



January 2010

Dear Cathedral of St. Raymond Community:

At the beginning of the year, the Parish Council launched a strategic planning process to help the Cathedral of St. Raymond community consider what our future could hold as we move closer to our centennial year – 2017. The intent of the planning process was to determine how to strengthen community, honor history and advance God's work.

I am happy to share with you these findings and outline some very broad goals. These goals still need further development, with input and action from our parish community. Our plan is to take what we have learned, shape it with these goals, and use it as a basis for all of our future planning. I will work with the leaders and members of our parish groups to help them incorporate what we learned and collaborate on where we intend to go. In essence, we hope to move these goals into actions.

The pages that follow describe the process, some key findings and guiding principles, as well as the five goals we will use as the focus of our attention and resources in the coming years. In addition to the goals, you will read some objectives and suggested action items. The goals and objectives are both aspirational and achievable but by no means are they comprehensive; rather they illustrate just a few of the possibilities. We envision that the objectives and action items will be wide-ranging in thinking, rich in content, and open to participation.

I ask for your reflection, need your feedback, and hope to have your contribution so that the plan will come alive. You can share your thoughts about this draft plan with me, Fr. Nate or any of the Parish Council members listed on the last page of this document.

With gratitude,

Very Rev. Brad Baker
Rector

The Planning and Listening Process

Launched in January 2009, we invited all parishioners to complete a survey (paper or online) which was completed by more than 400 parishioners. With that feedback, we have insights about our demographic profile as well as a better sense of the wants and needs of the people of the Cathedral of St. Raymond.

In February and March, the Parish Council hosted three town hall meetings with more than 100 parishioners joining in the discussion about their hopes and dreams for the Cathedral of St. Raymond's future. We asked participants to respond to these questions:

- What are the things we need to keep?
- What are the things we need to let go?
- What are the most important issues facing St. Raymond's, and why do you think they are important?
- What are the dreams you have for our future?

From the survey results and the town hall discussions, the Parish Council identified some key findings and guiding principles that will help shape our direction in the coming years.

Key Findings and Guiding Principles

Through the survey responses, town hall meetings and individual conversations, the Parish Council identified these key findings and principles that guide our planning.

We, the Cathedral of St. Raymond community:

- Confirm that Catholic teaching, built on scripture and tradition, is the foundation of our parish community.
- Understand that people in our parish yearn to deepen their faith and that we should focus on life-long faith formation, also known as catechesis.
- Recognize that homilies bring meaning to our relationships with God.
- Understand that the grade school and religious education programs are vital for our entire parish, and especially our families.
- Know that Masses must foster participation in order to attract and keep the next generations.

We, the Cathedral of St. Raymond community:

- Want to be an active parish.
- Should do more for those in need and should provide more service opportunities that impact our neighbors and our world.
- Should develop new ministries and strengthen all those that remain relevant.

We, the Cathedral of St. Raymond community:

- Know that hospitality and socialization are important aspects of our relationship with the church.
- Recognize that the grade school and religious education programs contribute to a strong sense of community.
- Should invite greater participation in ministry and during liturgies.
- Can build on the Cathedral tradition by honoring our history while welcoming and inviting new people to help shape our future.

- Seek to be involved.
- Need to improve communication with all parishioners and welcome involvement from all.

We, the Cathedral of St. Raymond community:

- Need a youth ministry program.
- Acknowledge that the young adults want opportunities to engage and explore around topics of faith, service and work.
- Know that we have a role and responsibility to help teens and young adults explore religious vocations.

We, the Cathedral of St. Raymond community:

- Know that music is one of our greatest assets and that younger people especially ask for more variety in its presentation.
- Know that the environment must be comfortable and hospitable for all generations.
- Know that both the sound system and the parking lot could use improvement.

We, the Cathedral of St. Raymond community:

- Are committed to securing our future with a solid financial base.
- Need to be good stewards of all our resources.

VISION 2017 Strategic Plan

Mission

United by baptism, our parish family gathers together for worship and support. Empowered by the spirit of God's Love, we will preach, teach and live the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Vision

The Cathedral of St. Raymond Nonnatus will be a vibrant model of discipleship, defined by our Catholic identity, characterized by a deepening of faith and demonstrated through liturgy, hospitality, prayer and action.

GOAL

Deepen Faith

Objective: Create liturgies marked by active participation, reverence, hospitality and glorious examples of environment and music in our Cathedral church.

Action: Encourage the congregation to participate for the glory of God.

Action: Recognize the need for diversity in music.

Objective: Become a community that demonstrates faith in action.

Action: Build and inter-connect liturgical ministries, community building ministries, social justice ministries, school and religious education ministries, and stewardship.

Objective: Develop a plan to deepen understanding of our Catholic faith tradition.

Action: Provide access to more life-long scripture and catechesis courses, workshops and lectures.

Action: Offer a variety of Catholic rituals and devotions.

Objective: Create opportunities for people to have a dialogue that bridges spirituality to their daily lives.

Action: Host Catholic spiritual development opportunities for women and men.

Action: Sponsor events that focus on topics of faith and work, faith and home, faith and society.

Action: Incorporate a spiritual dimension into most events and gatherings.

GOAL

Strengthen Ministries

Objective: Identify, invite and empower leaders to share their talents and gifts with our Cathedral of St. Raymond community.

