

## Parish Transformation Kick-Off Meeting Summary September 15, 2015

We had an enormous response to the Parish Transformation Kick-Off meeting with 198 people in attendance this past Tuesday night, September 15 in the Parish Life Center. Parish Transformation is a process of listening and discerning, dreaming and planning. To answer the questions: “Who are we?” and “What are we called to do?”

Fr Ed opened the evening with his personal thoughts-It is the right time to begin Parish Transformation. We are not beginning this process because we are in trouble or because we are not doing something we should be doing. Instead, it is the right time to think, to pray, to trust in the Holy Spirit and to allow God’s work to be done in this community. The process of Parish Transformation requires patience and prayer – and there will be moments when the Holy Spirit will be at work.

Jon Matousek, from St. Mary the Annunciation, is our Parish Transformation Facilitator. He has already facilitated 7 parishes, including St. Alphonsus Ligouri, St. Emily’s, St. Ann’s and St. Thomas Becket.

The Steering Committee, led by Fr. Ed Panek, includes Roberta Nichols, John Lorbach and Jack Loehr from the St. Raymond staff, and, Mary Jo Polark and Lorelei McDermott from the parish at large.

Those of us gathered shared why we make the conscious choice to return to St. Raymond each week, including our tremendous liturgies, our warm and welcoming sense of family and community, our encouragement of families with young (and sometimes noisy) children, our adult formation bible class, our strong outreach to people who have moved on to nursing homes or in-home care, and our willingness to leave our comfort zone.

We listened to videotaped words of encouragement from our Archbishop Blasé Cupich who called all of us to develop a bold vision for the future to grow stronger and holier through ministry and the joy of the Gospel – and to bring this bold vision to completion.

We also had a chance to voice our initial hopes and concerns for our parish. Many hopes centered on growth in our parish to include outreach to inactive Catholics and younger people as well as the need for a full-time pastor. Likewise, many concerns noted a disconnect between church and youth and the lack of people in the pews.

What’s next? A Mission Workbook is available on the parish website at [St-Raymond.org](http://St-Raymond.org). Please read pages 7-20 of the workbook to prepare for our meeting next Tuesday, September 22 at 7pm, and be ready to discuss one aspect of St. Raymond de Penafort which makes us unique. If you have not already done so, please complete the Parish Transformation Survey available on the parish website. And most importantly, please encourage parishioners who are not in attendance to complete the survey and to join us next Tuesday. A personal invitation may be all the encouragement that someone needs!

He’s with me.

He’s in me.

He’s around me.

What are you gonna do?