

"To Lead an Apostolic Community, Under Authority, That Brings People to Jesus Christ."

Bishop's Note: April 16, 2015 – DSJ Strategic Goals



Alleluia Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

This week marks a new series in my Bishop's Note, along with hyperlinks to The Bishop's Call to Prayer and The San Joaquin Anglican our online Newsletter for the diocese. Please take a moment to click on those links below to learn more.

In March your Bishop and Diocesan Council, after a good deal of prayer and study, set out a series of Strategic Goals for the diocese for 2015. These goals fall under five categories of long-term strategic goals which set out the overarching plan for accomplishing our vision: Focus on Clergy and Lay Leaders; Continuous Improvement of Ministries & Missions; Professional Development of Clergy and Lay Leaders; and Financial Outcomes. The particulars of each of these goals have been shared with the clergy at the Mass of Chrism, and I'm asking the Rural Deans to bring these up at the upcoming Clericus meetings. Next week they will be shared with the Diocesan Standing Committee, and over the next several weeks I will be unpacking them with you - the people of the Diocese of San Joaquin - in an effort to clearly communicate our goals, solicit your assistance, and be accountable to you.

LONG-TERM STRATEGIC GOALS TO ACCOMPLISH OUR VISION

- 1. To provide clergy and lay leaders a variety of tools to bring people to – and disciple them – in Christ.*

Evangelism and discipleship are absolutely fundamental to our Vision and Mission as a diocese and are required by Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: ***“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded***

you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” (Matthew 28:18-20
ESV)

Bringing people to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ must be of the highest priority for all Christians, but especially for me as your bishop and for the leaders of this diocese! This is accomplished by first recognizing that the scriptures are true and that at our death one of two paths exists for all people: Heaven or Hell. The resurrection of Jesus is the Gospel – the Good News – for all people. Because of Jesus’ death and resurrection, and with their acceptance of him - their belief in his name and his resurrection - eternity with Jesus is promised!

However, Jesus desires more than evangelism; he desires discipleship. With Jesus, we desire to see lives transformed and renewed, and that happens through discipleship – active submission to Jesus and training to live lives that are a reflection of his love and grace.

The godly desire to bring people both to a saving relationship with Jesus and into being active disciples of him, forms the basis of our life as Christians in the Diocese of San Joaquin.

I pray that as we seek to live these out together, we will - each and everyone of us - seek to be committed disciples of Jesus Christ, and be committed to discipling others.

I pray you all a blessed week!

Bishop Menees

You can find the entire list of long-term strategic goals [HERE](#)

Click [HERE](#) for the most recent Bishop’s Call to Prayer

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Catechism Questions 97 - 99

97. Who are the saints?

The saints are all those in heaven and on earth who have faith in Christ, are set apart to God in Christ, are made holy by his grace, and live faithfully in him and for him.

(Ephesians 1:1; Revelation 7:9-15)

98. What does the word “communion” mean?

The word “communion” means being “one with” someone else in union and unity.

Christians use it to refer to the relationship of the three Persons within the one being of God, to our union with all three Persons through our union with Christ, and to our relationship with one another in Christ. (John 17:20-21)

99. What is the “communion of the saints?”

The communion of the saints is the unity and fellowship of all those united in one Body and one Spirit in Holy Baptism, both those on earth and those in heaven. (Ephesians 4:4-5, Hebrews 12:1).

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Bishop's Note: April 23, 2015 – DSJ Strategic Goals Cont.



Alleluia Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

As we continue in Eastertide, we want to take seriously Jesus' command to go into all the world baptizing in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28) Our strategic goals are set in an attempt to assist us in being obedient to Jesus' Great Commission.

S2: "To continuously improve administration, communication, and ministries of this Diocese."

In 2010/2011 the Diocese of San Joaquin downsized big time – cutting the Bishop's staff to its current status of a full time Administrative Assistant and Bookkeeper and a quarter time IT/R receptionist. At the 2011 Diocesan Convention we moved away from an 18% assessment to the 10% tithe. These actions I applaud and support.

