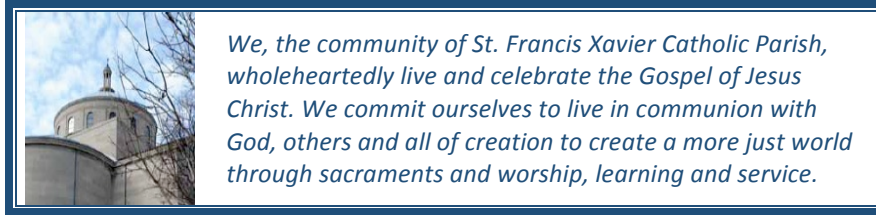


THE PROPHETIC PLAN – Fulfilling the Mission – Summary



In 2011, St. Francis Xavier parish began a journey – a journey of self-discovery. The process of self-discovery involved many people with many different ideas and perspectives. Sixty to seventy people attended each of the three weekend retreats; and, about 1150 people responded to the in-the-pew survey. The quest was not so much about finding new abilities or new skills, but about gaining a new understanding and awareness of those skills and abilities that already exist within us. As a result, we have named ourselves in our mission statement, reaffirmed what is important to us with our value statements, looked to the future with our vision statement, and outlined a course of action with our goals and objectives. (The complete *Prophetic Plan* can be found at <http://parish.sfxlg.org/about-the-parish/prophetic-planning/>.)

Since that time, the *Prophetic Plan* has guided the actions of the parish. It has been visible in discourse about ministries, in reminders in the Bulletins, and in the accomplishments of the parish. Our values and mission remain the same; and, the vision still reflects where we want to be. Each of the goals and objectives have been addressed. Some are still in process, some are completed, and some need to be redefined. There are many pages of accomplishments tied to the goals and objectives. These are available to those who wish to explore that level of detail on the parish website. This hopes to be a more concise summary.

In developing the summary, three central themes were identified – **Welcome, Worship, and Work.**

Welcome includes more than the ritual greeting at the start of Mass. It is the recognition of others as brothers and sisters in Christ, and the desire to invite them to participate in our journey. In our Vision Statement, “We embrace our call to be welcoming, loving, and prophetic in an ever-changing world.”

- We partner with neighboring parishes, congregations, and the community on the Food Pantry, youth ministry, support groups, and adult faith formation.
- Priests invite those unable to receive communion to receive a blessing instead.
- Parishioners participate with the Ascension-St. Susanna Bible Study and host meetings at St. Francis Xavier.
- The day school and the religious education program share resources as part of an effort to emphasize the common aspects of those two approaches to understanding our faith.
- A Teen Youth Council involves teens more actively with the life of the parish.
- Our parish organizations provide spiritual, service, educational, and social opportunities for children, teens, adults, seniors, the active and the homebound, men and women.
- Unity Hall will provide greater opportunities for welcoming activities. And, we are developing more personal approaches to welcoming new parishioners.

Worship recognizes that different people relate to God in different ways. Our Vision Statement places prayer at the center of our parish life and reminds us that, “Our prayer, public and private, compels us both to live the Gospel faithfully and to celebrate its message beyond the church doors.”

- Our weekend liturgies have been enhanced by the addition of young Lectors, Commentators, Eucharistic Ministers, and Music Ministers.
- There has been an increase in the number of liturgy planners and other liturgical ministers.
- Music is an important part of worship for many people. Our music at these liturgies is enriched by the addition of talented young musicians. And, opportunities to sing in choirs are available to children, teens, and adults.
- Additional worship experiences are provided – small faith-sharing groups, Taizé prayer, shared Mass with St. Agatha, CHRP and KAIROS retreats, Bible studies, and Quest groups for teens.
- Our strong relationship with *The Well* enhances the faith development of our parishioners through participation in their religious formation programs.
- Twice a week, word and communion services, led by our own parishioners, provide worship opportunities.
- The number of trained and mandated Ministers of Care has increased to provide worship experiences for the homebound and hospitalized.

Work includes activities that address human concerns and issues of social justice. Our Vision Statement reflects our longing for God’s Kingdom, and so, “...we pray for and work to create a more just and peaceful world. We educate ourselves to act to end social injustices. We are dedicated to serving those in need.”

- St. Francis Xavier continues to send teens and adults on domestic missions to Virginia Beach, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and on Habitat for Humanity service to Clarksdale, Mississippi.
- Parishioners support the BEDS program, not only by hosting, but by advocating for permanent housing for the chronically homeless in the La Grange area.
- Our food pantry is well supported by donations from parishioners, schools, other individuals, and local businesses. Volunteers at the food pantry come from St. Francis Xavier and from near-by parishes.
- St. Francis Xavier School is a Blue-Ribbon School of Excellence.
- A Day School Day of Service provides students opportunities to serve in various agencies. That experience was so successful that an all parish day of service was created. In 2016, over 400 parishioners of all ages reached out to 19 organizations.
- Education in the Catholic faith is vibrant and visible in both the Day School and the School of Religious Education. Students jointly participate in service projects and in religious formation activities.
- St. Francis Xavier provides funds to St. Agatha for tuition assistance and to Ascension-St. Susanna for the improvement and upkeep of their facilities.
- The Domestic Violence Outreach group was created in partnership with St. Cletus and St. John of the Cross when parishioners became more aware that this was a growing problem.

These are only a few examples of the accomplishments of goals and objectives based on our *Prophetic Plan* and fulfilling our mission statement. We are not finished. We are at a waypoint on the journey that leads to the fulfillment of our Vision. Relying on our Values – Spirituality, Community, Lifelong Learning, Justice, Service, Youth Involvement, and Family Ministry, we now continue that journey, for, as our Vision states, “We are contemplative seekers of truth, constantly listening and discerning, reading and speaking. We journey toward greater spiritual awareness in the company of men and women, young and old, lay and ordained.”

May 21, 2017