



REFLECTING ON OUR
Mission, Vision
& Values

SAINT DOMINIC CATHOLIC PARISH

St. Dominic,

Patron Saint of our parish, we turn to you asking for your guidance in fulfilling our mission to seek, know, and become Christ, each one for the sake of all.

You hungered for God who is truth and goodness.

Your life of prayer and study deepened your knowledge of Christ, and your profound love for God led you to preach the gospel with great passion.

Acknowledging that God's hand directed your life's mission, you intentionally invited others into a relationship with His merciful Son, Jesus.

This is your living legacy to us.

Our baptism calls us to be apostles for Christ.

Give us the courage, zeal, and desire to follow in your path.

Amen.

St. Dominic, pray for us!



Table Of Contents

Introduction	3
Using This Guide	4
Resource Links	4
Our Mission	5
Our Vision	8
Our Values	10
Pursue Holiness	11
Nurture Community	12
Embrace Compassion	14
Bear Witness	16
Prayer of St. John Henry Newman	17



Introduction

The Way

We are made for more than the world is telling us. We were created out of love to share and be love.

The Way is mentioned eight times in the Acts of the Apostles and hinges upon the understanding that Jesus is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). As our world grows further away from God, we are centering our lives in Christ. We will not walk away from Him, we will walk toward Him.

The Way asks each of us to enter more deeply into a relationship with Jesus through daily prayer and the sacraments, to find community for support in our discipleship journey, to dive into the Word and grow in spiritual knowledge and truth through the intellectual tradition of the Church. To live a life of mercy, service, sacrifice, and love for others in imitation of Christ, bringing His presence to our world.

All of our formation ministries are therefore intent on helping form and equip our parishioners to live as missionary disciples of Christ, who are always ready to bring the love of Jesus to others.

Our Mission Vision & Values

Our Mission, *to seek Christ, know Christ, and become Christ, each one for the sake of all*, was defined by our Parish Council in 1996. Acknowledging the need to reinvigorate and champion our Mission, we have developed a Vision Statement and Core Values that reflect our Mission, creating a guiding and unifying picture for our parish to drive culture and priorities, both individually and as a community.

Our Mission, Vision, and Values are foundational. They are the principles that give us direction and motivation as we journey in missionary discipleship.

The Way is summarized in our Mission, Vision, and Values.

Our Mission is our reason for existing. It is what we are doing to reach our vision.

Our Vision is what we aspire to be. Speaking to the heart it describes the inspirational long-term desired change resulting from the missional work of the parish.

Our Values show us how to live in a way that serves the success of the mission. They are the way we embody Christ.

DEFINITIONS



Using This Guide

This reflection guide is offered to help you open wide the doors of your heart to embrace a life centered in Christ. It is specific to how we, the community of St. Dominic, will grow in our discipleship together. It will assist you in getting started and guide you as you grow. It is not an end in itself but just the beginning of all that God has in store for you.

Each section of the booklet includes:



Reflections

Words to enlighten our Mission, Vision, and Values.



Inspiration

Quotes to feed your heart and soul.



Questions

Discussion starters to challenge and guide you.



Profiles

Descriptions to illustrate and imitate.



Prayers

Meditations to inspire.

This reflection guide can be used on your own, with your family, in your leadership role at St. Dominic, and in small groups.

Main Resource Pages



For support in your spiritual journey, reach out to one of our parish staff members at **262.781.3480**. Our Staff: stdominic.net/our-staff



Visit our website for resources related to this booklet. **Mission, Vision, Values:** stdominic.net/mission-vision-values



Additional Resource Pages



Discipleship is a journey. We created a road map to highlight how we can walk on “The Way” of missionary discipleship. **Discipleship:** stdominic.net/discipleship



Recommended books to help you grow in spiritual knowledge and Church teaching.

The Bookshelf: stdominic.net/the-bookshelf



Reflections and stories of our daily walk in faith; growing “rock-solid” in our relationship with Jesus.

theRock: stdominic.net/therock



Recommended digital resources to support your journey to Christ.

Digital Resources: stdominic.net/digital-resources



“Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.”

(John 17:3)



Our Mission

To seek Christ, know Christ, and become Christ, each one for the sake of all.