Still, there is more to do in making the administration of the Diocese of San Joaquin more effective for making disciples and training them to bring people to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

We are especially desirous of improving our communication with you, the brothers and sisters of the Diocese of San Joaquin. We have our monthly electronic newsletter, the *San Joaquin Anglican*. Unfortunately, we do not find all that many people checking out the *Anglican*. What are we doing about that? Starting last week, we are placing a hyperlink to the *Anglican* in the "Bishop's Note." This is being done in an effort to push the information forward, rather than trying to pull people in - to quote an idea from Fr. Richard James.

We learned, just last week, that our program for sending out the “Bishop’s Note” was eliminating email addresses – presumably, when people don’t click on the email a few times the address is taken off the list. So if you are reading this “Bishop’s Note:” Thank you for opening it up ☺!

Of course, communication is a two-way street. The diocesan leadership and I can make the information available, but you - the brothers and sisters of the diocese - need to take advantage of this information AND let us know what information you’d like, or more importantly, what information will make you more effective as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord bless you and keep you!

Bishop Menees

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Catechism Questions 100 - 102

100. How is the communion of the saints practiced?

It is practiced by mutual love, care and service, and by worshiping together where the word of the Gospel is preached and the sacraments of the Gospel are administered.

101. How are the Church on earth and the Church in Heaven joined?

All the worship of the Church on earth is a participating in the eternal worship of the Church in heaven. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

102. What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. God gives us the sign as a means whereby we receive that grace, and as a tangible assurance that we do in fact receive it. (1662 Catechism)

"To Lead an Apostolic Community, Under Authority, That Brings People to Jesus Christ."

Bishop's Note: April 30, 2015 - DSJ Strategic Goals Continued



Alleluia Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!

In this, the fifth week in Eastertide, we continue our examination of our Diocesan Strategic Goals. As I write this Bishop's Note, I am at our conference center in the Sierra's - ECCO. Fr. Craig Isaacs and Fr. Scott Mitchell are leading the Clergy Conference on the subject of Protecting the Sheep - Physically, Emotionally & Spiritually.

How appropriate then that the strategic goal for this week's Note is: ***"To regularly offer training and development opportunities for clergy and lay leaders."***

Why is this so important? Because Jesus' life and interaction with the disciples demonstrates that training and developing disciples for ministry is of the utmost importance to the breaking in of the Kingdom of God: ***"35 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; 38 therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."*** (Matthew 9:35-38)

Your Diocesan Leadership - Bishop, Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, and Rural Deans - are committed to providing learning opportunities to equip and empower people go out into the harvest as the laborers of the Lord.

This last Saturday, it was my pleasure to meet with the deacons and ordinands prior to

the diaconal ordinations to review the primary ministries of deacons: Leading Public Worship, Evangelism, and Discipleship; and Equipping the People of God to serve the sick, the poor, the lost, and the lonely.

What are our specific goals?

S3[a]: Conduct 1 Clergy Conference with at least 70% of Diocesan clergy in attendance. .

S3[d]: Conduct 1 Clergy Retreat with at least 70% of Diocesan clergy in attendance.

S3[b]: Conduct 4 Deacon Days with at least 30% participation at each meeting.

S3[c]: Offer 6 online training courses for clergy and lay leaders.

S3[e]: Complete development of a process for licensing of lay Chaplains in the Diocese.

I am pleased to say that we are well along the way to completing these goals. However, I am most excited about the establishment of the Diocesan School for Chaplains. It is my desire, hope, and prayer that this coming Fall we will offer our first class for the School for Chaplains. This will be a specific training course to train and license lay men and women to serve in the community -with my endorsement - at schools, hospitals, prisons/jails, etc., etc. With this training, brothers and sisters will be empowered and commissioned to represent the church and to maintain accountability and continued training. In time, it is my desire to establish three centers for this training throughout the diocese. Please keep this in your prayers, and keep an eye out for more news and announcements about the School for Chaplains.

May the Lord bless you and keep you this week!

