

# SYNTHESIS OF THE PARISH SYNOD CONSULTATION SESSION

**PARISH NAME:** Our Lady of the Lake    **PARISH CITY:** Branson

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**How many consultation sessions were held at the parish?** Five (one was unattended)

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**On what date(s) was the session held?**

April 28, 2022, at 10:00 am and 5:00 pm  
May 13, 2022, at 5:00 pm (Spanish) (unattended)  
May 26, 2022, at 10:00 am and 5:00 pm

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**About how many participants attended?** Approx. 55

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**How were invitations issued?**

- [eBulletin](#) (Flocknote) emailed to all parishioners with dates listed and fillable signup
  - [Emailed](#) (Flocknote) all ministry leaders to ask if their ministry members would like to attend a general listening session or would appreciate having an individual listening session during their normal meeting time. All ministry leaders said that their people would be fine with a general session.
  - Our website with [page](#) to sign up to attend a session, find resources, and fill out an anonymous form if they choose to do so
  - Mass announcements
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**How did you invite and connect with those at risk of being excluded or those on the peripheries? Were there any groups of people whose participation was especially noteworthy and why?**

- We reached out to the ministry leaders for a pulse on their ministry members to see if they would feel more comfortable sharing in a familiar small group.
- People who do not have access to a computer or smartphone get a paper bulletin at our helpdesk with the Synod details. (They could call the office as well)
- Anyone who was homebound heard the Mass announcements through live streamed Mass. (They could call the office as well)

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Were there specific groups of people who did not participate and why (if known) did they not participate?

- The Hispanic community

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❖ Through the consultation session, what were some of the positive descriptions of how the Church is journeying with people to “**grow in holiness**”?

- Through liturgy that is well done and engaging. Through opportunities to further one's personal spiritual life.
- Through the email prayer chain
- The Welcome retreat I attended in the winter of 2019 (designed by Dynamic Catholic) deepened my relationship with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. I continue use resources from this retreat on a daily basis.
- We have opportunities for bible study, retreats and prayer time.
- Through liturgy, but also through the relationships with other members of the community.
- Our ushers are always available to help and be a welcoming parish.
- The variety of the groups and ministries are so different to appeal to different people and their particular journeys they are on.
- Every once in a while, we need to take a review of our faith. Going through RCIA was incredible, if we can offer more that education would be great.
- We encounter Christ through the agencies and if more people would get involved, it would foster more Christ relationship.
- This parish has an incredible warmth and welcome to everyone. Our Church fills up and there is a reason the visitors come back over and over.
- Our gift shop is tops!

- The parish is our family even since we don't have a school.
- We nurture that sense of family even at the individual Masses. We look forward to being a part of that greater family.
- My parish friends help to encounter Christ through our wonderful community.
- It's wonderful to have the whole family at Mass. We need to have more family opportunity.
- In times of tragedy or excitement, we rally around each other.
- This discussion group spent several minutes looking at what might be meant by "growing in holiness". They did not arrive at a definition but thought it would be different for each person, and would involve a relationship with Christ, and one another in Christ. Something beyond merely knowing one another or Christ but developing a relationship. Life experiences are reflected in religious beliefs and practices.
- Our Lady of the Lake seems to be very much "Martha oriented" as opposed to "Mary oriented", (ref Luke 10:40) - lots of "doing".
- There was considerable discussion about RCIA. It was seen as a positive program in our parish, recommended for those interested in the church and for current members who wish to deepen their understanding of Church teachings. That being said, concern was expressed that the RCIA program has no actual guidelines as to what is covered/taught - not only with regard to our own parish, but others in the diocese and in the U.S. in general. There are approved programs available, but it is not required that parishes use such a program. The concern was that those interested in joining the Church may not receive correct and/or sufficient instruction and guidance. It was also a concern that the current setup for RCIA fosters a sense of "graduating" when the Sacraments of Initiation are received. It was noted that many who are accepted into the Church don't participate in further activities in the church or do so only on a limited basis.
- One member of the discussion group said their former parish did RCIA with families together (adults and children), and then the children separately.
- OLL is a very inviting parish. That welcoming atmosphere helps new members grow. The Welcome Retreat in particular was felt to be a blessing to new female parishioners.
- It was noted that volunteer opportunities are plentiful and include a variety of interests. Volunteering – within the parish and the broader community – was seen as a way to grow in holiness and in to develop relationships to foster that growth
- Parish is banquet table -- something for everyone.
- Many offerings here -- if you want them.
- Spiritual -- Adoration, CRHP -- changed life --> many became more active in parish/church -- more is available through internet

