

Strategic Plan Proposal – Part One, September 2nd, 2008

Parish Mission Statement, Core Values, and Vision

For parish committee review and revision during the month of September and a final approval vote at the November 4th pastoral council meeting

Mission Statement

Statement

As disciples of Jesus and stewards of God’s gifts, Resurrection Catholic parish is called to be a welcoming community, strengthening each other’s faith, sharing our Christian hope, and loving one another.

Summary

By our definition, a mission statement is meant to identify “why we exist”. In reviewing our parish mission statement, we found a great strength and resonance in the words of the current mission statement, inspiring us to hang on to particular elements. Moreover, it is important that a mission statement be memorable and recitable by our members and as such we have attempted to shorten it. In doing so, we discovered that our mission statement not only included our mission, why we exist, but also our core values, what we believe in. It is often recommended that a mission statement and core values be separate and as such we have identified the three existence related lines from the current mission statement and reshaped them into a new version of the parish mission statement that more accurately represents both our past and our present calling. Below you will find a line by line explanation of our rationale for our word and concept choices.

“As disciples of Jesus, stewards of God’s gifts...”

We at Resurrection have long upheld the philosophy and theology of stewardship as central to our parish family. We felt that every aspect of our parish should be viewed through the lens of stewardship, but more importantly the root of stewardship, our baptismal call to discipleship.

“...Resurrection Catholic parish...”

Instead of simply inserting “we” into this portion of the document, we believe that if a mission statement is something we are to memorize and recite that it should include a specific reference to our church home and family or else it could be referring to any Christian collective body.

“...is called to be...”

This is where the Holy Spirit comes in. To simply say, “Resurrection Parish is...” does not reflect the fact that as Catholics, we believe that our church was called into being by God and the Holy Spirit, not simply a body of like-minded people. We are different from many churches in that our church is not founded by a pastor or a group of believers, but by the body of the Church inspired by the Holy Spirit.

“...a welcoming community...”

Our parish has long had a commitment to open arms and hearts. It is foundational to our mission that we exist to share our faith and our lives with all those who knock on our doors.

“...strengthening each other’s faith...”

This is the first of three theological virtues that St. Paul writes about in his first letter to the Corinthians. As Catholic Christians, we believe that our baptismal call is to learn to love God and bring others closer to God. Our parish family exists to help us on that journey by strengthening our faith and the faith of our parish family through many avenues of prayer, liturgy, the sacraments, and continued formation.

“...sharing our Christian hope...”

Hope in our world is often fleeting. It is a critical need in our often sad and overwhelmed society. We believe that our parish exists to be a beacon of hope based in the salvation offered to us by Jesus Christ. We exist to share this hope through acts of charity and Christian witness.

“...loving one another.”

This is the final of the three virtues written about by St. Paul. He writes, “faith, hope, and love and the greatest of these is love.” If for no other reason, Resurrection Catholic parish exists to love one another inside our parish walls, but more importantly beyond them.

Core Values

Core Values

Welcome and Hospitality

We recognize Christ in all those we meet and treat them as we would Jesus.

Worship and Evangelization

We celebrate God’s love through our worship and sacraments which strengthens us to boldly live the Gospel in word and deed.

Life-long Faith Formation

We promote life-long growth in our faith and our continual need for repentance, conversion and spiritual development.

Service and Justice

We respond to the needs in our parish and broader community in ways that respect the dignity of all as children of God while working for societal changes that make social justice a reality.

Gratitude

We give thanks for all the gifts our loving God bestows on us by our generous acts of prayer, service and sharing.

Collaboration

We live our baptismal call for full and active participation in our community by nurturing each other's gifts, regular communication and fiscal accountability.

Summary

While the mission statement identifies “why we exist”, the core values represent “what we believe in”. We believe that our choices, based primarily in the values from the former mission statement, are fairly self-explanatory. **Vision**

Statement

We, the members of Resurrection Catholic Parish strive to be a family of believers generously building the kingdom of God. Our vision is to be a fully engaged parish focused on our spiritual commitment and growth. We will:

Build strong and open relationships with each other to foster a strong foundation of belonging

Know what is expected of us as active members of our faith community

Continue our involvement in the many opportunities to learn and grow as individuals and as a whole-parish community and

Use our gifts to develop a community of Christian ministry and mission, within and beyond the walls of our Church.

By these actions we will continue to strengthen our spiritual lives so that inviting, serving and giving become our daily priorities.

Summary

The vision statement identifies not “why we exist” or “what we believe in”, but more concretely “who we want to be”. A vision statement typically changes more regularly as its focus is for a shorter period of time, ranging anywhere between 1-5 years. In this case, we've been focusing on what we'd like to be as a parish over a 3-year period. Below you will find our criteria for a vision and a line-by-line explanation of the statement.

