

Resurrection Catholic Church

State of the Parish

May 2011

This is an exciting, and challenging, time for Resurrection Parish. We continue to experience significant growth in our membership, and there is an ongoing and enduring energy and vitality within our faith community. As we look back at this past year, and contemplate what still lies ahead, there is good cause to face the future with a sense of optimism and expectation.

We are a Personal Parish!

On November 27, 2010, our parish was formally granted Person Parish status. As a result, we no longer have ‘boundaries,’ and are officially recognized as a parish that serves the needs of a particular spiritual charism rather than the population of a specific ‘territory.’ This allows us to draw our membership from a larger area, but only insofar as individuals and families seek to embrace the underlying spirituality of our community --- specifically a Resurrection spirituality.

Although we possess an updated Internet website and a presence on Facebook, it still seems that people continue to discover our faith community largely by word of mouth and personal testimony. The invitation to “come and see” continues to be the most influential factor in our recent growth. To assist our members in offering this invitation, the Parish Pastoral Council is arranging for the production of a parish ‘business card,’ one that will contain basic contact information (phone, email, Mass times, etc.) as well as a rough map pointing to our location. The intention is to make these cards available to all members of the parish as an added convenience for informing others about our parish family.

We are Catholic!

The occasion of our change in status. . .and long before then. . .has sometimes prompted questions like, “Is this a Catholic church?” “Has this parish ‘broken away’ from the Rockford Diocese?” These questions easily arise because our parish incorporates a style of worship and fellowship not often experienced in Catholic parishes. To these queries, my favorite response is, “We are very orthodox, but not very conventional.” We continue to celebrate the sacraments in union with the Pope and the local bishop, even as we celebrate our special way of giving expression to the reality of ‘Church.’ We are convinced that unity does not require uniformity, just as diversity need not be an avenue leading to division. We do not offer an ‘off-beat’ Catholicism, but rather commit ourselves to the life and worship of this parish with the conviction that we represent an example of what ‘mainstream’ Catholicism can look like.

We are Growing!

I have been recently informed that the number of families registered in our parish exceeds 300. This represents a growth of nearly 50% over the past two years. It is a very exciting time in our parish, as we welcome so many wonderful individuals and families who wish to share in the spirit and charism of our faith community.

With growth comes challenges, as we seek to preserve the essential climate and values that are our core, while recognizing our need to adapt to the “newness” within our community: nearly one-third of our families have been registered here two years or less. We are blessed that so many new parishioners have taken so much initiative in involving themselves in the life and ministries of Resurrection Catholic Church, even as we realize the importance of continually inviting new members to participate more fully in the rich life of the parish.

We are Active!

Our multitude of ministries continues to reach out in service of those facing difficult economic circumstances. . . locally, regionally, and globally. There is a vigor and a resolve that continues to grow among these ministries, and it is inspiring to see the variety of initiatives that continue to arise and give birth to new ways of living and proclaiming the gospel values of justice, truth and love. As a parish, we will be faced with the challenge of more carefully organizing time and space to insure that this increased activity remains harmonious, with each activity and ministry receiving its proper share of attention.

We continue to be blessed by individuals willing to step forward and take on leadership roles in the parish. We have many gifted and dedicated people serving on our Pastoral Council, Finance Council, and Stewardship Council. We continue to celebrate fellowship in great style due to the many volunteers who organize such events as our Italian Dinner, our parish anniversary in October, our Epiphany Concert and reception, our Easter Vigil reception, Rezvinia, the parish picnic. . .the list goes on and on. And the leadership within our various ministries is simply outstanding.

This high level of involvement is especially evident in our Eucharistic celebrations. So many wonderful and talented people serving as Eucharistic ministers, lectors, musicians, altar servers, and greeters give more visible expression to the work of liturgical planners, coordinators, and those who care for the worship environment and the upkeep of its furnishings, vestments and linens. So much life!

We are Solvent!

We manage to keep an operating budget of more than \$400,000 in the black, this despite the relatively small size of our parish. There is no need for me to convince anyone of the abundant generosity that the people of Resurrection Parish have displayed over the course of these past 30+ years, a generosity present to this day. The willingness of new families to share in this element of stewardship has allowed the regular income of the parish to gradually increase. While some regular expenses we face will undoubtedly increase, there are grounds for hoping that we will be able to retire our parish debt at a

faster rate than was originally anticipated. Of course, one cannot help but note the extensive contributions that have been offered for so many important causes throughout the year, as we attempt to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and reach out to the disadvantaged at home and abroad.

We are Resurrectionists!

Our faith in the unqualified love of a most remarkable God continues to be the foundation of who we are and what we do. Our faith is rooted in the Risen Christ, whose own death and resurrection leads us to newness of life. We acknowledge the presence and power of God's Holy Spirit so alive and active in our midst. There is no question that God has chosen to do something unique and wonderful in creating and sustaining the Resurrection Parish family of faith. May God keep alive among us the hope, joy and peace of Christ's Resurrection as we continue together our journey of faith.