

Catholic Association of Racine

2010 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

Vision

The Catholic Association of Racine is the facilitator that unites Catholic churches and organizations in Racine so that they can deepen their faith and more effectively and profoundly live out their vocation as followers of Jesus in the Racine community and beyond.

Mission

The mission of the Catholic Association of Racine is to coordinate collaborative activities, education and faith practices for the Racine Catholic community, providing to all the opportunity to grow closer to God.

Organizational Overview

The Catholic Association of Racine was created in 2002 to foster collaboration among Racine Catholic parishes concerning Catholic education. At the time, many Catholic schools were struggling to maintain enrollment and to survive financially.

During its initial years, CAR worked to bring the parishes into collaboration mostly by encouraging them to share school information about salary structure, benefits, textbooks and other practices. While most people embraced the philosophy of CAR, there was not an overt willingness to collaborate on these issues. CAR then looked to other kinds of Catholic formation that the parishes were cooperative in sharing. Most of these efforts centered on youth formation for children in public schools and adult formation.

The parishes again raised the idea of merging schools and an Education Task Force was formed to study the issue in a tight one-year timeframe. The effort involved numerous people, but in the end the majority of parishes decided they were not ready to collaborate on this level.

At that juncture, CAR shifted its mission and began examining other ways in which the Catholic community in Racine might collaborate to achieve something that no parish could accomplish alone.

In fall of 2008, CAR launched a strategic planning process. Strategic planning for the organization is complicated. CAR has been emerging and reshaping itself to carry out its mission while the community has struggled to understand what CAR is and what its role is. Over the last several years, two parishes have dropped out of CAR and other parishes seem to question the financial commitment to the organization without understanding what its intended purpose is.

Given this background going into the strategic planning, the committee decided that CAR would not have a future unless it involved people in the pews and those disenfranchised from the church to discuss what they thought. It seemed that CAR needed to get some feedback from the community to understand best which direction it should take into the future.

To that end, the committee set about hosting small focus group discussions in December 2008 and January 2009 to gather some information. About 8 discussion groups were conducted. With each answering five questions:

1. What do you think are the most critical issues in the Racine community?
2. Is there a sense of a Catholic community in Racine?
3. Who is missing in our churches?
4. What would strengthen your faith life?
5. What are our best accomplishments?

Through these discussions, there arose as consensus that Racine Catholics think they could and should be addressing some of the broader issues in the wider Racine community, as well as collaborating more to create a sense of unity and using our resources to the best of our abilities to support our growing faith within us as individuals, within our parishes and as outreach to the wider community.

The committee felt that CAR has been in a precarious position from the start. It is funded by participating parishes, has a representative from each, but rarely gets the attention of the pastor or parishioners, which hampers the organization's ability to accomplish its goals. The committee felt it must take the results of these small focus groups to the pastors and parish councils to get their input and further seek direction for its strategic planning.

On March 31, 2009, the committee presented its findings to the parishes. At least four pastors were present and all partners were represented at the meeting. The pastors encouraged the committee to broaden these discussions to their parishes. The committee was delighted that its work met this kind of enthusiasm.

Over the spring and summer, the strategic planning committee conducted parish-wide discussions on these five questions and possible solutions at every parish that wished to participate. Nearly all in the city did host a discussion session, giving feedback to the committee.

By September, the committee had conducted conversations, both small focus group and parish-wide, with roughly 250 Catholics in the Racine community. Together, their discussions have led CAR's strategic planning committee to make several conclusions thus far in the process:

1. Catholics in Racine wish to be united, establish an identity together beyond the parish walls and to collaborate on issues where they think they can make a difference.
2. Catholics in Racine worry about the state of their Church; want to strengthen leadership; have access to worship regardless of which parish is the host; strengthen the faith support for all of the people in the Church – young people, elders, singles, marrieds, etc.; and reach out to those disenfranchised from the Church and those who want to explore the faith.

3. Catholics want to bring meaning to their faith. They wish to have opportunities to more expressively live out the faith in the community. They feel Catholics are good at uniting for a cause and finding a solution. As a group within the greater Racine community, we could be making a difference in the way we live out our faith together.

As people participated in discussions, eight areas of interest rose to the top of their concern. These areas were expressed in every one of the sessions in a variety of ways. In general, they are listed here in the order of frequency, from top concern to lesser:

1. Poverty and the Income Gap
2. Jobs and Joblessness
3. Housing
4. Health Care
5. Financial Literacy
6. Spirituality, Outreach and Inclusion
7. Education
8. Crime and Violence Prevention

With such a wide and varied interest in ways the Catholic community could make an impact on poverty and social justice issues in Racine, CAR decided to initiate a one-year project called, "*God Anoints You ... Work Miracles.*" The idea is to engage the entire Catholic community to making a pronounced difference during 2010 in areas they indicated were important to them and then to evaluate our success and re-examine our priorities for 2011. This would become an annual strategic planning and project process.