Action: Promote and encourage opportunities for people to take leadership roles in parish ministries, clubs, organizations and commissions.

Action: Create a family-oriented annual Parish Ministry Showcase to make parishioners aware of opportunities to serve and be served.

Action: Provide leadership training materials and/or events to people active in parish ministries and organizations.

Action: Establish Parish Council oversight for the parish ministries to explore the interrelatedness of programs and activities.

Action: Host a leader/volunteer appreciation event.

Objective: Encourage parish ministries, clubs, organizations and commissions to create opportunities for people of all ages to participate in social justice activities and initiatives.

Action: Provide opportunities for action and active reflection on service.

Action: Factor a youth service opportunity into each ministry.

Action: Create a mission opportunity for adults and youth of our parish.

Objective: Invite volunteerism through parish community programs to impact our St. Raymond Community and the community at large.

Action: Host a parish-wide service day.

Action: Provide the forum for people to act and/or reflect on serving the needy of our world.

Objective: Increase service opportunities for students with the hopes of teaching stewardship, ownership and the value of parish involvement. (Also in Goal IV)

Action: Invite students to engage in current programs such as Daybreak, Society of St. Vincent DePaul, clothing drives, etc.

Action: Offer frequent "Service Saturday" opportunities.

GOAL

Build Community

Objective: Create a plan of annual events for people to gather for social, spiritual, and fundraising purposes.

Action: Host social events, lectures, concerts, workshops, retreats, discussions, and fundraising activities.

Objective: Engage the parish community to a greater degree.

Action: Create a hospitality plan for each parish ministry (club, organization and/or commission).

Action: Identify and invite interested people to the ministries.

Action: Identify greeters for all Masses.

Objective: Use technology to communicate, educate and inform current and potential members of the Cathedral of St. Raymond parish.

Action: Develop and maintain a comprehensive parish Web site.

Action: Post timely information on the Web site, including parish bulletin, program and event schedules, and contact information.

Action: Create and implement a communication plan using a variety of tools, both traditional (mail, phone, email) and new (Web, Facebook, Twitter).

Objective: Create a marketing and public relations plan that highlights the strengths of the Cathedral of St. Raymond.

Action: Fund advertising (i.e. billboard, benches, radio and print) to welcome the greater community.

Action: Use local newspaper to build reputation and increase word-of-mouth activity.

Action: Leverage the “Catholics Come Home” campaign to encourage non-active parishioners to return.

Objective: Foster a mutually beneficial relationship with the University of St. Francis.

Action: Initiate a dialogue with University of St. Francis to brainstorm on ways we can build on our shared mission of Catholic education and service.

Action: Seek out systems and programs through which University of St. Francis students and faculty can enrich our grade school curriculum.

GOAL

Involve the Next Generations

Objective: Create opportunities for families to explore the Catholic tradition while deepening their faith.

Action: Develop religious education programs for families.

Action: Offer weekly family faith-building opportunities.

Objective: Increase opportunities for junior high and high school students to participate in faith building and service programs.

Action: Provide students with a list of parish clubs, organizations and ministries and ways they can get involved.

Action: Encourage leaders of all parish organizations and ministries serve as advocates for the youth.

Action: Promote youth representation on each parish ministry board or committee.

Objective: Expand our youth and young adult ministry programs.

Action: Provide funds to staff the program and for program activities.

Action: Provide opportunities for formation in the Catholic faith targeted to young adults.

Action: Involve young adults in the life of our parish through spiritual, service and social participation.

Action: Increase participation of our high school and college age students in liturgical ministries.

GOAL

Ensure Financial Vitality

Objective: Manage church and school resources with a disciplined and realistic approach to financial planning, budgeting and spending.

Action: Adopt a fiscally conservative, forward-thinking policy for employing resources.

Action: Ensure full compliance with all Diocesan fiscal policies.

Action: Create a zero-based budget plus a contingency plan in the event resources are greater than planned.

Objective: Undertake a complete assessment of the physical plant.

Action: Create a plan to respond to areas of concern identified in the assessment.

Action: Explore expansion of Cathedral parking.

Objective: Increase gift income to support major initiatives, financial aid for students and people in need programs.

Action: Identify major gift opportunities.

Action: Develop a plan for promoting a gift-giving program.

Action: Host a planned giving information session.

Action: Create a fundraising committee.

Objective: Invest in programs designed to contribute to the goals outlined in this plan.

Action: Work with the Administration Commission to plan a budget that supports these goals.

Evaluation

We must evaluate our programs and our resources on a regular basis in order to sustain and build on what is effective and to understand the things that are not. We will evaluate the VISION 2017 goals and objectives and share the findings in an annual progress report.

Feedback

The Parish Council Strategic Planning Committee welcomes your input.

Brian Baltz (815) 740-0804 or bwb72@sbcglobal.net

Eileen Gutierrez (815) 722-6653 or straysdevelopment@yahoo.com

Kathy Holden

Bill Jenkins (815) 725-9887 or bjenkins@realmagnet.com

Bryan Kopman (815) 258-6953 or bkopman@kgllc.com

Brian McDaniel (815) 577-7254 or Brian.McDaniel@comcast.net

Mary Meader (815) 729-4545 or memeader@aol.com

Deacon Ed Petak

Marcille Sandahl (815) 725-5140 or msndlsrays@aol.com

Jane Schmig (815) 729-4688 or janeschmig@gmail.com