Reflections

Words to enlighten our Mission

What does our mission mean to you? What part of our mission is God calling you to engage in more deeply?

Seek Christ

Seeking is an active verb. To do it well, we must be actively engaged in the process. We are not sitting on a porch looking for Jesus to come down our driveway. This beautiful notion of actively seeking Christ is the very first part of our mission.

Those new to the faith may feel a longing or incompleteness that is drawing them to seek Christ in the form of questions and needs. Those who have a relationship with Jesus may be seeking to understand the nuances of their relationship, much like discovering something new about a dear friend. Indeed, the more we find Christ, the greater we seek Him. The point is we are actively engaged in the process and continually seeking Christ in our lives no matter where we are in our journey.

Know Christ

Knowledge is a relationship with the truth. Jesus is “the way, the truth, and the life.” We invite people to explore and learn about the person of Jesus and our Catholic faith. Everyone is invited and encouraged to explore their questions about who Jesus is, to build their knowledge of Scripture, and to belong to a community of believers forming the hearts and habits of discipleship. By discussing Jesus and His teachings within our community, we grow our understanding and deepen our relationship with Christ, and one another as our intellectual knowledge becomes intimate “heart” knowledge.

Become Christ

As Catholics, we receive nourishment for our spiritual journey through the Eucharist, which unites us with the person of Christ, the very source of life. Conforming our lives to Christ occurs when we surrender to God's continual conversion of our heart, mind, and soul. If we look back at the first two pillars of our mission statement, we see the building blocks needed for this radical transformation. Seeking Christ is the initial step of recognizing there is more to life than ourselves, and we have declared in our hearts that we are ready for more. Then, we focus on the wonderful work of getting to know Christ. As we build an intimate relationship with Jesus, we soon realize that we are not simply called to know Him, we are all called to follow Him. This conscious reorientation of our lives opens the door to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit who forms us into the likeness of Christ and guides and strengthens us to live The Way – the way of holiness, in community, pouring out compassion, and giving witness to the pathway of love.

Each one for the sake of all

This simple statement is critical to who we are as a parish. We invite people to serve Jesus by loving others and witnessing to Jesus's transforming power in their lives. Having committed to following Christ and reorienting their lives around the Gospel, they are ready to be sent out on mission in whatever capacity Jesus has called them.

Inspiration

Quotes to feed your heart and soul

"Because God has made us for Himself, our hearts are restless until they rest in Him." – *St. Augustine*

"I count all this as loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ" (Philippians 3:8).

"We become who we love and who we love shapes who we become." – *St. Clare of Assisi*

"Seek to imitate Christ in all things, for He is the perfect example of love and holiness." – *Thomas à Kempis, The Imitation of Christ*

"I am not capable of doing big things, but I want to do everything, even the smallest things, for the greater glory of God."

– *St. Dominic Savio*

Questions

Discussion starters to challenge and guide you

Seek Christ

1. What is the deepest longing of your heart?
2. What does Christ offer you that you need the most?

Know Christ

1. What does your relationship with Jesus look like?
2. How can you commit to praying with Scripture each day to deepen your knowledge and understanding of Jesus' way of life?

Become Christ

1. How are your efforts to seek and know Christ helping you to become more like Him?
2. What area of your life do you need to surrender to God to allow Him to fill your heart, mind, and soul?

Each one for the sake of all

1. Is your lived relationship with Jesus impacting those around you?
2. How can you help someone else seek, know, or become Christ?





Profiles

A disciple who embodies our mission...

- sets aside time each day for conversation with God.
- prays with Scripture often, listening for God's voice.
- offers worship to God through weekly Sunday Mass.
- participates in the sacrament of reconciliation regularly.
- engages in prayer and formation opportunities of the parish.
- actively shares their time, skills, and resources in service and in sacrifice for others.

A person who lives our mission well sets aside time every day in silence for conversation with God. They pray with Scripture to hear God's voice of encouragement and challenge. They participate regularly in the sacraments. This person is teachable, with a growth mindset, realizing there is always more to learn, more ways to grow, and more of our heart to turn over to God. They are known to others as someone who models Christ. They make it their personal mission to share Jesus with others, both through their actions and words.