God Anoints You ... Work Miracles was launched on Sunday, January 31 at St. Catherine's High School. The afternoon began with an all-city Mass and continued with group discussion around 6 of the 8 issues that surfaced during the focus groups. Each group came up with a project that would unite Racine Catholics and engage other organizations working in those specific areas so that we may together take action in our community that is a testimony of our faith.

Through this process, it has become apparent that CAR must begin to shift its dependence on parish dues to supply all operating costs and must begin to generate additional revenue for its actions. It was also apparent that the most difficult work of the group is to continue uniting and engaging Catholics in efforts beyond their own parish doors.

Plan

God Anoints You ... Work Miracles is a year-long plan to unite Catholics to strategically address shared issues of concern with collaborative actions coordinated by the Catholic Association of Racine.

The plan encompasses the following objectives and goals:

1. Make CAR relevant to the Catholics in Racine by engaging them in projects they determine they are willing to do;
2. Make CAR financially secure;

3. Make a profound impact on the employability of Racine residents by matching them with employers who are willing to hire them;
4. Publicize the housing opportunities available to people who are without adequate housing;
5. Expand access to health care through the parishes;
6. Increase the faithful in Racine through strategic formation and education programs that work to include all people who long to grow closer to God;
7. Increase the number of children who have access to Catholic education and support those in public schools so that more children are adequately educated in Racine;
8. Make Racine a safer and just place to live.

This strategic plan calls for CAR to adopt a number of projects that will meet these goals by engaging Racine Catholics in solving the issues of most concern to them. Following are the action plans suggested for each area, as they were offered through our collaborative discussions.

1. Make CAR financially secure:

GOAL: Make CAR Financially Secure			
Action	Revenue	Timeframe	Who/What
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write grants to support some programming <ol style="list-style-type: none"> CAN Grant with RVM Erica John Fund Racine Community Foundation Conduct an annual campaign 	\$8,500 (\$7,000 adm/\$1,500 program) \$19,500 (\$12,000adm/\$7,500 program) \$3,500 (\$2500 adm/\$1000 program) \$5,000 mail-in campaign	March March April/may Advent	Jobs initiative Formation/Spiritual ed Housing/Safety Support Work Miracles
Total	\$36,500		

2. Make a profound impact on the employability of Racine residents by matching them with employers who are willing to hire them:

GOAL: Increase job-readiness and employment in Racine			
Action	Resources	Cost	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get a group of business owners committed to project <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential business owners Invite them to Business Summit Host Business Summit to introduce project Have interested business owners commit Prepare a group of prospective employees <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify unemployed and underemployed people in churches Create worker bank with directory of skills Work with RVM to provide & train prospective employees Host Job Fair to match employers/workers Continue to refer people to RVM for matching Evaluate the result of these actions 	Parish/press Letter/press RVM CAR/RVM CAR/RVM	\$0 \$500 \$500 \$0 \$500	Who Jobs Committee/RVM Jobs Committee/RVM Jobs Committee/RVM Jobs Committee/RVM Jobs Committee/RVM Dec.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business Summit attendance 2. How many businesses commit 3. How many prospective workers gathered 4. How many employers/workers matched – jobs created/filled 5. Participant survey – businesses and workers 			
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3. Publicize the housing opportunities available to people who are without adequate housing:

<i>OBJECTIVE: Help expand access to affordable housing for families</i>			
GOAL: Work with existing agencies to accomplish the objective			
Action	Resources	Cost	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a meeting of all housing agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Each offer info about their program 2. Each identify their need to meet housing demand 3. Each designate a resource-referral person in agency 4. Create a housing fair to match program to users/vol. • Host housing fair 	Presentations	\$0 \$0 \$0	Summer
		\$500	Oct/Nov
			Who CAR and Agencies

4. Expand access to health care through the parishes:

<i>OBJECTIVE: Expand access to health care in Racine</i>			
GOAL: Build up the health ministry in every parish			
Action	Resources	Cost	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create health ministry in each parish to include areas of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Resources 2. Health Education 3. Disease Prevention 4. Advocacy • Form Collaborative Health Ministry Group 	Parish nurses	\$500	
			Who

1. Meet Quarterly		
2. Catholic Health Newsletter		

5. Increase the faithful in Racine through strategic formation and education programs that work to include all people who long to grow closer to God:

