



Saint Elizabeth Roman Catholic Church
Insert to the Parish Bulletin for Sunday, March 19, 2017
2017-2020 PASTORAL PLAN

Have you noticed the new banner in the church narthex these days? The banner lists six key values that characterize Saint Elizabeth as a parish community and guide all of us in living as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. They serve as a measuring rod for everything that we do and all that we strive to become as we live out *Our Vision* and *Our Mission* together. On March 5, we reflected upon two of those values: *Nourishing a Welcoming and Inviting Parish* and *Building a Community of Grateful Stewards*. Today we take a closer look at another two core values:

To Grow in a Christ-centered Life in the Sacraments – How many times have you heard someone you know complain that he or she gets nothing out of the Mass? Have you expressed the same sentiment yourself? How long has it been since you experienced the merciful forgiveness of God in the Sacrament of Penance? How does the grace-filled Spirit of God given to you in the Sacrament of Confirmation shape your daily living as a disciple of Jesus Christ?

By our Baptism into Jesus Christ, each of us has been incorporated into a unique spiritual family - the Church. And it is in the Sacraments of the Church that we continue to encounter Jesus and are strengthened by His grace to live faithfully and responsibly as His disciples in the midst of our families, friends and neighbors, our work colleagues and local communities. As mature disciples, we are challenged to make decisions every day that reflect how much of our hearts we have given over to Christ and to the mission of His Church in the world. May all of us renew our Baptismal commitment to follow Christ and to draw nourishment and strength from the Sacraments on our spiritual journey to the Kingdom of God!

To Know and Practice our Catholic Faith – Do you have unasked or unanswered questions about Church teachings on faith and moral living? Have you ever taken an opportunity to understand the Catholic Faith in an adult manner, rather than in the images and the expressions of the elementary catechesis you received in your childhood? How mature is your understanding of our Catholic Faith at this point in your life?

All of us are called to an ongoing faith formation through which we come to understand our Faith more fully, embrace our Faith more sincerely and practice our Faith more consistently. In today's pluralistic and increasingly secular world of everyday living, it is even more critical for adult and young adult believers to invest some of their time and energy to prayerful reflection, studying the Word of God in the Sacred Scriptures, reading and openly discussing with others what the Church teaches and why. As the First Letter of Saint Peter reminds us: "Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear." (1 Peter 3/15-16). May all of us continue to grow into a fuller appreciation of the gift of our faith in Jesus Christ, renew our commitment to put our faith into practice, and willingly share it with others!

Don't forget to go online to the home page of the parish website (stelizabethparish.org) for information about the *2017-2020 Pastoral Plan* and how you can offer your own input into its completion in the weeks ahead. The plan includes *Our Vision*, *Our Mission*, *Our Values for Living as Faithful Disciples* and a set of six Pastoral Goals, for which concrete objectives are still being completed. Look for additional updates about the six pastoral goals in the parish bulletin over the next few months.