- Other activities -- Stitchers, K of C
- Key -- Personal invitation -- reaching out -- invite in
- Strong Pastor influence very important -- encourage, invite, reach out
  - Holy, joyful priests -- great examples
- Welcome back to church those who've been away
- Individuals themselves need to seek out, to get involved
- Welcome new and/or returning parishioners -- feel welcome -- helps them encounter Christ
- Welcome visitors
- Important connection parish has with people
- Value in social groups
- "We're all from someplace else"
- Struggle with past experiences with priests elsewhere
- Important dynamic women religious were very influential in the past
- CRHP experience pulled us together
- Impressive bulletin -- information on many opportunities both spiritual & social
- Social groups are wonderful
- sharing life and joy
- The variety of ministries is great so you can pick what calls to you and help you grow with Jesus
- Joy on the face of a Eucharistic minister
- Joy on the faces of the ushers and greeters!!!
- Being drawn in by Latina Grandma growing up. Attending Spanish Mass is very familiar to what she knew as a child. She has a love for communities of all faiths. Love of the ecumenical flare.
- The people are wonderful.

- Train and Stitches is great because there is no agenda!
  - They are drawn in by testimonies of people!
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❖ **What were some of the challenges, disappointments, or frustrations conveyed, in describing how the Church journeys together to “grow in holiness”?**

- Unfortunately, there are times when those leading ministries or events are less than inclusive. The gifts of individuals need to be accepted and embraced, even when those individuals do not fit the preferences of the individual group leaders. Striving to become more and more inclusive is critical. When one's gifts are not accepted, it is easy to feel left out, unworthy and less than holy.
- More than one scheduled confession time per week (at a time that is difficult for those with children active in weekend events).
- Better availability of personal witness, more family gatherings where we come together to celebrate Feast Days, etc.
- Are there other Charismatic-type programs, speakers, resources that can be shared with the parish to focus on our need for the Holy Spirit? I see a lot of doctrine, liturgical information in the bulletin, but not many resources for a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit, Jesus, and God.
- Offering more class times.
- Come together in prayer as a whole community (not as small groups).
- A small group setting is about iron sharpening iron. We need a men's group that would foster interactions of personal stories and vulnerability.
- We need to share more about what the Knights and the agencies are doing. We need to have better communication about the good things they are doing.
- We need to share more information about Our Lady Cares with the whole parish.
- We need to promote our own ministries.
- We don't have a church directory.
- New people need to have two things fulfilled. Relational and an opportunity to plugin. Publicize opportunities to serve, specially those who are younger and not as mature as others, they still need an opportunity.

