

In the last couple of weeks I have written about our parish vision. Parish leaders have created this vision to give our parish a common direction, to guide our decision-making, and to help focus our priorities so we can use our resources well. Our vision has one key word, and four bullet points. I've introduced the first two bullet points: Love God and Grow Disciples.

Our third bullet point is: **Share the Gospel**. Perhaps here we come closest to the core of Jesus' message – he was constantly talking about the reign of God. The living presence and activity of God is in our midst, here and now. But how many people in the world know this and believe this?

Contrary to popular opinion, Jesus did not come to teach disciples how to save their own skins. No, he gave his disciples a mission, which was to spread the good news that the reign of God has arrived. If we ask ourselves, "What is my purpose in life?" I think Jesus' answer would be to share this good news.

Jesus offers people a way of life that addresses their deepest hopes and fears, longings and anxieties. He speaks to humans about the meaning of life, and suffering, and what awaits us after death. How do they pick themselves up again after they've fallen, perhaps many times?

When people are part of the reign of God they realize that they don't have to go through life on their own. They can learn from other believers and walk together on a journey of faith in a personal relationship with a living God who is always concerned about their well-being.

So many people in our world need to hear this good news. And it is our mission to let them know. Yet this may be the most difficult bullet point of our vision. We're not so sure we want to do this, and we Catholics on the whole are pretty uncomfortable "talking about our faith." We still have some things to learn.

So part of our vision is to do this well. Perhaps an image could be that St. Catherine's is the "city on a hill," whose light shines brightly throughout Portage. Perhaps we can be known as the parish where "all are welcome," the place to go when you're hurting, the place to **share the good news** and offer the healing and support that the world longs for.

Jesus said: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature." (Mark 15:16)