

Focus Groups to Discuss the Vision for St. Mary's Catholic Church

As we have seen our Vision develop, we know that it 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.

The current Vision Model is to the right.

We now invite and encourage all parishioners to attend Focus Groups to share their thoughts about the various Vision Components, and learn how they can participate in the future of our church.

The table on the following page sets forth the schedule of the Focus Groups for the Vision Components.

Please select the Focus Groups you'd like to attend, and then plan to attend.

- All Focus Group will be held in a meeting room connected to the basement (old kindergarten room).
- All Focus Groups will last no longer than 90 minutes (you can leave when you need to).
- You are welcome to bring a brown bag lunch to the Noon Focus Group (noon meetings will be shorter).
- You are welcome to bring a beverage and snack to any Focus Group.
- John Ferrone will facilitate all Focus Groups.
- Your comments and suggestions are what are needed, and they will be notated without any names attached to them.
- You are welcome to attend multiple Focus Groups of the same Vision Component.
- To prepare, please read the past bulletin announcements that can be downloaded from the St. Mary's website:

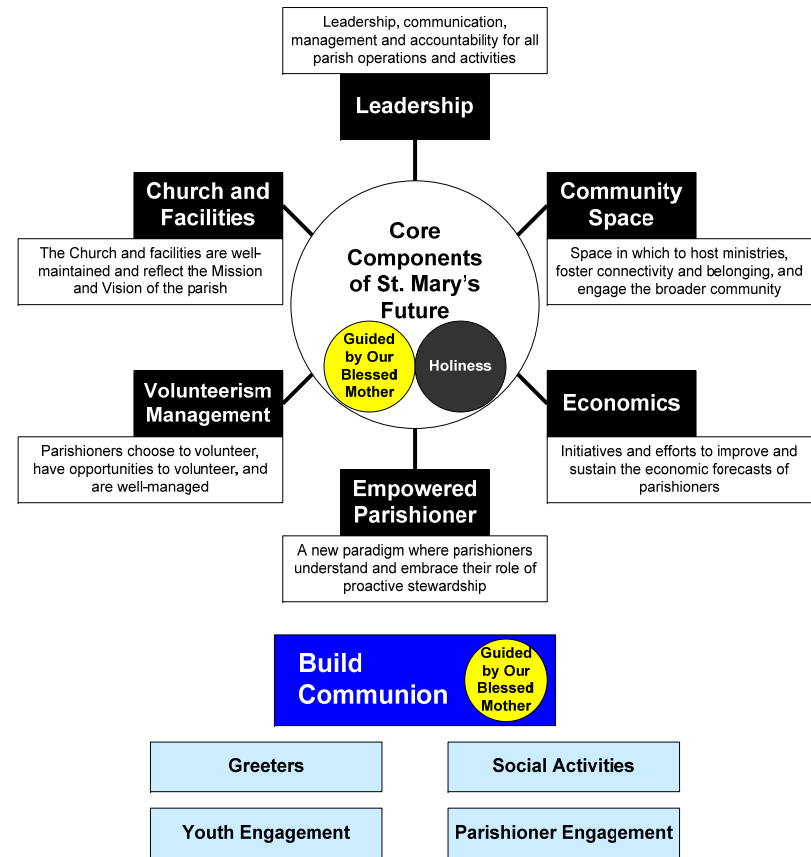
<https://stmarylincoln.org/>



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.



