



Foundational Documents

Our Mission

We at St. Paul the Apostle Parish gather the many gifts and talents of our community for one thing – *mission*. The Church doesn't simply have a mission, we *are* a mission. We are all about building a community of disciples, strengthened in Word and Sacrament, to celebrate, live and share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Everything we do goes back to helping people have a transformative encounter with Jesus Christ and to live into that relationship as *intentional disciples*. This is our mission, the one Jesus gave the entire Church in the Gospel of Matthew, “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).

Discipleship Process



“Go and make disciples of all nations. . .” Matthew 28:19

We at St. Paul the Apostle are all about **FORMING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES**. The diamond of discipleship is our game plan for accomplishing this mission. We believe that every disciple is called to encounter Christ personally, to follow Him passionately, to discover their unique calling, and to serve the world accordingly. We do this by being intentional with every person, process and program. Why? Because we love God and honor the Great Commission He gave us.

LOVE . . . Jesus

The spiritual journey begins with a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. These encounters change our hearts, set us ablaze for Christ and reorient our lives to Him. What we do on this “baseline” creates opportunities for the Holy Spirit to work as people encounter Jesus and open their eyes to the LOVE of God that transforms their lives, helping them to “fall in love” with the Risen Savior. Through continual encounter and conversion, our hearts are set ablaze and our relationship with God is renewed.

LEARN . . . to be a disciple

After the initial encounter with the Lord, the LEARN stage of spiritual development helps people develop the habits of the heart and head that ensures growth in their relationship with Jesus. People in this stage learn to pray, to read the Scriptures, to receive the Sacraments with heart fully opened, to fellowship with other disciples, to listen to the still small voice of God and draw the courage to follow Jesus daily. Our goal in this stage is to form vibrant, mature and disciplined followers of Christ.

LIVE . . . your calling

This stage in the spiritual journey is all about discernment. It assumes that the individual is a mature disciple and poses the questions, “What is my unique calling in this community? How do my own gifts and affinities apply to the world at large? What unique role is God calling me to?” The Church’s work in this stage provides a process of discernment whereby each disciple can discover how their deepest passions intersect with the world’s greatest needs to give glory to God.

LAUNCH . . . into the world

Once a disciple discovers his/her calling, it is now time to get to work! They are ready to be LAUNCHED into the world to serve others according to their gifts and passions. They are sent into the world to intentionally engage others, building authentic relationships, and sharing the gospel in the organic context of their daily lives. The Church’s work in this stage is to provide intentional disciples an opportunity to live out their calling, to press into the true self, the person God created us to be.

Guiding Values

1. Seeking Jesus

We, the members of Saint Paul the Apostle Parish, baptized and confirmed in faith, pursue an ongoing, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This relationship is strengthened by the Word of God, the Sacraments of the Church, and a consistent lifestyle of prayer, study and action. We love Jesus, seek the will of God in all things and rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We celebrate the Sunday Eucharist as the summit and source of our Christian journey. We seek Jesus and embrace all of these guiding values out of our commitment to the Catholic Church and her teachings.

2. Building Relationships

We are all about *relationship*. Our relationship with God guides, informs and overflows into our relationships with others. As God pursues a deep, personal relationship with us, we intentionally pursue loving relationships with those around us so that the presence of God can be known and a civilization of love can be built.

We work to build up the Body of Christ, the Church, through humble and positive interactions with others. We know our weaknesses and thus can identify with those who are struggling. We seek reconciliation and understanding. We welcome constructive criticism and use it to improve ourselves and the parish community. We seek open, honest and transparent communication, going to the proper sources when there is a question or a concern. We are open to dialogue and seek to correct misinformation in a spirit of truth and love.

3. Sharing the Gospel

We know the overarching story of God and can articulate that basic message of the Gospel to others. We have reflected on our own stories of faith and actively participate in evangelization by relating our story to others in a natural and pastorally sensitive way. Finally, we can identify how our story and God's story intersect to advance the mission of God in the world today.

4. Embracing Mission

We personally embrace our call to love God, love others and make disciples. The Church doesn't have a mission, the Church *is* mission (Mt 28:18-20). This mission is *evangelization*. Embracing evangelization as the deepest identity of the Church, we understand that all of us are evangelists and are called to seek the lost as Jesus did. As intentional disciples of Christ, we actively participate in evangelization by helping others to know, love and serve the Lord.

5. Praying Always

We are people of prayer. We embrace deep, personal, transformative prayer as the foundation of our life in the Spirit and our service to others in the name of Christ. We are comfortable praying for and with others. Attuned to those who are hurting or struggling, we pray for one another, for our parish community and for the world at large.

6. Studying Faithfully

We are committed to study and lifelong formation through exploration of the Scriptures, Sacred Tradition, and the Church's theology, history and spirituality, to help us on our journey of discipleship.

7. Acting for the Kingdom

We are not only people of prayer, but people of action. Our community is committed to using our gifts to share the Gospel, to make disciples, to serve the needy, to work for justice and to build up the kingdom of God.

8. Fostering Unity

We are one body in Christ. Our community understands the importance of fostering healthy relationships within the parish community and beyond. We realize that we are all connected and that the Gospel is intimately personal but not private. Knowing that our unity in Christ is a powerful witness to the Good News, we love one another and commit ourselves to united service to the world.

9. Connecting to the Community

We are faithful to the Sunday (or Saturday night) gathering of the Eucharist at St. Paul the Apostle Parish realizing that God has called us to this community. We recognize the importance of our presence together and joyfully offer our gifts to advance our mission as a parish.

10. Giving Generously

We support the parish by giving generously of our time, talent and treasure to build up the parish, the local Body of Christ. We seek to utilize our gifts to support the life of the parish and to serve the wider needs of our community.