- Groups (like the Knights) need to help spread the excitement to others. In times of tragedy or joy, we need to rally around each other even more. We can be better at promoting ways to come together.
- Welcome, Crusillo, retreats are not pushed enough to encourage growth. We need a push, one encounter may be great for one but not for another.
- Two teams are needed, the idea team and the implementation.
- A desire for the return of parish dinners, potluck or otherwise, was expressed. This is something that has been done in previous years but has fallen away in more recent years. This is an opportunity for parishioners who attend different masses to get to know one another in a casual and inviting setting.
- A wish was expressed by multiple individuals to have a printed bulletin available. It was known that bulletins are sometimes available at the Help Desk, but parishioners said there are not enough for everyone who wants one. Some parishioners pass the bulletin along on visits to the Homebound; another said she liked to keep it in her vehicle for quick reference and to use as an invitation to people she comes in contact with to invite others to a particular function, event, or Mass. Some felt it was easier to read a printed bulletin than to read it online, particularly on small devices or those with limited access to internet. Links don't always work on various devices.
- There is a desire to "get back to pre-COVID activities and ministry". Many ministries and activities were discontinued at that time that have not been resumed. The idea was expressed that the discontinuation of those ministries/activities had negative aspects that need to be healed. In many ways, it was a forced break-off of relationships, particularly for marginalized individuals – in physical or spiritual need.
- A quote was given, "Humans heal humans," saying that we heal one another in relationships with one another. Holiness has vertical as well as horizontal dimensions – our relationship with Christ intersects with our relationships with others.
- We grow in holiness or fail to do so by our day-to-day, and even minute-to-minute decisions. These comments led into discussion of the second topic.
- Current PSR system does not seem to be effective in developing life-long disciples of Christ. We are losing our youth, teens, and college-age individuals in particular. Possibly try to get away from the school-grade system. Maybe a family-oriented PSR/Faith Formation format. Encourage life-long growth from the youngest ages. It was noted that only a few of our youth participate as servers at Mass.
- Continue streaming of Mass -- important outreach to those who can't get to Mass
  - Caution -- some haven't attended mass for over 2 years
- Encourage use of Catholic media -- streaming this to us -- Matthew Kelly, Jeff Cavins, etc

- Challenge us to growth -- Danger of being too comfortable, complacent
- Outreach to elderly & their caregivers/families
- Use radio ads -- Past effort called "Welcome Home Catholics"
- "Why Catholic?" -- small group gatherings in past -- important outreach
- Outreach to young families -- where are the children?
- Hold a Ministry Fair -- so parishioners see what's available
- More outreach within neighborhood clusters
  - Suggested that hold these in "neutral" setting rather than people's homes
- Hospitality between masses
- Importance of involving others -- "In the doing that we get to know each other."
- Re-assess Confirmation program
- Encourage learning more about our Catholic faith
- Transportation to Mass -- bus?
- Mass schedule keeps us separate
- Outreach is very important, especially for those having hard time getting involved
- **NOTE:** Much of our discussion on questions #1 & 2 is also covered in #3 (In what ways does the Church journey with individuals on the path of intention discipleship? How does the parish community help one another to grow in fuller knowledge of, understanding of, and daily practice of, life in Christ?").
- We were on a great path before covid. Since covid, we haven't had cluster groups and we are all disconnected.
- We haven't seen people in such a long time because they haven't been back to Mass
- We need to go after the ones who have wandered. How can we engage them? They need a safe place.

- Lots of people have left because of past pastors and haven't come back.
- Be open to change. If we want to bring the kids back we need to keep them involved and understand
- Bring people together in small groups like coffee after Mass
- What makes us different than any other church? We don't keep the Eucharistic central at what makes us, us.
- YEARS ago, people would LIVE their lives through their faith. What better place to be at all times? We need to make this truly a community that appeal to young adults. Appeal to young adults by changing up groups
- **We need to have an opportunity to listen to people's personal stories and for them to share their faith! We need to have that in small group settings**
  - Father J. Recalls on his personal experience and ties it into the scriptures
- We need to have an opportunity for the twenty somethings and bring them together and ask, "What will work for you?"
- You ask for help and the same ten people show up.
- You can't ignore the older group. They are an important part of the church. Keep them involved and keep them feeling valued.
- We have a unique parish to have such a huge group of people at Mass that are tourists. (We need to share more sweet notes from people)
- The pastor needs to mention that the young and youth need to thrive. When the older generations die, we won't have a church if the youth won't get involved.
- The twenty somethings say that they feel judged immediately by the older generations. These young adults are criticized so often.
- How can the pastor help us stay ahead to love people but don't condone their actions.