Prayers

Meditations to inspire

Lord, my God, teach my heart this day where and how to see you, where and how to find you. Teach me to seek you for I cannot seek you unless you teach me, or find you unless you show yourself to me. Let me seek you in my desire; let me desire you in my seeking. Let me find you by loving you; let me love you when I find you.
– *Saint Anselm of Canterbury*

Heavenly Father, give me a deeper understanding of the Lord Jesus, who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” Through the power of the Holy Spirit, grant me the wisdom and understanding to know and love Him more each day. *Amen.*

Dear Jesus, fill me with your Spirit. Teach me to hear your voice amidst the noise and confusion in my life and lead me to a closer relationship with you. Guide me in placing your will above my own. Help me to embody your love and mercy, so that I might reflect your light to others. Remind me each day of your presence and give me the strength to become your hands and feet in the world. *Amen.*



Our Vision

To be a spiritual home that radiates the love of God, overflows with the power of the Holy Spirit, and joyfully leads others to Christ.

Reflections

Words to enlighten our Vision

What does our vision mean to you? What do you see as your role in making our vision a reality?

To be a spiritual home

Have you ever considered the difference between a house and a home? A house is a physical place you live in, but a home is where your heart lies. A home is where you are cared for, known, and loved. Each of us is on a journey toward home, a home where we encounter Jesus, where we come to know and love Him. St. Dominic Catholic Parish is not a place, it is a home where you belong, a community that prays together, encourages, challenges, and lifts one another up as we journey in our discipleship with Christ.

That radiates the love of God

What do you think it was like to be near Jesus? Have you ever met someone who radiates love? As recipients of God's unconditional love, we are called to reflect His love in our everyday lives by serving and loving others sacrificially, offering forgiveness, and extending grace and compassion to those near us. By embodying the love of God, we become Christ, offering His healing power, spreading joy, peace, and hope to a broken world. As we contemplate our mission statement and the phrase "become Christ," we must ask ourselves if Christ's holiness and radiance shines through us.

Overflows with the power of the Holy Spirit

Overflowing implies an abundance of something. Can you imagine an abundance of the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is God's power in action - His love in action. As we surrender ourselves to the

Holy Spirit's ongoing conversion of our hearts, minds, and souls, our spiritual home will overflow with the power of the Holy Spirit. Contemplate the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Now imagine being in abundance of those fruits and gifts so that they overflow for the good of all who enter our doors and for those returning to be refreshed and lifted up.

And joyfully leads others to Christ

Joy is often the magnet that draws people to Christ, but where does joy come from? The source of our joy is God alone. Joy comes from knowing God loves us, from a constant awareness of the presence and grace of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and trusting in Christ's mercy. To lead others to Christ we must abide in Christ. We become the hands, feet, voice, and gaze...the very fragrance of Christ for one another. We then invite others to follow the pathway of love and joy that leads to the heart of God. By creating connections with others, sharing our faith story, or simply coming to the aid of another person, we open the doors to those who may be "seeking Christ" but are unsure of where to turn.

Inspiration

Quotes to feed your heart and soul

"The heart of Jesus is our home, which we enter through faith, and can only stay there through love. It is a holy place." – *Anonymous*

"Basic reality seems to be that the more you try to be like God by radiating unlimited love, the more you become flooded by waves of love from others and from God." – *John Templeton*

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (*Romans 15:13*).

"We are called to live the joy that comes from the encounter with Jesus, to overcome our selfishness, and to move beyond our comfort zone." – *Pope Francis*

Questions

Discussion starters to challenge and guide you

To be a spiritual home

1. Is St. Dominic your spiritual home? If not, what steps can you take to strengthen your sense of belonging?
2. What can you do every day to build our spiritual home for others?

That radiates the love of God

1. Have you felt God's unconditional love?
2. What do you need in order to more fully radiate God's love to others?

Overflows with the power of the Holy Spirit

1. Do you call upon the Holy Spirit for guidance and strength?
2. What fruits and gifts do you see growing in your life?

And joyfully leads others to Christ

1. Are people drawn to the joy and love that you reflect as a child of God?
2. Who is one person in your life who may be far from God? What is one kind, practical thing you can do to lead them to Christ?

Profiles

A disciple who embodies our vision...

- knows how much God loves them and shares that same love unconditionally.
- values their spiritual home, engages in community, and serves to build up the Church.
- welcomes others with a friendly smile and a greeting, shares a word of support for young parents with children, assists the elderly, or those who may be lost or in need of help.

