



Sacred Heart Catholic Church

502 2nd Ave SE
Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401
Telephone (605) 225-7065
sacredheartaberdeem.net

Vision Sunday #6

We have spent six months discussing and unpacking the parish's new vision statement. One of our primary goals of these 'Vision Sundays' was that at the end of six months anyone who comes to mass at Sacred Heart on a regular basis would be able to tell you the vision of Sacred Heart Catholic Church. Repetition is a great teacher and hopefully our continual attention to the vision has helped us accomplish this goal! Let's take a brief look at each of the last five months to summarize what it means to Invite Everyone to Passionately Live the Gospel.

Vision Sunday #1 unveiled the new vision statement and unpacked what vision essentially is: a picture of the future that inspires us. We used the analogy that the Church is like a bus, made to move and go out on mission. Vision is the sign on the side of the bus, telling everyone plainly where it is headed. It is important that the Church have a unified vision to go out on mission from. Conflicting visions lead to di-vision, which fractures the community and weakens our ability to go on mission.

Vision Sunday #2 began to unpack the essential elements of the vision statement starting with the last word: Gospel. The word 'gospel' actually means good news! In a nutshell this good news is that you and I were created in the image and likeness of God, who is love itself! However, the entrance of sin into the world and our lives separates us from Him. God sent His only son, Jesus, at a specific moment in history to offer Himself as a perfect sacrifice of love and ultimately conquer death itself in order to repair our relationship with God and make it possible that we can live with Him forever in paradise.

Vision Sunday #3 explored the phrase 'Live the Gospel'. To live the reality of Christ's salvific action means that our lives mirror his own; that is, that our lives be centered on self-sacrificial love for the good of those around us. We also discussed how living the Gospel means that Christianity impacts the whole of our lives, seven days a week, and not just on Sunday mornings.

Vision Sunday #4 expanded the focus one word further to 'Passionately Live the Gospel'. In the Midwest we have much fewer atheists (those who do not believe in God) as we have apatheists (those who just don't care). We can all fall into living our faith tepidly or in a lukewarm way and in doing so relegate God to just one aspect of our lives instead of being critically essential to our identity. We also asked the question 'what are you passionate about' and encouraged everyone to pray about how your passion can be oriented toward the glory of God and love of neighbor for the building up of the body of Christ.

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Inviting Everyone
to Passionately Live the Gospel

Vision Sunday #5 emphasized the missionary identity of the Church represented in the vision by the words 'Inviting Everyone'. The Church exists in order to evangelize! The bus was made to move! The vision statement is a calling for us to orient all of our efforts as a parish toward the forming and equipping of its members to be not only disciples of Jesus Christ, but missionary disciples that bring the good news of the Gospel out into a broken world that so desperately needs it.

We are concluding these Vision Sundays right before the beginning of the Lenten season. As we seek to simplify our lives this coming season and return to the ancient Christian practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, our hope is that we all reflect deeply about the call to missionary discipleship and what it is that God is seeking to do through you. Vision Sundays are coming to an end but we are only just beginning to journey together.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!
Mary, star of the New Evangelization, pray for us!

- Thomas Eskro
Director of Evangelization
and Discipleship