

CHRIST THE KING SEMINARY • 711 KNOX ROAD • EAST AURORA, NY 14052

**“ . . . FORWARD TO WHAT
LIES AHEAD ”**

A STRATEGIC PLAN



**CHRIST THE KING SEMINARY
2007 - 2012**

I. PREAMBLE

- A. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS. This Strategic Plan is the collective work of the CKS community. Over the course of one year more than thirty individuals from the Seminary and Buffalo Diocese and Church have contributed to and helped to shape it. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee expresses its sincere appreciation for the outstanding work and commitment of so many.
- B. PROCESS. The formation of this Strategic Plan occurred in six stages. *Stage 1* consisted of a scan of our operating environment, followed by the crafting and articulation of initial strategic planning values, vision and strategic priorities, and the formation of task groups focused upon particular spheres of operation. In *stage 2* the task groups completed a number of exercises intended to facilitate an analysis of and proffering of suggested initiatives germane to their respective operational spheres. During *stage 3* the Steering Committee reviewed the work of the task groups and established a number of major objectives for each of these groups. In the light of these objectives and drawing upon their previous work, the individual task groups prepared Work Plans over the course of *stage 4*. Utilizing these Work Plans, at *stage 5* the Steering Committee, both in work groups and collectively, constructed their own Work Plans, out of which the Strategic Plan proper was constructed. Presentation to and adoption by the Board of Trustees of the Strategic Plan encompasses *stage 6*.

II. FRAMEWORK

Our Strategic Plan begins with an *Environmental Scan*, that is, a brief consideration of the circumstances in and out of which CKS operates. The *Mission* and *Values* central to the Plan follow next. These three elements coalesce and engender our *Vision*, a driving concept that serves to provide a strategic, long-term perspective of what we hope to become over the course of the next five years. *Strategic Dimensions* or priorities that we believe to be essential for achieving that vision are subsequently set forth. In their wake, *Goals and Objectives* whereby those priorities may be brought to life are established. A consideration of conditions requisite to successful *Implementation* ensues. Finally, an addendum consisting of malleable *Work Plans* is presented with which to begin managing the implementation and performance of our goals and objectives.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The Diocese of Buffalo includes eight counties in Western New York, covering some 6,455 square miles, and includes more than 200 churches and upwards of 700,000 Roman Catholics. As with many dioceses in the United States, the Buffalo diocese has seen a significant drop in its overall membership, weekly attendance, and number of active priests and priestly candidates

throughout the past ten years. Originally founded in 1857, CKS affords four Master's degrees and one Certificate, along with various other programs. Student enrollment over the past five years has averaged approximately 23 Seminarians, 70-75 non-Seminarian graduate and 125 continuing education students.

Most dioceses within the immediate region send their sponsored candidates for the priesthood to other seminaries. There are currently no academic institutions within the Buffalo Diocese granting Master degrees similar to one of those that the Seminary bestows, although Houghton College is working on a proposal to initiate a M.A. in Theological Studies. Three Catholic Institutions – Canisius College, Niagara University, and St. Bonaventure University, as well as Houghton College, offer Baccalaureate degrees within the field of religious studies.

IV. MISSION

It is the mission of Christ the King Seminary to educate sponsored candidates for ordained priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church and individuals pursuing either a graduate theological education, a ministerial education program, or a program of continuing education. Christ the King Seminary is fully committed to an integrated and ecumenical model of theological education for men and women eager to experience the wealth of the Roman Catholic Church's tradition of theological learning, pastoral praxis, and spiritual formation.

"...to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God" (Eph. 4:12-13).

V. VALUES

Two core values have guided the development of this Strategic Plan, principles which are the source of the Seminary's beliefs and behaviors.

- A. COMMUNION. Christ the King Seminary is "a continuation in the Church of the apostolic community gathered around Jesus." It provides an environment where learning takes place, and where "bonds are anchored in genuine relationships to the Lord and his Body, the Church" (PPF 290).

"For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another" (Ro. 12:4-5).

- B. SERVICE. Christ the King Seminary has a particular role to play within this communion, namely, the training and education of those who would serve the

Church and wider community. In fulfilling our task, the manner and content of education we provide derives, in the first place, from the needs and direction of the Church, not our own preferences.

“Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them... if one is a teacher, in teaching” (Ro. 12:6-7).

VI. VISION

Our environment, mission and values portend a moment in time for Christ the King Seminary to recognize the challenge before it and rise up to a new level. Building upon the significant positive change and momentum that has already taken place at CKS, the time has come to continue with our 150-year-old mission in a fresh way, namely, the way of **ministerial collaboration**. As an institution that seeks to serve by providing prophetic and transformative education, we will actively promote mutually supportive relationships among the faithful who are seeking to minister or are already ministering within the Church. We will foster this same communion among and for the purpose of ministry with other dioceses, giving special attention to our diocesan neighbors in the region. The long-term concept that drives this Strategic Plan is that of **becoming a comprehensive, leading Seminary within the region**.

