

Ascension of the Lord

I invite your help to write a new mission statement for St. Anthony Catholic Church. This church was dedicated in 1922 as Assumption Catholic Church. In 1991 it was renamed for St. Anthony when it combined three parishes in the northeast. At that time members of the parish developed a mission statement. In 2008 St. Aloysius Church closed and merged with St. Anthony Parish.

I'd like to read to you in its entirety the mission statement that we have hanging in a frame by the front door of the church:

We are People of God residing in the historic Northeast district of Kansas City, Missouri. St. Anthony Parish was preceded by and formed from three distinct immigrant parishes: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Francis Seraph, and St. John the Baptist. As pilgrim Christians we struggle to live and mirror the Body of Christ.

We gather to worship and to reach out as the Living Christ to inactive Catholics, the homebound and the unchurched. We strive for joyous music-filled liturgies and ethnic celebrations. We welcome guests and encourage their participation.

St. Anthony Parish is committed to Christian Formation from childhood through maturity. We are committed to our membership in the Central City Catholic School System.

St. Anthony Parish supports programs for the needy at our facility and neighboring sites. We involve ourselves in our diverse and changing community through active participation in neighborhood associations and cooperation with other Northeast religious organizations. We are committed to fostering family life whether it is traditional, blended, single-parent, or single person.

In these times of economic and social changes, we strive to offer our diverse community a sense of continuity. St. Anthony Parish supports and treasures diversity as a gift from God.

The people of St. Anthony Parish celebrate life.

It took many parishioners a lot of work to formulate that statement. It has made us who we are. Our staff and finance council agree with me that the time has come to tighten its focus and bring it up to date.

Today you're receiving a form for you to share your ideas. You may take it home and bring it back. Or you may leave it with us today. Or you may go to our web site, 309benton.com, and fill it in there. Here are the questions I'd like you to answer: Who are we? What is our purpose? What do we do? What would you like us to be?

This weekend we celebrate Mothers' Day. Mothers help establish the mission of their family. We also celebrate the Ascension of the Lord, the day when Jesus entered heaven itself, where he reigns as high priest over the house of God. Our ultimate mission is to spread his word and give him praise.

Our identity, our purpose, our function and our future: Help us reflect on these matters and to center ourselves once again on the mission of St. Anthony Catholic Church.

Sunday, May 8, 2016