

Draft Vision for St. Mary's Catholic Church

This draft of the Vision is a starting point for discussion. It is based upon a synthesis of the following inputs:

- Discussion from more than a dozen meetings with the Planning Team including Father Walsh
- The initial survey of the Planning Team
- The Mission statement refinement process, as well as the Mission statement itself
- Comments shared during the Town Hall Meetings
- Survey data and comments
- Insights gleaned from the book about Christendom and Apostolic Mission that was the focus of a Priest Study Day in Lincoln several weeks ago

This draft of the Vision is aligned with the new Mission statement and represents a possible future that the parishioners of St. Mary's can pursue if it lives its Mission.

The Mission of St. Mary's Catholic Church is to worship, serve, and build communion in Jesus Christ, with Mary our mother and guide.

Grammatically, the Mission statement can be broken down into the following statements:

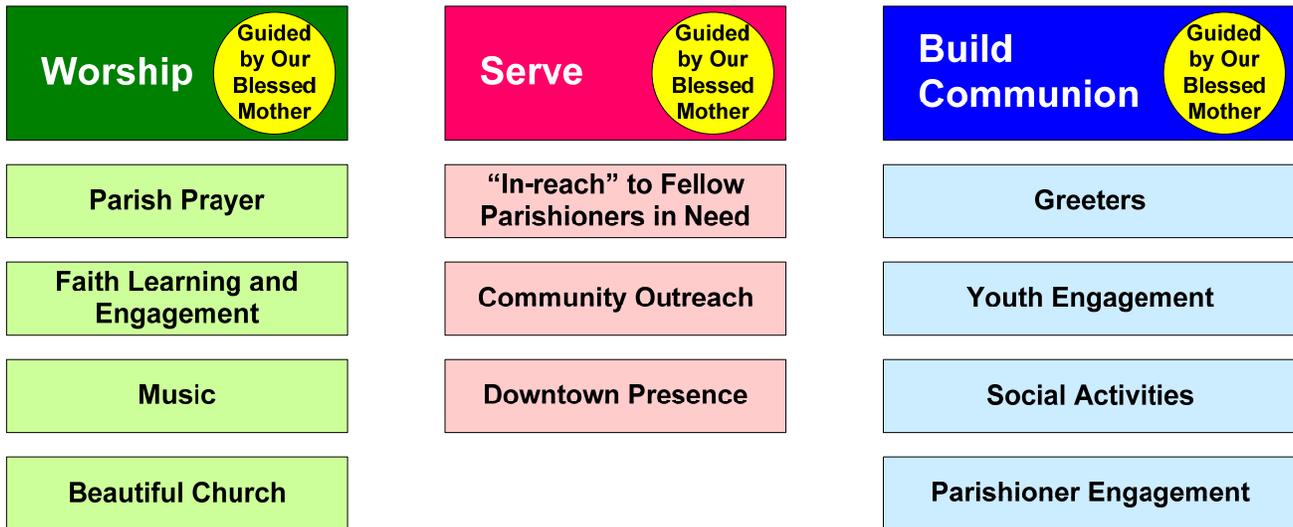
- Worship Jesus Christ with guidance from Mary
- Serve Jesus Christ with guidance from Mary
- Build communion in Jesus Christ with guidance from Mary

The challenge is to develop a Vision that is a manifestation of each of the above bullet points. The first step is to present a model that visually depicts the Vision such that all of the ideas and priorities for which there is consensus are represented in relation to one another. The Model on the following page illustrates the Vision in this way. Below the Model is a narrative explanation as to what the Model means. There are many ways to depict the Vision, and the Model on the following page is just one way. The purpose of depicting the Vision in model form is because 1) Many adults are visual learners; 2) The illustration provides a common basis for discussion; 3) The parts of the Model can be moved around easily as different questions are asked and new insights are shared; 4) A model helps highlight important priorities and themes; and, 5) A model helps a group of people stay focused on what they've decided.

Jesus Christ is the Source and Purpose of our Mission and Vision

The mission of St. Mary's Catholic Church is to worship, serve, and build communion in Jesus Christ, with Mary our mother and guide.

When we pursue our Mission, we will build and sustain a Catholic community where parishioners feel connected, like they belong, and part of something bigger than themselves. They will be both inspired and empowered to participate as proactive stewards of the parish.



