management tasks like thermostats, lights and other systems to help the parish reduce its energy costs.

Integration

Continue to look for ways to reduce staff workload and integrate or sync various software programs to reduce duplicate data entry work.

Continue our efforts to make PDS the one stop shop for all data in the parish and use it to update and maintain any other systems within the parish.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Revision of the Plan

Monitoring and Evaluation Process

The goals of the technology plan will be evaluated as follows:

- Members of the Technology Team will assess the progress of the plan and make recommendations for improvements when needed.
- Parish Staff use of technology will be evaluated informally by the Director of Technology on an annual basis.
- The effectiveness and ease of administrative tasks will be evaluated by the Director of Technology, and Assistant to the Pastor, and Pastor annually.

Incorporation of evaluation information for ongoing planning

The Technology Plan shall be reviewed on an annual basis in order to:

- Receive feedback from staff on the effectiveness of the plan.
- Review implementation progress against the milestones identified in the plan.
- Review current and emerging technology and make appropriate modifications to the plan.

Process for reporting to stakeholders

The reports will be communicated by a number of means including:

- Posting of Technology Meeting Minutes
- Newsletter Articles
- Annual Technology Fair
- Technology Web Page

Process and timeline for ongoing, long-term planning

The plan will be reviewed and updated during the last quarter of each fiscal year in time for implementation of any required changes for the following fiscal year.