Our criteria for the vision were:

1. The vision should have some reference to our parish ME25 results since that is really the information that prompted us to move ahead with the process and is also our method of measurement
2. The vision needs to be specific, but strategies and numbers should be reserved for the goals and objectives in Part 2 of the process.
3. Vision must include both the growth of our members inside the parish and our hopes for their involvement outside the parish doors
4. Vision should be worded in such a fashion as to create member buy in. Example, “We, the members of Resurrection Catholic Parish, will...”

“We, the members of Resurrection Catholic Parish strive...”

We chose to use “we” to create an initial buy-in. The parish is the people and therefore the

vision should be spoken from the first person.

We used the phrases “family of believers” and “generously building” to represent the two key lenses of stewardship and intergenerational living that our parish has adopted as their guiding forces.

“fully engaged parish” and “spiritual commitment” were chosen as key words from the ME25 survey. Engagement are the priorities and actions that according to the ME25 theory create spiritual commitment and that is our ultimate goal.

“Build strong and open relationships...”

Relationships are the foundation to a sense of belonging which is a fundamental and basic need for all humans. This connection and community is critical step to significant depth in any area. The question within the ME25 that referenced “having a best friend in the parish” is an area where we have room for improvement. Especially for a stewardship parish, this sense of belonging must be established prior to the formation and gifts-discernment that can lead to gifts based ministry and mission. Moreover, as a parish with “welcome and hospitality” as one of our core values it is important that we extend our welcome beyond “hello” on Sundays into deeper, more meaningful and accountable relationships.

“Know what is expected...”

Expectations are a critical area that is missed by many churches. As was noted during our Gallup session, this is one of the key ME25 areas for improvement here at Resurrection. If parish leadership does not communicate what it expects of its leaders, we cannot expect to be able to direct and gauge growth in engagement or spiritual commitment. Nor can we expect our members to participate in growth opportunities, leadership dialogue, or social action if it is not clearly communicated that it is important. As part of this item, it will also be critical that members understand that they are expected to hold parish leadership accountable to their needs. This will also address the concerns that are raised by a lower ME25 score on the question relating to “My opinions seem to count” and the fact that one of our core values is collaboration.

“Continue our involvement in the many opportunities to live and grow...”

It is just as important to highlight and focus on strengths in a vision as it is to focus on areas for improvement. As core values, life-long faith formation, worship and evangelization are *also* areas of strength for Resurrection on our ME25 survey. We certainly do not want to loose sight of this strength because formation or “feeding” is foundational for healthy relationships and continued service. Furthermore, it is by leveraging our areas of strength that we are able to pursue growth in the areas in need of improvement.

“Use our gifts...”

This bullet represents the fact that the purpose of a parish is not solely to serve itself and the members within its walls. If we are achieving the mission of the Church it is not so much what is seen within the church, but what is seen beyond the walls of the church and the confines of Sunday morning. This item creates an action behind our core values of service, social justice and gratitude. The use of our God-given gifts in “Christian ministry and mission” casts a wider

net and truly represents our baptismal call to service, social justice, evangelization, and stewardship as a way of life. This item falls as the fourth item because as the parish, we must achieve the first three items in preparation for and continued support of our work within the world. The items of giftedness and service are lesser priorities on our ME25 results, but will still give us a growth measurement.

“By these actions...”

If our ultimate goal is individual spiritual commitment, which by ME25 standards is correct, we do so presumably (according to the ME25 theory) by achieving engagement, the spiritual commitment item should be a concluding statement. Even beyond the survey, at Resurrection, we believe that stewardship is a way of life based on our baptismal call and it is something to be lived out in all of our actions. This concluding statement can be backed up in measurable results by a series of spiritual commitment questions included in the ME25 survey.

Overview of Part Two – Complete for pastoral council and committee review by December 2nd, 2008

The next step for the planning and implementation team is to begin looking at the specific items of the vision statement and identifying strategic goals and objectives for each, quantitative and qualitative, which when accomplished will achieve the vision.

When the time comes to do another ME25 survey, we will be able to not only anticipate our successes and failures based on our evaluation of how we have met these goals, but we'll also be able to identify the successful strategies.

Once these strategic goals and objectives have been approved by the council, each committee and group will be provided with this list and directed to undertake their yearly planning of initiatives and events based on how possible ideas will meet the different strategic goals and objectives set forth by the council. Formation and support materials and assistance will be provided by the planning and implementation team.

In this sense, staff, council, committees, and member will all be working toward the same goals and thus will have a much better chance at achieving our shared vision. We will be better equipped to prioritize the many needs, plans, demands, and ideas that cross our paths as a parish community. We will have already identified the current needs and we will simply need to determine how we intend to meet them.

*All feedback from committees should be sent to Amberly Boerschinger, stewardship coordinator, for review by the planning and implementation ad-hoc team prior to **October 2nd, 2008.***