All Focus Group Schedule at a Glance

| Date | Time | Community Space | Economics | Empowered Parishioner | Volunteerism Management | Church and Facilities | Leadership | Worship | Serve | Build Communion | Guided by Our Blessed Mother |
|-----------|------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|---------|-------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| T, 6/21 | 9am | X | | | | | | | | | |
| | Noon | | X | | | | | | | | |
| | 2pm | | | X | | | | | | | |
| | 4pm | | | | X | | | | | | |
| | 6pm | | | | | X | | | | | |
| | 8pm | | | | | | X | | | | |
| W, 6/22 | Noon | | | | | | | X | | | |
| | 2pm | | | | | | | | X | | |
| | 4pm | | | | | | | | | X | |
| | 6pm | | | | | | | | | | X |
| | 8pm | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Th, 6/23 | 4pm | | X | | | | | | | | |
| | 6pm | | | X | | | | | | | |
| | 8pm | | | | X | | | | | | |
| F, 6/24 | 8am | | | | | X | | | | | |
| | 10am | | | | | | X | | | | |
| | Noon | | | | | | | | | X | |
| | 2pm | | | | | | | | | | X |
| | 4pm | | | | | | | X | | | |
| | 6pm | | | | | | | | X | | |
| | 8pm | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Sat, 6/25 | 11am | X | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1pm | | | | | X | | | | | |
| | 3pm | | | | | | X | | | | |
| M, 6/27 | Noon | | | X | | | | | | | |
| | 2pm | | | | | | | | | X | |
| T, 6/28 | Noon | | | | | | | | X | | |
| | 2pm | | | | | | | | | | X |
| | 4pm | | | X | | | | | | | |
| | 6pm | | | | | | | X | | | |
| T, 7/5 | Noon | | | | | | | X | | | |
| | 2pm | | | | | | | | X | | |
| | 4pm | | | | | | | | | X | |
| | 6pm | | | | | | | | | | X |
| | 8pm | | X | | | | | | | | |
| W, 7/6 | 4pm | X | | | | | | | | | |
| | 6pm | | | X | | | | | | | |

| VISION COMPONENT | DESCRIPTION | DATES/TIMES |
|---|--|---|
|  | <p>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> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wed., 6/22, 6pm • Friday, 6/24, 2pm • Tues., 6/28, 2pm • Tues., 7/5, 6pm |
|  <p>Parish Prayer</p> <p>Faith Learning and Engagement</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Beautiful Church</p> | <p>The essence of this word, “Worship”, is in the Mission to ensure that our worship of Jesus Christ is worthy of Him.</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> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wed., 6/22, Noon • Friday, 6/24, 4pm • Tues., 6/28, 6pm • Tues., 7/5, Noon |
|  <p>“In-reach” to Fellow Parishioners in Need</p> <p>Community Outreach</p> <p>Downtown Presence</p> | <p>The essence of this word “Serve” from the Mission is to be Christ-in-the-moment to others, thus serving Jesus Christ.</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.</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> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wed., 6/22, 2pm • Friday, 6/24, 6pm • Tues., 6/28, Noon • Tues., 7/5, 2pm |

| VISION COMPONENT | DESCRIPTION | DATES/TIMES |
|--|--|--|
| <div data-bbox="100 167 365 253" style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; padding: 5px;"> Build Communion </div> <div data-bbox="275 167 365 253" style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin-left: 10px;"> Guided by Our Blessed Mother </div> <div data-bbox="121 266 340 315" style="border: 1px solid #0056b3; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;">Greeters</div> <div data-bbox="121 331 340 380" style="border: 1px solid #0056b3; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;">Youth Engagement</div> <div data-bbox="121 396 340 444" style="border: 1px solid #0056b3; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;">Social Activities</div> <div data-bbox="121 461 340 509" style="border: 1px solid #0056b3; padding: 2px; margin-top: 5px;">Parishioner Engagement</div> | <p>The essence of this phrase “Build Communion” in the Mission is to form a community to which parishioners feel like they belong, and have solidarity in their love of Jesus Christ.</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 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> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wed., 6/22, 4pm • Friday, 6/24, Noon • Mon., 6/27, 2pm • Tues., 7/5, 4pm |
| <div data-bbox="100 850 340 906" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">Leadership, communication, management and accountability for all parish operations and activities</div> <div data-bbox="151 915 289 971" style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Leadership</div> | <p><i>Leadership:</i> However it is referred to in the future, there will be a governance structure that has the capacity to provide the leadership, communication, management and accountability for the parish in all that it does. It will include the necessary subcommittees, such as Finance and Facilities, but it will be more than a group of parishioners who come together to listen, discuss, and recommend. Its structure will be aligned with the Vision Model, and many more parishioners will be asked to participate in various roles of leadership and accountability as the various activities and initiatives are launched. The Planning Team will be working on the task of creating a Governance Structure so that it exists and can provide leadership to pursue the Vision.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tues., 6/21, 8pm • Friday, 6/24, 10am • Sat., 6/25, 3pm |
| <div data-bbox="100 1143 235 1198" style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Community Space</div> <div data-bbox="100 1208 340 1263" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">Space in which to host ministries, foster connectivity and belonging, and engage the broader community</div> | <p><i>Community Space:</i> One of the most important priorities is the need for space. Is it possible to create a multi-use facility ranging from a wedding facility, to meeting space, to retail/services space for lease, to a business incubator (see the next point)? Without new space that can be utilized in support of what the parish has discerned it both needs and desires to pursue, then much of what has been discerned will not be feasible. This priority requires special attention and is a key facet to St. Mary’s future.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tues., 6/21, 9am • Wed., 6/22, 8pm • Sat., 6/25, 11am • Wed., 7/6, 4pm |
| | <p><i>Economics:</i> This topic is a paradigm shift for many people. The bottom line is that economic self-sufficiency among parishioners is needed, but cannot be assumed. The more a Catholic parish can do for its own parishioners to support them to either stabilize and/or increase their economic status, the better. It is not a goal to make everyone rich! But it should be a goal to use our Catholic community to support one another with business decisions, purchasing, sales, jobs,</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tues., 6/21, Noon • Thurs., 6/23, 4pm • Fri., 6/24, 8pm • Tues., 7/5, 8pm |