VII. STRATEGIC DIMENSIONS

Three strategic dimensions or priorities are integrated throughout this plan.

- A. **FORMATION**. Christ the King Seminary aims to provide high-quality training and education for the formation of priests, deacons and lay ecclesial ministers that is grounded in the truths of the Catholic faith.

“Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours” (2 Thess. 2:15).

- B. **GROWTH**. Christ the King Seminary aims to increase its constituent base through the cultivation of partnerships and the continuous pursuit of a real-time awareness of and responsiveness to the emergent ministry-related educational and formational needs of the Church.

“The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all” (Acts 4:32-33).

C. ADMINISTRATION. Christ the King Seminary aims to operate in an effective, collaborative, transparent, accountable and just manner.

“Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute (the) food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so.” (Lk. 12:42-43)

While each of these Strategic Dimensions provides a distinctive emphasis in support of the Strategic Vision, they also share attributes in common with the other two. This sharing demonstrates the strong integration and connectedness that necessarily exists among them, and reinforces the strength, synergy and clarity of the goals and objectives associated with the Strategic Plan. Figure 1 displays the number of goals and objectives associated in some way with each dimension.

Number of Goals and Objectives		
Strategic Dimension	Goals	Objectives
Formation	4	13
Growth	5	15
Administration	5	16

Figure 1

VIII. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

A. PRIESTLY FORMATION. This task group focused upon our Program for Priestly Formation, giving special attention to the need to enroll more candidates and to guide their “spiritual development within the context of his call to service in the Church, his human development within the greater context of his call to advance the mission of the Church, his intellectual development as the appropriation of the Church’s teaching and tradition, and his pastoral formation as participation in the active ministry of the Church” (PPF 71). It is noteworthy that in the past ten years, the post-ordination ministry retention rate for graduates of our program is 89% overall – at the high end nationally, and 95% within the Diocese of Buffalo.

Goal A1: Christ the King Seminary will ensure relevant, high-quality training and education for the pre- and post-ordination of priests.

Objective A1.1: CKS will (further) develop the two-year pre-theology program.

Objective A1.2: CKS will develop and execute a program of ongoing formation for individual Seminararian spiritual directors.

Objective A1.3: CKS will develop and proffer a post-ordination program and/or offerings for ongoing formation consistent with the needs and life of priestly ministry.

Objective A1.4: CKS will identify, acquire and/or train and educate additional personnel for all four dimensions of priestly formation, as needed.

Objective A1.5: CKS will seek to establish an episcopal council with diocesan partners that will provide direction for our Program for Priestly Formation.

Goal A2: Christ the King Seminary will increase our constituent base.

Objective A2.1: CKS will become client-diocese driven.

Objective A2.2: CKS will assist the Office of Vocations in the promoting and discerning of priestly vocations.

Objective A2.3: CKS will assist in the provision of a holistic program of formational development, inclusive of the high school, college, pre-theology and theology levels.

Objective A2.4: CKS will seek to build partnerships with other dioceses, especially regionally.

Objective A2.5: CKS will seek to differentiate our priestly formation programs and offerings on the strength of diocesan context, leadership development training, and episcopal direction.

- B. **ACADEMICS.** This task group focused upon matters relating to learning and academic rigor, all the while remaining cognizant that courses and programs should facilitate “a deepened understanding of the mysteries of faith that is pastorally oriented toward effective” ministry (PPF 138). It is noteworthy that in the past five years, our faculty has published six books and twenty-four articles. It is also noteworthy that in 2002 we received the highest-level re-accreditation by the Association of Theological Schools and the Middle States Association - ten years with no notations.

Goal B1: Christ the King Seminary will continuously evaluate and develop the breadth and quality of its academic programs and offerings in the light of emerging needs.

Objective B1.1: CKS will research, develop and implement, as practicable, a high-quality post-graduate certificate that addresses diocesan ministry needs.

Objective B1.2: CKS will research, develop and implement, as practicable, a high-quality DMIN, MDIV/MSW, and/or MDIV/Counseling degrees.

Objective B1.3: CKS will seek to collaborate with other educational institutions.

Objective B1.4: CKS will develop and execute faculty acquisition and succession plans.

Goal B2: Christ the King Seminary will increase accessibility to academic programs and offerings.

Objective B2.1: CKS will seek to establish strategically placed satellite locations within the Buffalo diocese and, as practicable, within other dioceses.

Objective B2.2: CKS will research, develop and implement, as practicable, a blended distance education program.

- C. FORMATION. This task group focused more generally upon the four pillars of formation common to priests, deacons and the laity – human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral, as identified in the “Program of Priestly Formation” (5th edition), the “National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons,” and *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*.