- is dependent on the Holy Spirit to provide the grace needed each day to be Christ for others.
- prays daily for the people in their life who need to know of God's deep love for them, asking the Holy Spirit for wisdom in leading them to Christ.

This person just exudes the Holy Spirit. Whether in their quiet holiness or exuberant joy, there is something different about them, something attractive, that others want to be around. They welcome in those around them, refusing to judge others for any reason. They are bridge builders and connectors, helping everyone find their place in the Body of Christ. They take ownership of this parish community, knowing it is everyone's responsibility to transform it into the place all can call home.

Prayers

Meditations to inspire

Loving Father, we ask that your presence be felt by all who enter our spiritual home, and that they be touched by your Spirit. May they encounter relationships of love and compassion. May they find a home in which to belong among a community of disciples who support and challenge one another in their journey toward Christ. *Amen.*

Come Holy Spirit, empower me with your gifts. Fill my heart, mind, and soul. Inspire me to speak with holiness, kindness, and mercy. Teach, guide, and direct my words and deeds, and may your grace give me the courage and joy to live a life pleasing to you and fruitful in service. *Amen.*

Dear Jesus, give me the words and the courage to express to others how beautiful your love is for them. Direct my actions to live the truth and bear joyful witness before all the world. *Amen.*

“Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.”

(Romans 12:2)



Our Values

Pursue Holiness

Nurture Community

Embrace Compassion

Bear Witness

Our values are the pillars that drive our culture. They are the behaviors and actions we live by to support our mission and reach our vision.

Our values are how we embody Christ in the world.



Pursue Holiness

We surrender ourselves to God's continual conversion of heart, mind, and soul.

Reflections

Words to enlighten our value – Pursue Holiness

What does holiness mean to you?

How is God calling you to be holy in today's world?

Holiness means aligning our lives with God's will and seeking the divine; to be set apart for God. We are called to surrender ourselves to God's continual conversion of heart, mind, and soul through the work of the Holy Spirit. Holiness requires openness, surrender, and willpower.

Pursuing holiness begins with prayer, which is a personal encounter with the Lord that changes and transforms us. Along with prayer, the grace received through the Eucharist and the sacraments strengthen us in our pursuit of holiness. A holy life is grace-filled, joyful, attractive, deeply satisfying, and God's main goal for each one of us. Acts of charity, mercy, and sacrifice are a lived expression of holiness, but holiness is not ultimately something we do or achieve. It is not perfectionism. Holiness is something God does in us. It is the result of being completely united to Him-who-is-Holy, surrendering more and more of our lives to God.

Inspiration

Quotes to feed your heart and soul

“As He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written, ‘Be holy because I am holy’” (1 Peter 1:15-16).

“Holiness is the most attractive face of the Church.” – *Pope Francis*

“Growth in holiness is a journey in community, side-by-side with others.” – *Pope Francis*

“Do not be afraid to set your sights higher, to allow yourself to be loved and liberated by God. Do not be afraid to let yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit. Holiness does not make you less human, since it is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God's grace. For in the words of Leon Bloy, when all is said and done, ‘the only great tragedy in life, is not to become a saint.’” – *Pope Francis GE, 34*

Questions

Discussion starters to challenge and guide you

1. God calls us to greatness, to be holy, and to be saints. Are you answering God's call to be holy or are you just living each day without a thought toward heaven?
2. What can you do today to take the next step on the path of holiness?
3. What are the greatest distractions or obstacles that prevent you from becoming a saint?
4. How do you live out your set-apartness, your holiness, as you live in the world?

Profiles

A disciple that pursues holiness...

- surrenders to God's will and purpose.
- studies God's Word and the teachings of the Church, and cultivates a deep prayer life to seek God's guidance, strength, and wisdom.
- is immersed in things divine, seeking out the spiritual writings of the Church fathers and saints to aid in being conformed to Jesus' way of life.
- seeks community for encouragement and to be held accountable in their pursuit of holiness.
- avoids sin and guards their heart against impurity.
- practices forgiveness, serves others, and nourishes the gifts of the Spirit.