| VISION COMPONENT | DESCRIPTION | DATES/TIMES |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Economics</p> <p>Initiatives and efforts to improve and sustain the economic forecasts of parishioners</p> | <p>networking, etc. This used to occur in the past, and it is something we need to return to. One possibility that is very out-of-the-box but that makes very good sense given the downtown location is the idea of establishing a Catholic Business Incubator. This document will not get into the details of such an initiative, but in summary it would be a process and a space to encourage and support Catholics to start, run, and grow new businesses, and the approach would be a win/win for the entrepreneur and the parish in many ways including: wealth-building, jobs, skill-building, internships, donations, branding, etc. The Economics priority requires special attention and is a key facet to St. Mary’s future.</p> | |
| <p>Empowered Parishioner</p> <p>A new paradigm where parishioners understand and embrace their role of proactive stewardship</p> | <p><i>Empowered Parishioner:</i> How many people stated in the survey that they would like a Bible Study, yet none are officially offered by the parish. What does it mean to be “offered by the parish”? What that phrase will come to mean in the future—because parishioners will learn that they are empowered and expected to be proactive stewards of the parish—is that a parishioner will say, “If I want a Bible Study, I will organize one, and I know how to do that because the Governance Council (or whatever it is called) will help me do that.” This approach should be true across the board. There are parishioners willing to step forward and lead, but they don’t know that they can, or that they are being invited to do so. Empowering the parishioners is a key facet to the future of the parish’s ability to realize this Vision.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tues., 6/21, 2pm • Thurs., 6/23, 6pm • Mon., 6/27, Noon • Tues., 6/28, 4pm • Wed., 7/6, 6pm |
| <p>Volunteerism Management</p> <p>Parishioners choose to volunteer, have opportunities to volunteer, and are well-managed</p> | <p><i>Volunteerism and Management:</i> Tying in with the notion of the Empowered Parishioner is volunteerism. As more is planned, more people will be needed to help. [Note: The parish will implement its ideas wisely, of course, and not outstrip its parishioner capacity]. As more parishioners understand the opportunity to engage, and are energized by being empowered, there will be a need for a concerted management effort to ensure that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing. In way, this box is highlighting the need for increased volunteerism and the actual increase that will occur, as well as the need to manage volunteers effectively. It is a key facet to the future of the parish as it pursues its Vision.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tues., 6/21, 4pm • Thurs., 6/23, 8pm |
| <p>Church and Facilities</p> <p>The Church and facilities are well-maintained and reflect the Mission and Vision of the parish</p> | <p><i>Church and Facilities:</i> This is the low-hanging fruit of every Catholic parish across the country. If we fix the roof and gutters, or tuck-point the brick, or pave the lot, etc. we’re doing great! Yes, without a well-cared-for church and facilities, you have no parish. But too often the care of bricks and mortar is where the imagination ends. This component, then, is necessary and critical, but it also must not be the only priority—it must be one of many as evidenced by the others listed above. More to the point, this component accounts for the future, as well, and thus is critical both in the present and in the future.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tues., 6/21, 6pm • Fri., 6/24, 8am • Sat., 6/25, 1pm |