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## ❖ What were some of the positive descriptions of how the Church is "forming intentional disciples"?

- Ideally, the Church is constantly inviting, engaging and sharing how we as individuals are living out our call to intentional discipleship. However, in practice, it seems many are unwilling to share

or engage more than a superficial level. It sometimes feels as if we, within the parish community, are merely giving lip-service to the concept of being intentional disciples. Opportunities are available to further ones' understanding and knowledge, but it appears that a significant portion of the community is not engaging.

- Again, I think personal witness is essential. But adult education is lacking, education in the Sacraments and Church teaching
- We have daily mass and first Friday and First Saturday Mass. they also offer resources for personal at home study.
- By the opportunities to serve others (volunteering for various ministries).
- The Sacraments – our Catholic training – from little kid to adult. It's a thread that carries through.
- The Chosen, the retreats and groups are amazing. We need to encourage MORE to go these retreats and opportunities.
- Instead of having PSR and religious ed and young adult or older ones, we shouldn't have to pick which to attend and go through. I.e. All 2<sup>nd</sup> graders shouldn't go through first communion just because of their age. And it shouldn't be based on the school. All need to be invited to experience RCIA.
- Our parish is a safe haven, I need to know how to share my faith in a fallen world. How do we shine a light in this world?
- We need to communicate and promote the opportunity of going to a spiritual advisor.
- After confirmation, they are catholic, what's next? If a kid wants to be a doctor, we put them in touch with other doctors and school to learn. If they want to be a priest or sister, we pray for them but not much of anything actionable.
- We don't graduate at confirmation. And now we have this next...
- Encourage that Christianly and train up those leaders.
- The Youth and high school and college, they just walk away. "They isn't anything there for me."
- We need to teach them how to be in the world but not of it.
- We need to offer training of Catholic beauty and its history.

- Squires from Knights of Columbus – revamping PSR
- We need to practice what we preach.
- During the pandemic, we should not have been denied the Body of Christ. We need to truly walk our faith.
- The Eucharist needs to be protected, promoted, and encouraged to everyone in the community.
- Be more intentional about why they are NOT coming back or why they have left!
- Have a ribbon of people who have not been back (like Christmas cards) and pick a card and reach out.
- We could have a group of people who keep up with those who have left.
  - We need to have training and expectations.
- We should see everyone we meet as Jesus's face, respecting that quality in others as well as ourselves. That understanding should influence our actions – see comment above about day-to-day, minute-to-minute decisions.
- The Parish Center should be central to parish life. Especially with the number of visitors, parishioners need a sense of community and opportunities for socialization. Religious gatherings also need to have a social aspect, similar to family reunions. When we get to know one another, we begin to develop relationships, which in turn reflects on our relationship with Christ and one another.
- Coffee and donuts after Mass was seen as a positive thing because of the opportunity to get to know visitors and parishioners. Appeals to all ages and encourages socialization.
- Spiritual Companionship was mentioned as a possible ministry (?). Spiritual Guidance would be a one-on-one situation, but Spiritual Companionship would be more of a group option.
- Centering Prayer and the Welcome Retreat were mentioned as positive influences in discipleship.
- The RCIA process should involve non-Catholic spouses if children are involved – if one member of the family is Catholic and wants children to receive sacraments of initiation.
- Encourage people to speak and we can listen
- The initial evangelizing and then once we get them there, encourage them to grow deeper.
- Foster family culture

- We need to get better with the follow up. Not just get them there but follow up later.
  - RCIA needs to not be so intimidating.
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## ❖ What were some of the challenges, disappointments, or frustrations conveyed, in describing how the Church journeys together to “**form intentional disciples**”?

