

St. Matthew Catholic Church

Pastoral Plan for 2008 – 2011 - Plan Summary



Plan Summary

Introduction

St. Matthew Catholic Church will celebrate its silver jubilee in September of 2011. The Pastoral Plan presented here celebrates the amazing success of a dynamic, vibrant parish. Any successful parish that is growing and maturing must look to the past to keep close and celebrate those traditions that made it successful. However, in order to keep progressing on our faith journey, both individually and as a parish, one must have the courage to challenge the status quo. This plan is meant to challenge the status quo.

Opportunities

The Pastoral Plan Committee was formed in July 2007 to reassess and review the functioning of St. Matthew in order to write a new Pastoral Plan. The committee identified four areas which it felt needed attention. These were: spiritual development, communication, welcoming, and leadership development.

The committee was then charged with the prime directive as follows: St. Matthew Parish needed to focus, first and foremost, on significantly raising the overall level of spiritual development and engagement of all parishioners.

To that end, the committee began its extensive research which involved identifying other Catholic parishes that had instituted an effective spiritual development program. It was during this research that the committee contacted the Gallup organization. Gallup had developed a survey known as the Member Engagement Survey 25 (ME²⁵), which would help to measure the two primary indicators of spiritual health – spiritual commitment and congregational engagement. These two indicators would become centerpieces to the new Pastoral Plan.

In December 2007, St. Matthew participated in the ME²⁵ survey. In addition to implementing the ME²⁵ survey, the committee researched Gallup's Living Your Strengths program. The Living Your Strengths program is designed as a small group program that will help parishioners identify their unique God-given talents. It is surmised that once people become familiar with their strengths, we will see an increase in their parish engagement and spiritual development will occur.

Plan Summary CONTINUED

The Pastoral Plan

The new Pastoral Plan is a four year plan with special emphasis on improving spirituality and engagement. The plan will also attempt to promote positive change that will enhance spiritual development, welcoming, communication, and leadership development.

Each year of the plan has a theme:

Year One	Prepare the Soil
Year Two	Plant the Seeds
Year Three	Water the Crop
Year Four	Reap the Harvest

The overview of each of these years is contained in this document beginning on page 21.

To help introduce and implement the four year plan, the Committee has established a vision statement and updated the parish mission statement.

The vision statement was designed as a short, concise statement that is easily remembered by all in the parish. St. Matthew's new vision statement is:

Connected in Christ! Moved by the Spirit!

The revised mission statement is as follows:

“The Eucharistic Catholic community of St. Matthew loves Christ above all things and our neighbor as ourselves. In our faith journey, our parish family will be engaged and spiritually committed; fulfilling our vision through shared Gospel values, prayer, fellowship, service, outreach, and teaching.”

Another important piece of the plan is parish expectations. It was realized through the December 2007 ME25 survey results that most parishioners did not know what was expected of them as a member of St. Matthew. Many felt that their opinions did not matter, and that the spiritual leaders did not care about them individually.

As a result, two broad areas of expectations were addressed in May 2008.

- What is expected of you if you are a parishioner at St. Matthew
- What should a parishioner expect of the clergy, staff, and leadership of St. Matthew?

The responses were reviewed and evaluated with the idea that they should reflect the uniqueness of St. Matthew. The list was submitted for approval to Monsignor McSweeney in June of 2008. Pending his approval, additional steps will be made to increase the understanding of our expectations as it relates to the successful future of St. Matthew.