Everything that currently exists (all ministries and initiatives) as well as all new ideas that have been shared by St. Mary's parishioners via the Town Hall Meetings, the Planning Team, and the Survey fits into the above boxes which represent the parts of the Mission.

The above boxes represent the structure for how St. Mary's can adopt an Apostolic Mission (as described in Father Walsh's bulletin letter), and live its new Mission.

This Vision Model is a visual way of seeing how the parts fit together. It also helps the parish keep track of what it hopes to accomplish.

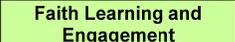
See the accompanying Vision Narrative that explains these boxes.

You might be wondering: Who will decide exactly what is in each box? Or, how will things be implemented and managed? And, who will be responsible for doing it all? The answers to these questions will be shared when the next version of the Vision Model is presented next week.

Stay tuned!

Narrative Explanation of the Vision Model

The following table breaks down each section of the Vision Model and provides a corresponding explanation. The parts are resized to fit in the table. Below this section is a conclusion with further narrative to explain how the Vision Model should be used to further the discussion about the future of St. Mary's Catholic Church.

<p>Jesus Christ is the Source and Purpose of our Mission and Vision</p>	<p>The main box states what the Planning Team has always stated from the beginning. This truth is no different than what any Catholic Church would proclaim. By stating it, we 1) are very clear about what we believe; and 2) are making sure no one thinks that we have misplaced our priority when viewing the rest of the Model.</p> <p>Also, although one's eye might first focus on the center wheel of the page, there is no doubt that this box and its message are the dominating message in the Model.</p>
<p>The mission of St. Mary's Catholic Church is to worship, serve, and build communion in Jesus Christ, with Mary our mother and guide.</p> <p>When we pursue our Mission, we will build and sustain a Catholic community where parishioners feel connected, like they belong, and part of something bigger than themselves. They will be both inspired and empowered to participate as proactive stewards of the parish.</p>	<p>These are the words beneath the main box. They include the Mission statement as well as an explanation of the most dominant theme and priority that has surfaced in the planning process thus far: the desire to feel connected and part of something bigger than oneself. Also included is a peek into the paradigm of empowerment and stewardship: nothing will change or evolve until the parishioners collaborate with the pastor to make changes happen.</p>
	<p>You will see this yellow circle in all 4 components of the Model. It is a visual reminder and cue that the parish has discerned that it must make a conscious effort to seek our Blessed Mother Mary's guidance in all that we do.</p>
<p>Existing Ministries</p>	<p><i>Existing Ministries:</i> Many ministries exist (e.g., Legion of Mary, Knights of Columbus, Acolytes, Altar Society, etc.) and they will continue to perform their roles and contribute to the internal and external communities in the various forms of service they offer. They are not listed on the Model because the many existing ministries could be placed in different boxes, and the Planning Team will need to discern where they fit. It is noted here so that the Planning Team does not lose track of this task.</p>
     	<p>This component is the "Worship" component. The essence of this word, remember, is to ensure that our worship of Jesus Christ is worthy of Him. Some of the priorities that surfaced during this planning process are listed in the boxes below the main box. The color green does not mean anything and can be changed to whatever color the Planning Team prefers.</p> <p>Each box can be broken down into more detail, and some starter suggestions are as follows (again, based on input gathered thus far):</p> <p><i>Parish Prayer:</i> includes the Rosary before Mass; special prayers and prayer times to celebrate our Blessed Mother; organized encouragement for families to pray at home, particularly the Rosary, but other prayers as well; instruction as to how to pray effectively; etc.</p> <p><i>Faith Learning and Engagement:</i> includes programs such as RCIA; Bible studies; guest speakers; CCD; and other forms of formal learning about our faith.</p> <p><i>Music:</i> includes the Music Ministry; the organ; choosing music for Mass and how that gets accomplished; possibly hiring a Director of Liturgical Music; special concerts; styles of music, etc.</p> <p><i>Beautiful Church:</i> includes refurbishment; possibly adding new statues; new space to glorify our Blessed Mother; other enhancements, etc.</p>

