



Vision In Action - VIA

Meeting held Sept. 26, 2009

Vision In Action
improving St. Therese Parish
via

- Hands-on involvement
- Stewardship of time, talent & treasure
- Listening and doing

Next meeting:
October 24
9 am

Attending: Andy Somers, Bert & Mary Wiegand, Carlos Herrera, Ellen Vissers, Ernesto Gonzalez, Fr. Bill Hoffman, Greg Pethan, James Zimmer, Larrie Brazner, Nancy Bourassa, Sr. Gemma Therese.

1. Opening prayer - was said by Fr. Bill.

OLD BUSINESS:

2. Phone Tree update

Generally working well. There are a few glitches we're working on - what time to send these, getting the email part to work, Hispanic database is messy. Positive feedback so far. Will try to find a volunteer to help keep up with the Hispanic database.

3. Getting a sponsor for TV

Notice should be in the bulletin this weekend.

4. Business Card update

They are in the back of church. Will try a new approach: staple one to each bulletin some week plus announce as a reinforcement.

5. Sale of the school building

Hoffman Construction came to look at the building. They will do a feasibility study & cost estimate to see if it's possible to knock off the top 2 floors of the building and just keep the ground level, with a walkway from church over to the Family Room, cafeteria and gym.

NEW BUSINESS:

6. What ideas can we take away from Terry Thorne's talk and implement to help our parish???

A. Name tags idea

St. Bernard's does this. Let's ask how it's working. Maybe start at REP or a committee first? Suggestion: we should put our names and also list one of the committees/groups we work on so people can discuss things with us. Should do this at fundraisers and get together. *Mary will bring samples of name tags to the next meeting.*

B. Welcoming ideas

We want to be a more welcoming parish and have better energy at Mass.

Maybe at the beginning of Mass have a welcome and tell people to introduce themselves to those around them.

Ushers could be younger people (teens), couples or families. There is an usher's meeting in November, talk to them about being very welcoming (follow Larry H's example of shaking hands with each as they go to Communion?)

Put a notice in the bulletin to look at recently posted pictures of an event, they'll see people they know. *Ellen will make some magnets (attach a business card size to a glue-on magnetic sheet) so people can put one on the fridge to remind them of our web address.*

C. Giving Tree could be done differently - ask another family to join with you to purchase a gift, and then deliver it yourself. Kids could sponsor/gift kids. Get youth involved.

D. Retreat in English and Spanish.

Especially for ministers and others interested in ministry. Half day, maybe Saturday Nov. 28? (Sat. after Thansgiving). *Fr. Bill will bring some possible dates to the next meeting.*

7. Next meeting October 24; Bert & Mary volunteered to bring treats. (Thanks Larrie for donuts today!)

Bill Kime will bring a box of basic tools.

We will look at the print out of our sticky-notes again and come up with more implementable ideas.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00
Minutes by Ellen Vissers

Parking Lot:

Redecorating the Family Room, per Kathy S. memo. Consensus to wait until after Hoffman's feasibility study. Pictures could be enlarged photos of activities. Ernesto has connections.

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Repeat from 8-26 minutes, sticky note ideas, brainstorming on parish improvement, following up on Terry Thorne's talk. What can we take away that will benefit our parish?

After discussion, we came up with a number of main themes:

- **Spirituality**
- **Welcoming**
- **Stewardship**
- **Liturgical**
- **Social**
- **Services**
- **Leadership / Training**
- **Communications**

🌀 **Spirituality**

- Offer joint retreats/bible study for both Hispanic and Anglos
- Focus on spiritual and social issues
- Begin home groups w/focus on spiritual & social (-start w/VIA members holding mtgs with other parishes members each knows?)
- Home churches
 - Youth home churches
- Consider "Christ Renews his Parish" sessions
- Set up many home groups to discuss some Catholic faith areas & meet as a parish twice a year

🌀 **Welcome**

- Routinely have people introduce themselves to others before Mass
- Greeters to include families w/young children (possibly REP children)
- Do the name tag thing – follow up on no shows – ask if they need services
- Greeters and welcome in English and Spanish
- Create a welcoming community

🌀 **Stewardship**

- Get parishioners to sign up for ministries so existing people church don't feel burned out by working 3 – 4 weekends per month
- Have existing committee makeup be more multi-cultural with members showing up, not just on the membership list
- Welcoming parish – Fill needs within the church – Connect our youth to multiple opportunities
- Can we tap into Xavier to get youth to help our parishioners?
- Welcoming Parish Environment / Culture etc. – Small based comm. – Stewardship – Focus on ministry – Social
- Reinstate stewardship committee to see where people would volunteer to help others
- Seek opportunities to serve – Offer opportunities for Parishioners. Form Ministries to serve others
- Create skills inventory by parishioner. Announce current needs in announcements.

☞ **Liturgical**

- Have mixed (Anglo – Hispanic) Usher training, Communion Ministers
- Teach all Communion Ministers how to say in English or Spanish:
The Body of Christ — El Cuerpode Cristo
The Body of Christ — La Sangra de Christo

☞ **Social**

- Space for elderly to socialize before/after Mass
- Create an activity for all youth (Anglo and Hispanic)
- What ever will we do with those large, empty unused buildings?
- Need more socials, that is where you get to know people and make them feel welcome – small, after church?
Soup, sandwich, lunch, chili, dip
- Enclose space off bell tower to be used as a social gathering space
- Have “Share” times ie soup night/luncheon where speaker comes to share information –
also serve as mini social (ie: gathering to share about DR had many attending & was fun!!)
- Cookies and juice after Mass, possibly outside church
- ½ hour culture presentations: Hispanic, German, Micronesia, other
- Do something for families, teens, children; Anglos feel left out
- Social period after Mass – In church – not in school

☞ **Services**

- Spanish speaking classes
- English speaking classes on ESL
- Introduction to the Spanish language class, include history and culture
- Create focus groups – i.e: elderly, caregivers, young family, youth

☞ **Leadership / Training**

- Leadership training, Focus within
- Overworked staff: solicit volunteers to free up Chris and Barb’s time
- Have Sr. Anne Arthur and Larry describe their impressions of Diocese’s service to our group
- Training for staff, committees on how to solicit help, what to say, not say
- We have a great and only advantage, that is the Spanish language. If we don’t, would the Hispanic people come to this parish?
- Staff training / Development
- Eventually will have to assess staffing issues. Do we have the right people doing the right jobs?
- Benchmarking at other churches

☞ **Communications**

- More communications with staff about what is going on in the parish.
- While the TV project is tabled, e-mail and use website to inform. Have information we would communicate via TV system
- Better planning of the event calendar or better communications between staff and the parish
- Do we need to make parish community more aware that a VIA group exists?
- Regular columns in bulletin on what VIA is doing; rotate authors
- What is our vision for St Therese? What type of people do we want to attract?
- Share mission & vision of St. Therese on poster boards inside church (keep in forefront)
- Update parish regularly on “events” such as status of the school sale.
- Share news on existing groups in parish so other parishioners can think about it and hopefully join
- Bring in Parishioners to meetings to try to zero in on what they want for the Parish.