Goal C1: Christ the King Seminary will provide and/or enhance formational programs and offerings for priests, deacons, religious and lay ministers in all four areas of ministry development: human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral.

Objective C1.1: CKS will seek to establish, enhance and manage partnerships within the Buffalo diocese and, as practicable, with other dioceses with and/or for whom specific need-based programs and offerings are proffered.

Goal C2: Christ the King Seminary will increase accessibility to formational programs and offerings for priests, deacons, religious and lay ministers.

Objective C2.1: CKS will seek to establish strategically placed satellite locations within the Buffalo diocese and, as practicable, within other dioceses.

- D. RECRUITMENT. This task group focused upon the means and process of finding and/or attracting qualified people for our programs and offerings. It, therefore, included such areas as marketing and communications, as well as alumni and seminary relations.

Goal D1: Christ the King Seminary will seek to increase enrollment in all programs.

Objective D1.1: CKS will seek to establish and/or enhance mutually supportive partnerships with diocesan [a] offices/departments/organizations, [b] religious orders, and [c] parish communities.

Objective D1.2: CKS will seek to establish partnerships with other dioceses.

Objective D1.3: CKS will seek to build partnerships with post-secondary institutions.

Objective D1.4: CKS will develop and execute an institutional recruitment plan.

- E. RESOURCES. The Resources task group concerned itself with the stewardship of Seminary resources, focusing especially upon financial planning.

Goal E1: Christ the King Seminary will provision resources in accord with emergent diocesan and Seminary needs.

Objective E1.1: CKS will seek to balance the operating budget by the end of the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

Objective E1.2: CKS will allocate and align expenditures with revenue streams so as to achieve a break even or positive net cash flow.

Objective E1.3: CKS will measure, align and (further) develop revenue streams for operation, preventative maintenance, fixed assets and capital improvement plans (cf. Facility objectives)

Objective E1.4: CKS will seek to ensure availability of cash reserves, as well as ensure line of credit relationships for emergency funding needs.

Objective E1.5: CKS will establish an impressed fund for the replacement/repair of capital and operation assets based upon depreciation/amortization schedules.

- F. FACILITY. This task group concerned itself with the internal and external condition and usage of the overall facility.

Goal F1: Christ the King Seminary will provide quality facilities for constituents.

Objective F1.1: CKS will develop and execute an operational maintenance plan.

Objective F1.2: CKS will develop and execute a preventative maintenance plan.

Objective F1.3: CKS will develop and execute a capital improvements plan.

Objective F1.4: CKS will develop an emergency response plan.

Objective F1.5: CKS will renovate the physical plant in accord with determined/emergent usages and developed plans.

G. OPERATIONS. This task group focused upon the need to improve overall operations internal and external to the Seminary.

Goal G1: Christ the King Seminary will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its administrative operations.

Objective G1.1: CKS will initiate a performance management system that fosters transparency, accountability, collaboration and justice.

Objective G1.2: CKS will maintain administrative resources, structures and processes that are aligned with its strategic vision, priorities and objectives.

Objective G1.3: CKS will establish and maintain policies and procedures consistent with its mission, vision, strategic priorities and applicable regulatory requirements.

IX. IMPLEMENTATION

If the Goals and Objectives are to be achieved and the Strategic Plan fully implemented, certain conditions must be satisfied. Specifically, an agenda for action, sufficient finances, and energetic, well-trained and committed leadership are essential.

- A. AGENDA FOR ACTION. If the goals and objectives are intended to bring to life our vision of what we hope to become over the course of the next five years, then an analysis of our current condition must be made and action steps developed through which the gap between our current and future conditions can be bridged. Initiatives should be identified, metrics developed to measure progress on each objective, and required resources specified. Our Work Plans (cf. Addendum) represent a critical component of our agenda for action.
- B. FINANCES. Over the next five years our budget would necessarily increase owing to inflation of costs, technology upgrades due to obsolescence, employee salaries, and maintenance associated with facility upgrades. The goals and objectives associated with our vision will impose additional costs. These additional expenses, however, will be incurred gradually over the course of the five years. Throughout implementation of the Strategic Plan, we will ensure that our financial base remains strong. In general, funding will be obtained through incremental revenues realized through expansion of services, the seeking of additional or increasing of existing funding sources, the reallocation of existing resources, and enhanced efficiency, productivity and space utilization.

- C. LEADERSHIP. There is no substitute for energetic, well-trained and committed leadership. Without such leadership the Strategic Plan will rest on a shelf gathering dust, or at best meander along haphazardly. Leadership must come from all - trustees, directors, faculty and staff, but especially from the president-rector and his administrative team. Where and when called for, a change in culture and/or environment, never easy, must be supported. Every effort must be made to communicate the content and aspirations, as well as the progress and setbacks associated with the Strategic Plan so that it is seen to be and will continue to exist as a dynamic, living document.