<div data-bbox="50 65 285 159" style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 5px;"> Serve Guided by Our Blessed Mother </div> <div data-bbox="50 176 285 226" style="background-color: #f8bbd0; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> “In-reach” to Fellow Parishioners in Need </div> <div data-bbox="50 243 285 294" style="background-color: #f8bbd0; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> Community Outreach </div> <div data-bbox="50 310 285 361" style="background-color: #f8bbd0; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> Downtown Presence </div>	<p>This component is the “Serve” component. The essence of this word, remember, is to be Christ-in-the-moment to others, thus serving Jesus Christ. Some of the priorities that surfaced during this planning process are listed in the boxes below the main box. The color red/rose does not mean anything and can be changed to whatever color the Planning Team prefers.</p> <p>Each box can be broken down into more detail, and some starter suggestions are as follows (again, based on input gathered thus far):</p> <p><i>“In-reach” to Fellow Parishioners in Need:</i> includes all of the many possible ways that the parish can begin to assist, support and help those who expressed some sort of need within the health and wellness section of the survey. The phrase “in-reach” is important because it complements the traditional “outreach” that Catholics like to perform, and it draws attention to the fact that our very own parishioners need help, too. What exactly will be done or offered? That’s a question requiring further discussion and discernment, but there is definitely a need for it.</p> <p><i>Community Outreach:</i> includes FoodNet; other services to those in need, or at least a process for connecting people with other available services (such as Catholic Social Services); other forms of outreach that typically address a need in the immediate community. We also need to define specific communities that would be good to target and foster, such as a government community, entertainment/hospitality, young professionals, or businesses and business leaders—what could it mean to engage targeted communities? Additionally, many existing ministries will continue to contribute their efforts at community outreach.</p> <p><i>Downtown Presence:</i> includes opportunities to leverage the location across from the Capitol (e.g., Right to Life); participating in community events from the “front porch” of the church; signage; possible new space that the community could utilize (e.g., wedding reception space, or meeting rooms within a new building in place of the old school); creating some sort of safe haven space in the midst of the downtown hustle and bustle; and other opportunities to have an impact.</p>
<div data-bbox="50 1018 285 1092" style="background-color: #2196f3; color: white; padding: 5px;"> Build Communion Guided by Our Blessed Mother </div> <div data-bbox="50 1108 285 1150" style="background-color: #bbdefb; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> Greeters </div> <div data-bbox="50 1167 285 1209" style="background-color: #bbdefb; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> Youth Engagement </div> <div data-bbox="50 1226 285 1268" style="background-color: #bbdefb; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> Social Activities </div> <div data-bbox="50 1285 285 1327" style="background-color: #bbdefb; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px;"> Parishioner Engagement </div>	<p>This component is the “Build Communion” component. The essence of this word, remember, is to form a community to which parishioners feel like they belong, and have solidarity in their love of Jesus Christ. Some of the priorities that surfaced during this planning process are listed in the boxes below the main box. The color blue does not mean anything and can be changed to whatever color the Planning Team prefers.</p> <p>Each box can be broken down into more detail, and some starter suggestions are as follows (again, based on input gathered thus far):</p> <p><i>Greeters:</i> specifically means people at Mass greeting those who arrive, and saying goodbye when they leave; it could also be interpreted more broadly in the sense of trying to instill a welcoming spirit within all activities and facets of the parish.</p> <p><i>Social Activities:</i> includes events such as dances; hobby gatherings; activities such as gaming and card clubs; going to community events as a group of Catholics; etc. The main point is that this is Catholics hanging out with other Catholics without it having to be a Sacrament or learning about our faith. People are yearning for friendship and group fun, and hanging out with people who share your faith is a powerful way to strengthen the parish dynamics towards building community and connectivity.</p> <p><i>Youth Engagement:</i> includes youth groups; programs and activities for youth and/or families; opportunities to engage the broader community as a group of youth (e.g., downtown trash cleanup); youth participation and leadership in Mass; etc.</p> <p><i>Parishioner Engagement:</i> This box is a final catchall that underscores the importance of inviting parishioners to be part of their parish. It would include things existing programs such as Fish-Fri and Winterfest, but could also include new programs: parish picnic; parish kickball at the park; parish tailgate; parish etc. The key word is “parish” because it is a parish-organized and supported event for parishioners (and possibly open to non-parishioners).</p>