OBJECTIVE: Increase the faithful in Racine			
GOAL: Engage more people who may feel disenfranchised in the church			
Action	Resources	Cost	Timeframe Who
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the Evangelization Committee Implement a CAR Youth Facebook page Create a youth CAR board member Start an online faith-sharing community Investigate a “Just Faith” program online Conduct “Awakening Faith” 	Evan Com	\$0 \$0 \$0 \$1000	March-June Evangelization Com. Evangelization Com
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year of the Priest presentation Year of something for 2011 All-City Mass 	Archbishop	\$500 \$500 \$500	Year-round Spring 10 Spring 11 Jan 11 Evangelization Com
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate RCIA 	Var speakers	\$1000	Aug 2010 -Apr 2011 May 23 Anna Marie
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue <i>Share the Spirit</i> 			Anna Marie

OBJECTIVE: Formation			
GOAL: To provide opportunities for spiritual growth for all in the community			
Action	Resources	Cost	Timeframe Who
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host the annual “back-to-school” in-service for teachers Offer catechist training sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshop 	Speaker(s) Presenter	\$1500 \$400 Vary	Aug 23, 2010 Aug-Sept Now thru June Formation Committee + Archdiocese

2. On-line offerings	2011			
• Offer <i>Safeguarding All of God's Children</i> sessions (4-6)	As needed	Presenter	\$450	CAR
• Consider offering Divorce Recovery sessions		Presenter	\$700	Formation Com
• Offer Acacia Theatre presentation	review	Theater group	\$400	Formation Com

6. Increase the number of children who have access to Catholic education and support those in public schools so that more children are adequately educated in Racine:

<i>OBJECTIVE: Increase number of children who graduate from high school in Racine</i>				
GOAL: Partner with John XXIII and SOAR to achieve the objective				
Action	Resources	Cost	Timeframe	Who
• Work with SOAR to increase Catholic school accessibility				
1. Assist in informing parishes of the program	Presentations	\$0	March-July	CAR/SOAR
2. Help identify Table Captains for SOAR breakfasts		\$0	March-Aug	CAR/SOAR
3. Get mentors for SOAR		\$0	March-Sep	CAR/SOAR
• Work with John XXIII Education Center				
1. Assist in informing parishes of the program	Presentations	\$0	March-July	CAR/John XXIII
2. Get mentors for John XXIII		\$0	March-Sep	CAR/John XXIII

7. Make Racine a safe and just place to live:

<i>OBJECTIVE: Make Racine safer</i>				
GOAL: Involve Catholics in making their neighborhoods safe				
Action	Resources	Cost	Timeframe	Who
• Work with churches to establish Neighborhood Watch	Neighborhood	\$0	March-	Parish rep/parishes

in their parish neighborhood	Watch/CAR Parish comm.	Aug
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host neighborhood picnics/night out to strengthen visibility and trust in the neighborhood 	\$300 Neighborhood Watch/CAR/Parish Comm.	March-Sep Parish rep/parishes

OBJECTIVE: Social Justice

GOAL: To inspire action about social justice issues

Action

- **Increase awareness of our local environment**
 - 1. Adopt-A-River campaign (celebrate Earth Day)**
 - 2. Adopt-A-River campaign (Make-A-Difference)**
 - 3. Family Day at REC Center**
 - 4. Family Day at Eco Justice Center**
- **Peacemaker Award for students**
- **Raise consciousness of “green” food production**
 - 1. Look for sites for urban gardens**
 - 2. Work with Urban Garden Network and Community Action agencies**
- **Promote Fair Trade products**
 - 1. Work with HOPES Center**

Resources	Cost	Timeframe	Who
volunteers	\$0	April 24, 2010	Social Justice Committee
Volunteers	\$0	October 2010	
	\$0	July or Aug	
	\$0	Sept or Oct	
	\$300	May 23	SJ Committee
Parishes volunteers		Now to prep for summer 2011	
			SJ Committee

Conclusion

The Strategic Planning Committee recommends that CAR adopt this as its year-long strategic plan. There are steps to take in order to do so:

1. Get official CAR board approval of the plan;
2. Meet with every Catholic pastor to present this new strategy of CAR and God Anoints You ... Work Miracles year;
3. Expand the board to include people who are committed and excited about this project approach;

4. Have brochure prepared describing God Anoints You ... Work Miracles for distribution in all Catholic parishes and entities – schools, organizations, fraternities – to engage others;
5. Appoint leadership for every initiative and Anna Marie will coordinate and follow up with them;
6. Hold a celebration Mass and planning during Advent or in the new year of 2011 to summarize the year's success and to plan for 2011.
7. If successful in fundraising strategy, realign the dues structure.