Bishop Menees

You can find the entire list of long-term strategic goals [HERE](#)

Click [HERE](#) for the most recent Bishop's Call to Prayer

Click [HERE](#) for the ABC new story on our Bookkeeper, Carol Gill

Click [HERE](#) for the most recent edition of the *San Joaquin Anglican*

Catechism Questions 103 - 105

103. How should you receive the sacraments?

I should receive the sacraments by faith in Christ, with repentance and thanksgiving. Faith in Christ is necessary to receive grace, and obedience to Christ is necessary for the benefits of the sacraments to bear fruit in my life. (1662 Catechism; Articles of Religion, 28)

104. What are the sacraments of the Gospel?

The two sacraments ordained by Christ, which are generally necessary for our salvation, are Baptism and Holy Communion, which is also known as the Lord's Supper or the Holy Eucharist. (Articles of Religion, 25)

105. What is the outward and visible sign in Baptism?

The outward and visible sign is water, in which candidates are baptized "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" – the name of the Triune God to whom the candidate is being committed. (1662 Catechism, 1 Peter 3:21; Matthew 28:19)

"To Lead an Apostolic Community, Under Authority, That Brings People to Jesus Christ."

Bishop's Note: May 7, 2015 - DSJ Strategic Goals Continued



"To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 1:7)

This week's "Bishop's Note" concludes our examination of the Long Term Strategic Goals of your Bishop, Diocesan Council, and Standing Committee. Over the past three weeks, we have examined the first three of these goals:

S1: To provide clergy and lay leaders a variety of tools to bring people to -- and disciple them in Jesus Christ.

S2: To continuously improve administration, communication, and ministries of this Diocese.

S3: To regularly offer training and development opportunities for clergy and lay leaders.

The fourth and final goal is clearly audacious, but it is also godly: ***S4: To fund Diocesan operations while allocating 50% of revenue to ministry and outreach.*** To raise giving and cut bureaucracy so as to increase ministry is indeed a godly goal. This goal may seem outrageous on the surface, but the call to live a Christian life is outrageous too. I began this "Bishop's Note" with a quotation of Romans 1:7, where St. Paul reminds the people of Rome that first, they are loved by God, and second, they are called to be saints. Being called to be saints sounds like an outrageous claim, but it is absolutely true.

So, too, the call to live as a diocese in such a way that we dedicate 50% of income to directly support active ministry and outreach - in order to fulfill the first three of the Long Term Strategic Goals - is an outrageous but attainable goal, with God's help.

Imagine, for a moment, what the diocese would look like if each person began to tithe from what God had given him. I can guarantee that, the day that happens, ministry and outreach will increase a hundredfold – Christ would be even more greatly glorified here in San Joaquin.

All outrageous goals start with small steps – our short-term goals are those small steps.

Short Term Goals for 2015:

S4[a]: Exceed budgeted revenue by 15% with part of the surplus allocated to
2016 missions.

S4[b]: All churches in the diocese participate in an audit process in 2015.

S4[c]: Complete training of all church treasurers.

S4[d]: All churches in the diocese shall have met their tithe commitment for 2015.

I pray that you will search the scriptures, speak with the Lord, and talk to your clergy about assisting us in the execution of these outrageous and godly goals.

May the Lord bless and keep you all!

Bishop Menees

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Catechism Questions 106 - 108

106. What is the inward and spiritual grace set forth in Baptism?

The inward and spiritual grace set forth is a death to sin and a new birth to righteousness, through union with Christ in his death and resurrection. I am born a sinner by nature, separated from God, but in baptism, rightly received, I am made God's child by grace through faith in Christ. (John 3:3-5; Romans 6:1-11; Ephesians 2:12; Galatians 3:27-29)

107. What is required of you when you come to be baptized?

Repentance, in which I turn away from sin; and faith, in which I turn to Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord and embrace the promises that God makes to me in this sacrament. (Acts 2:38)

108. Why is it appropriate to baptize infants?

Because it is a sign of God's promise that they are embraced in the covenant community of Christ's Church. Those who in faith and repentance present infants to be baptized vow to raise them in the knowledge and fear of the Lord, with the expectation that they will one day profess full Christian faith as their own. (Acts 2:39)