

Dear Parishioners,

9 & 10 May 2015

I often start out my travels to familiar places without really thinking about how I will get there. Driving to my brother's house a few weeks ago I bumped into a "Closed Road" sign and a detour. I had turn from a familiar way to an unknown road weaving through a strange neighborhoods. The way was marked by bright orange signs every so often that help direct the traffic through the detour. But, there was no way I was going follow those directional markers. I knew I could find a "better", "quicker" way to beat the detour. Of course, I got lost! I was grateful for my GPS app.

When we think we know where we are going, we rarely stop and seek direction.

Sometimes as a Church we can think that we know what we are about, where we are going, and how to get there. Every now and then, however, even as a universal Church we bump into a detour and what was once familiar changes and becomes strange. In the mid-twentieth century, the Church realized that the world around it was changing and that it needed to find "new" ways of proclaiming the never changing and ever new message of Jesus found in the Gospel and the Tradition of our Church. This helped to initiate the Second Vatican Council. Basically, the Church stopped and asked for directions.

Such is the reason, for the first Parish Assembly we held last week. The parish Pastoral Council, considering the merger of parishes three years ago, looking at the current data on the parish and local community, and motivated by a desire for a "new" and clear direction and vision for the parish, hosted the Assembly. Over one hundred and twenty people attended, listened to information on the parish history and data, reflected on several questions and shared their answers and ideas. It is from the responses of parishioners to these particular questions, that the Pastoral Council will formulate a pastoral plan for the parish. Through a process of prayerful discernment, the Pastoral Council will sift through the assembly responses over the next several weeks and create a new "Mission Statement" along with major goals that will guide many of the major decisions we make as a parish community for the next three to five years.

Here are the questions that members of the Assembly responded to: (The first three questions will help to shape and define the parish mission statement. Responses to questions 4 to 7 will form the major goals of the parish pastoral plan.)



1. If Jesus were here today, what words would he give us to direct our future?
2. Why do you think the universal Catholic Church exists?
3. What makes our parish unique and special?
4. What do I as a member expect of my parish?
5. How should we reach out to the broader community from our parish?
6. What do our demographics and data suggest that we do for the future?
7. Which of the seven essential elements of parish life (Evangelization, Worship, Word, Community, Service, Stewardship, and Leadership) do we need to focus on and why? *

If you were not able to attend the Assembly but would like to respond to the questions above, feel free to speak to any member of the Pastoral Council ** or send your responses to rsvp@stjohnmanayunk.org Your ideas will help to give direction to the parish's future.

Thank you and congratulations to the Pastoral Council and all who volunteered on a successful Assembly and a "job" (ministry) well done! Special thanks to Jim Browne who was the lead facilitator at the Assembly!

Have a great week! 

To learn more about the essential elements of parish life go to our parish website at:

- * <http://stjohnmanayunk.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Bulletin-Message-14-15-March-2015.pdf> and <http://stjohnmanayunk.org/monday-may-9th-2011/>

- ** Pastoral Council Members: Msgr. Kevin Lawrence, Fr. John Kelly, Diane Browne, Keith Buhl, Mary Ellen Fitzpatrick, John Gray, Deacon Matt Hrobak, Carol Hrobak, Dennis Kelly, Janet Kempf, Marie Kwartnik, Lee Ochal, Steve Paul, Ray Stackhouse and Joe Szczeh



ASSEMBLY OVERVIEW - PASTORAL PLANNING

MISSION STATEMENT

Every group needs a definitive mission to survive. Mission statements are not generic nor interchangeable. They are statements of identity and direction describing the present and future. They are philosophical, value-oriented, long-term declarations of fundamental purpose. Mission statements simply say what an organization is trying to do, why it exists. A brief and clear mission statement makes a public declaration about the group's purpose and helps keep priorities in order, build morale, and provide direction for the future.

The mission statement of each parish indicates the unique aspects of its history, tradition, and composition, as well as its particular vision for fulfilling the mission of Jesus Christ. It gives specific expression to the parish intention to live out its calling within the concrete boundaries of its location, resources, and needs. It defines WHY a particular parish exists.

Forming a mission statement involves the processes of discernment and decision making through consensus. The pastor and council, having listened to the parish reflect upon its unique characteristics, resources, and gifts, now determine how the parish can best give expression to the gospel vision and the particular call of God to this parish community.

Four Basic Dimensions of a Mission Statement

Identity (indicates the elements which identify the parish, such as name, location, history, etc.),

Purpose (speaks to the values, beliefs, central focus, reason for existence of the parish),

Function (identifies the "to whom" and "what" of the life of the parish in broad categories), and

Future (addresses areas of challenge, elements that are missing or in need of strengthening).

GOALS

A goal is a brief, clear statement of an outcome to be reached within three to five years. It is a broad, general description that sets forth not how something is to be done, but rather what the results will look like. In pastoral planning, a goal is directly related to one of the seven essential elements. In addition, it must flow from the diocesan and parish mission statements.

OBJECTIVES

An objective is a brief, clear statement of an outcome to be reached within one year as a step toward one goal in the parish pastoral plan. An objective is specific about what will be done and who will be affected. The outcome is stated in terms that are quantifiable and measurable and each objective specifies a completion date.

To all the MOMs out here ~

Happy Mother's Day

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY

DEC. 8, 2015 - NOV. 20, 2016



This past week Pope Francis shared the following prayer for the Extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy

Lord Jesus Christ,

**you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father,
and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.**

Show us your face and we will be saved.

**Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being
enslaved by money;
the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in
created things;**

**made Peter weep after his betrayal,
and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.**

**Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you
spoke to the Samaritan woman:**

"If you knew the gift of God!"

**You are the visible face of the invisible Father,
of the God who manifests his power above all
by forgiveness and mercy:**

**let the Church be your visible face in the world,
its Lord risen and glorified.**

**You willed that your ministers would also
be clothed in weakness**

**in order that they may feel compassion
for those in ignorance and error:
let everyone who approaches them feel sought after,
loved, and forgiven by God.**

**Send your Spirit and consecrate
every one of us with its anointing,**

**so that the Jubilee of Mercy
may be a year of grace from the Lord,**

**and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm,
may bring good news to the poor,**

**proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed,
and restore sight to the blind.**

**We ask this through the intercession of Mary,
Mother of Mercy,**

**you who live and reign with the Father
and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.**

Amen.