



Envisioning the Future of the SJC Parish Community

The SJC adventure to design the SJC Parish Future!

Summary of the August 3, 2010 Envisioning Forum

Participants: Kathy Ahearn, Mary Allamandola, Doris A. Avanzado, Jason Bayard, Beth Bialoglovski, Mariqueta Churchill, Tom Connelly, Cecil Dobbs, Rosemary Everett, Ed Johnson, Catherine Luniewski, Donna Van Schaack, Jack Van Schaack, Dick Sherman, Zen Tiamzon, Emily Vu, Ed Wessler, Mabel Hoffman, Mike Hoffman, Fr. Vincent, Fr. Greg attended as an observer.

Facilitated by Marieann Shovlin

The second Envisioning Forum was held on August 3, 2010, in the SJC Community Center. The evening began with a blessing by Fr. Vincent. We then had a brief background of the Envisioning Project, which sprang from the Communications Ministry's desire to increase participation in the SJC Parish community. In October, 2009, the Communications Ministry administered a survey at all the Masses, asking parishioners about their ideas and feelings about their SJC Parish life in the areas of

- ✚ Worship & Liturgy
- ✚ Christian Community
- ✚ Outreach – Social Justice – Interfaith
- ✚ Demographic information
- ✚ Ideas about the most important things SJC should be doing now and in 3 years

The majority of those answering the survey thought SJC Parish was doing a pretty good job and they had a lot of good ideas about what could be even better.

Copies of the survey results were distributed to the participants and are available on the SJC website.

Based on the major themes we saw in the survey:

- ✚ Spiritual fulfillment & support
- ✚ More involvement & activities for youth & young adults
- ✚ Outreach & programs to get more people involved & served,

Fr. Greg and the Communications Ministry, with the support of the Parish Council, have begun a series of brainstorming and planning meetings for all those in the SJC Parish Community. These "Envisioning Forums" are intended to identify what we can do to make our Parish more effective and have more involvement by more Parishioners.

Participant Introductions:

After the survey background, the Forum participants introduced themselves with their name, one strength or capability they bring to SJC, and one word that describes what they see as the future of SJC.

The strengths of our participants include:

Passion
Dedication to Youth Ministry
Leadership
Longevity
Dependability
Persistence
Enthusiastic Worker Bee
Historical Viewpoint
Worker Bee
Prompt & Consistent

Communications Ministry
Priestly Presence
Leader in Welcoming Parishioners
Catechist & Eucharistic Minister
Lector
Passion & Experience in Social Justice
Creating Something out of Nothing
Vision & Execution
Love & Knowledge of Scripture (Old Test.)

The Participant's words describing the future were:

Live & Grow as a Vibrant Community
Integration of All Ministries &
Come Together as a Catholic Community
Youth Involvement
Enthusiasm for All Groups to Get Together
Inclusion
Communication
Pastoral Plan
More Involvement
Community
Vibrant Adult Education in Scripture

Education – Communicate
What the Church is Doing
Growing Community
Proactive Community
More Interaction between
School & Church/Parish
More Involvement in Youth & Children &
What We Can Give
Model for the Diocese
More Involvement in Social Justice
Passionate Participation

Appreciative Inquiry Journey to the Future

We then started the journey to the future using Appreciative Inquiry, a collaborative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them.

Our journey to the SJC future has four stages:

- **Discover – appreciate the best of what is**
- **Dream what might be – the vision**
- **Design – co-construct the ideal**
- **Create a Destiny** based on what will be - participate in the creation of the design for the future – the plan for accomplishing the future – next meetings

Participants answered the four questions below, a brief discussion of the responses followed.

1. Describe a high point experience at SJC when you have been the most alive and engaged.
2. What did you value most (appreciate, find most important) about yourself in that situation? What did you value most about others? About SJC Parish?
3. What are the core/key factors that give life to SJC, without which it would not be the same?
4. Given your experience, if you had three wishes to enhance the health and vitality and community of SJC, what would they be? Write the 3 wishes on the cards using the markers.

The 3 wishes from each participant were sorted and grouped into categories with the result below, showing the collaborative image for the beginning of the plan for the SJC future. The categories were given titles that described their focus.

Wishes to Enhance the Health & Vitality & Community of SJC

| Community Spirit | Faith Formation | Inclusive Involvement | Youth Involvement | Vibrancy | Bishop's Plan | Finances |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Enhanced Sense of Community | More Catechesis | Events that Attract All Groups | Youth Involvement & Participation | Passionate Involvement | Follow Bishop's Plan | Solid Finances |
| Community Service | Theology & Faith Classes | Activities that Include More People | Youth Involvement | Masses are Standing Room Only | Awareness of Bishop's Plan Specifics | Events to Raise Money |
| Work Together as One Group | Integration of Church's Social Teaching in Programs & Preaching | Family/ People Groups | Active Youth Involvement | More Lively Music | | |
| Heightened Awareness of Stewardship | Homilies Grounded in Prayerful Reflection | More Involvement to More Activities/ Events – Let's Have Electronic Recycling Day | Youth Involvement | Everybody Joins in Singing | | |
| Support Each Other – Not Too Much Talk – Just Do It | Offer at Least 1 in-Depth Study of One of the Books of Bible per Year | Inclusive Involvement | Youth/Adult Involvement | | | |
| Honor Each Other | More Religious Ritual Content, Accompanied by Its History | Awareness/ Involvement in Other Groups' Events (Dinners, Concerts...) | Get Younger People Involved (Under 50) | | | |
| More Trips to Support Other Church Events | Retreats | | | | | |
| Exercise Classes | More Studies about the Church History | Better Communication | | | | |
| Personally Invite a Portion of Parishioners to an Event | Lector Training | Serve All Souls...Not Just Those that Attend Mass | | | | |
| Community Service as a Whole | More Ethnic Religious Events – like Simbang Gabi, Taize, Guadalupe to Promote Our Diversity | Work with Other Churches | | | | |
| Parishioners Stories Are Told & Heard | Pay for Nationally Known Catholic Apologist/ Speaker per Year | More Get Together Functions | | | | |
| More Volunteers | | | | | | |
| School/ Parish Collaboration | | | | | | |
| "Family" Community | | | | | | |
| Help Each Other Find Jobs | | | | | | |

There will be a third session to put all this together in a SJC Parish Plan. It is scheduled August 17, 7 – 9 PM in the Community Center.

All those who participated in these Envisioning Forums – and all Parishioners are invited to participate!