A person pursuing holiness is always looking to grow. They use Scripture and the teachings of the Church as their measuring stick, calling on God to bring them into deeper conformity to Him. They actively strive to root out sin in their life and make prayer the most important part of their day, building their life around it, not around their life. They are known, first and foremost, by their love for others which flows out naturally as a result of their deep love of God.



Meditations to inspire

Jesus, you showed us with your words and actions what a holy life looks like. Give each of us the desire and courage to follow your way. Holy Spirit, flow through us and bring renewal and newness to our faith lives so that we can grow in holiness and be the people we were created to be. *Amen.*

Loving God, give me an attentive heart. With the help of the Holy Spirit, I will open myself to hear your Word spoken to me this day. I will allow your Word to unsettle me and to challenge me. I will be attentive to discerning your call for change in my life where it will bring me closer to You. Give me the courage to change what I need to so that your Word can bear fruit in my life. I ask this in Jesus' name. *Amen.*

Nurture Community

We encourage and accompany one another in our journey to Christ.



Words to enlighten our value – Nurture Community

Where have you found community?
What does being in community look like for you?

We belong to God, not to ourselves or to the world. True belonging is being fully known and fully loved. Belonging to God is our deepest need, and yet to belong to God is to belong to His people, His family, His Church.

We are a part of each other's journey to Christ; not just our personal journeys, but that of the whole parish community and, indeed, the whole global people of God.

Maybe you have heard the saying that a chain is only as strong as the weakest link. The same can be said of the body. If any part of our body is failing, even the smallest paper cut, the whole body suffers. It doesn't operate at its maximum potential. The Church is the same way.

Our faith, by its very nature, is communal. Just as no one body part can survive on its own, our faith cannot survive alone. We need each other for encouragement, correction, inspiration, and accompaniment. Just as our God exists in a community of three persons, so too, we were made for community, a community that strengthens and supports our daily walk with Christ.



Inspiration

Quotes to feed your heart and soul

“We must consider how to rouse one another to love and good works. We should not stay away from our assembly, as is the custom of some, but encourage one another” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

“Community means that people come together around the table, not just to feed their bodies, but to feed their minds and their relationships.” – *Henri J.M. Nouwen*

“A community needs a soul if it is to become a true home for human beings. You, the people, must give it this soul.”

– *Pope John Paul II*

Questions

Discussion starters to challenge and guide you

1. In what ways do you rely on our parish community to live and grow in faith?
2. What are you giving into our parish community to build it up?
3. In what ways have you recently encouraged a fellow disciple on their spiritual journey?

Profiles

A disciple who nurtures community...

- prays with someone in need.
- participates in formation opportunities to connect with others walking with Christ.
- starts or joins a small group to grow a community of people going deeper into the heart of Christ.
- joins a parish ministry team to feed and nurture our parish community so others might grow and encounter Christ.
- seeks out a one-on-one mentor to be guided on their journey of discipleship.

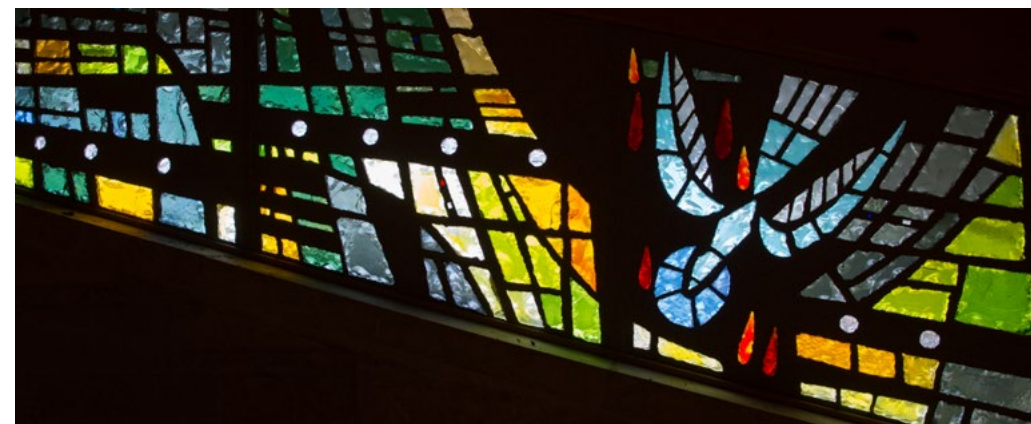
A person nurturing community first recognizes the importance of community in their own life. They know that holiness is not a solo sport and they surround themselves with people who inspire them, challenge them, and hold them accountable. Knowing the importance of this in their own life, they strive to be that community for others. They readily share the gifts they have for the building up of others, drawing others into the same life-giving community they have found.

Prayers

Meditations to inspire

Dear Jesus, teach us to walk in unity with one another. Let your Spirit guide our hearts to genuine relationship and compassionate support. In your mercy, help us to see others through your eyes, brothers and sisters created by your hand and placed into the landscape of our lives. Open our hearts wide to receive and give love and to foster a community that reflects the heavens, infinite, pure, and eternal. *Amen.*

Heavenly Father, we thank you for serving as the perfect example of companionship through the person of your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us to be a kind and true companion to others, to be patient with those whose faith is weak. Help us to act for the good of the other to build up his spirit. Keep our hearts enflamed with your love. Give us wisdom, understanding, and discernment always, as we accompany others in their journey toward Christ. *Amen.*



Embrace Compassion

We willingly forgive, serve, and sacrifice
in love for one another.

Reflection

Words to enlighten our value – Embrace Compassion

What does compassion mean to you?

How can you pour out compassion in your life?

On our path of holiness in which we seek to follow Jesus, He says to us: “Learn from me; for I am gentle and humble of heart”. (Mt 11:29). In a world of division, hostility, pride, and vanity, Jesus proposes another way, one of gentleness, mercy, and humility. Each one of us are sinners, yet “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). None of us deserves Christ’s compassion, yet He gives it freely. To become Christ then, what we receive, we must give to others.

Dorothy Day describes a love that mirrors Christ, “Love and ever more love is the only solution to every problem that comes up. If we love each other enough, we will bear each other’s faults and burdens. If we love enough, we are going to light that fire in the hearts of others. And it is love that will burn out the sins and hatreds that sadden us. It is love that will make us want to do great things for each other. No sacrifice and no suffering will then seem too much”.

We are called to become like Christ, a living sacrifice of love, to be detached from selfish ambition and attached to selfless giving, to become an instrument of His mercy for others. Not only to those near us, Jesus commands us to seek out the poor, the outcast, the oppressed, and show them mercy.

Inspiration

Quotes to feed your heart and soul

“As we grow closer to Jesus and abide in Him, our lives will reflect Him more clearly. We will love the unlovable, forgive the unworthy, and do good to those who can’t repay us.” – *Anonymous*

“We should strive to keep our hearts open to the sufferings of other people and pray continually that God may grant us that spirit of compassion, which is truly the spirit of God.” – *St. Vincent de Paul*

“Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25:40).

“The greatness of community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.” – *Coretta Scott King*

Questions

Discussion starters to challenge and guide you

1. Do you find it easy to forgive? Why is forgiveness necessary for life in community?
2. Are you able to serve others without the desire or need for reward or acknowledgment?
3. How do you show Christ’s compassion to those most in need?
4. What material good or goods do you have the strongest attachment to? Do they get in the way of loving others?





Profiles

A disciple who embraces compassion...

- lets go of grudges and is the first to say I'm sorry.
- lives a life of gratitude, recognizing that all they have is a gift from God.
- is ready to give their time in loving response to the needs of others.
- asks God to show them how to use their blessings and gifts for the good of those who are weak, poor, vulnerable, or oppressed.
- looks for ways to draw near to those who may be grieving or experiencing suffering in practical ways.

A person who embraces compassion sees every person as an image of Christ. Rooted and grounded in profound understanding of and gratitude for receiving God's own mercy and compassion, a disciple extends sincere mercy and compassion to others. Through their own example of love, they walk with others through difficulties and guide them back to the loving heart of the Father. They make service, especially to the poor, a focal point of their lives, knowing Jesus' preferential ministry to those most in need of His care.



Prayers

Meditations to inspire

In your goodness Lord, pour out on us the fruits of your Spirit; patience, kindness, and gentleness. May we love you and possess you, for you are love, and may every action of our lives praise you. May we seek those things that are beneficial to our brothers and sisters, without counting the cost, to help them on the pathway to Christ. *Amen.*

Make us worthy Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands, this day, their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy. – *Prayer of Pope Paul II*

“And what you heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will have the ability to teach others as well.”

(2 Timothy 2:2)



Bear Witness

We profess in word and deed the joy of the Gospel.



Reflections

Words to enlighten our value – Bear Witness

What does bear witness mean to you?
How do you testify to Christ in your life?

The joy of the Gospel is more than forgiveness, justification, and eternal life as unbelievably amazing as these are. The fullest and sweetest joy of the Gospel is God himself. The joy of the Gospel is the good news that Jesus, through His death and resurrection, purchased for us the eternal happiness of being in the presence of God. This is what's at stake. This is why we bear witness.

The Catholic Church exists today because down through the ages, beginning with the apostles and the saints, witnesses to Christ spread this good news. Today, each one of us has a unique and irreplaceable role in spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ. We are called to be missionary, to evangelize, which is to profess and witness to Christ in both word and deed, sharing the amazing things God has done in our lives and inspiring others through a life of joy to pursue a relationship with Him.

Being a missionary disciple encompasses our whole life. We are called to follow Him (Matthew 16:24), walk in a manner worthy of the calling He has given us (Ephesians 4:1-3), and to imitate Christ in His love and compassion (Ephesians 5: 1-2). This requires drawing near to God through prayer, Scripture, and Christian community, depending on the Holy Spirit for grace and guidance.

Inspiration

Quotes to feed your heart and soul

“It is through an unbroken chain of witnesses that we come to see the face of Jesus.” – *Pope Francis*

“We have come to believe in God's love: in these words, the Christian can express the fundamental decision of his life. Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.” – *Pope Benedict, Deus Caritas Est*

“Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope” (1 Peter 3:15).

“And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news!’” (Romans 10:15).

“We have not been successful in our Christianity unless and until we have brought others to the Lord.” – *Bishop Robert Barron*

Questions

Discussion starters to challenge and guide you

1. What is your reaction or impression when you hear the words “bear witness”?
2. Does sharing your testimony scare you or excite you? How can you become more confident in giving a reason for your hope in Christ?
3. Why is it important to proclaim the gospel in both words and deeds? Why is just one or the other not sufficient?
4. Why is the Holy Spirit necessary for us to bear witness to Christ?



Profiles

A disciple who bears witness...

- lives a consistent Christ-centered life.
- is prepared to share their faith story at any time.
- participates in opportunities to be equipped to evangelize, such as Missionary Discipleship Training, the Called & Gifted Workshop, or My Parish Matters.
- asks the Holy Spirit for guidance in leading others to Christ and prays that their hearts be opened.

A person who bears witness lets every aspect of their life proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. In their actions and their words, in the very way they live their life, they announce God's goodness, His saving love. And because of this, they necessarily live counter-culturally, serving as an example to others of what a life centered on Christ looks like. And they are not afraid, nor do they shy away from, naming Jesus as the reason for their way of life.



Prayers

Meditations to inspire

O God, who makes all things new, open our hearts and minds to reflect on your call to bear witness to your love in our daily lives. Help us to hear and respond to you every day. May we learn how to love you more. May we learn to trust in your abundant love for us and all of your creation. Inspire us to be witnesses of your love to others in our words and deeds. *Amen.*

Dear Lord, purify and renew our parish that it may give an ever-greater witness to you. *Amen.*

If you are discerning becoming Catholic, reach out to us to learn more. <https://stdominic.net/becoming-catholic>

Dear Jesus,

Help me to spread your fragrance wherever I go.
Flood my soul with your spirit and life.

Penetrate and possess my being so utterly
that my life may only be a radiance of yours.

Shine through me, and be so in me
that every soul I come in contact with
may feel your presence in my soul.

Let them look up, and see no longer me
but only Jesus!

Stay with me, and I will begin to shine as you
shine, so to shine as to be a light to others.

The light, O Jesus, will be all from you.
None of it will be mine.

It will be you, shining on others through me.

Let me thus praise you
in the way in which you love best:
by shining on those around me.

Let me preach you without preaching,
not by words but by example,
by the catching force,
the sympathetic influence of what I do,
the evident fullness of the love
my heart bears for you.

Amen.

– St. John Henry Newman