- Within our parish community I feel that that our children, youth and young adults often feel unseen if not unwelcome. These young people have gifts and talents to share and are a part of the church of today, not merely the church of the future. When we fail to engage these individuals fully, we are saying that they are not important. Also, it is very difficult in the parish community for those who identify as LGBTQ. I have witnessed the unkindness that these individuals face and it greatly saddens me. We are told to love one another, yet it seems that our LGBTQ brothers and sisters seem to be deemed less than worthy of that love.
- As a parishioner with young children, my family is marginalized in our parish. I understand that tourists are the primary concern. The long request for money at the beginning of each mass and an advertisement of the gift shop at the end (along with a church lacking awe-inspiring art and vestments, maudlin music, and shabbily-dressed tourists) makes it nearly impossible for children to perceive they are participating in something sacred. We appreciate the content of the homilies, but their length necessitates heroic effort for those with young children.
- Divorced and remarried people who think they are excommunicated and don't realize the process of annulments
- In the past, we were given out-dated ministry information when we first joined the parish. It would have been helpful if this information is accurate.
- We have many visitors so are always striving to be welcoming. We have greeters at the doors and ushers. We wear name tags so visitors know who we are.
- By inviting ALL to participate....in liturgy, in serving, in various forms of worship and prayer. I do not know who/why someone doesn't feel welcome. Perhaps some don't know we are all sinners and they don't feel worthy because they haven't learned that we are all loved despite our brokenness.
- Children are hearing homosexuality is fine in schools and from their friends. But people who are in the LGBTQ community do not feel comfortable in our church.
- Let's not talk about sex every time we turn around.
- If our church is struggling with disabilities or sexual orientation, how do we make them feel just as loved as anyone else.

- Can we accept being called a sinner? That is for everyone.
- We need to first approach them with love.
- We need to help the youth understand that being gay and practicing Catholic can't mix but still need to understand that all need unconditional love.
- The youth want to be entertained in church.
- People don't go to the church for information, they ask their phone.
- Divorced/remarried individuals often feel they are not welcome – at Mass and/or in the RCIA process. Sometimes there is a misconception about Church teachings. Many have expressed the idea that others are (or would be) judging them if they attended Mass or Church functions. The Church needs to develop better ways to handle divorce – to mentor, encourage, and monitor members experiencing this situation to keep them in the Church. It was noted that when parents leave the church, the children usually do as well.
- It was noted that non-practicing Catholics are the second largest religious group in the U.S. That figure is tragic. Outreach to non-practicing Catholics when they can be identified – registered parishioners who stop coming, RCIA participants who don't attend mass after receiving the sacraments, etc. Needs to be done in a way that would not be seen as judgmental, but rather outreach to understand why they are not practicing, and answer needs if we can.
- Divorcees struggle to get back to church -- need to make the process easier and kinder
- Need outreach to divorcees
- Outreach to fallen away Catholics
- Catholics are largest denomination; Fallen-Away Catholics are the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest!
- Call all parishioners, especially those who are not attending church
- Evangelize Catholics first!
- Marginalized groups feel left out
- Recent Reconciliation Services were very positive experiences for fallen-away Catholics
- Difficult for disabled and/or visually impaired to enter building
- Need signage (especially for restroom near chapel) and closer parking

- Do we know the disabled needs?
- Problem: were often in our own comfort zones so we hesitate to reach out to help
- Need drivers to bring people to church -- Pulpit talk expressing need
- "Helping Hands" Ministry -- outreach to help parishioners with rides to doctor, raking leaves, etc.
- Taking care of elderly parishioners -- how to fit this into our own schedules?
- Outreach to divorced
- Young people, children -- where are they?
- Are other churches experiencing this too?
- How do we evangelize those not going at all?
- How do we encourage them to make the choice to make Jesus central in their lives?
- We know the problems -- what do we need to do?
  - Find something teens like to do and offer them that opportunity through the parish
- Women
- LBGT –
- Not a lot of people know what an intentional disciple is!
- Intentional disciple: Choosing as an individual to have a relationship with Jesus and living that out.
- The term, "intentional disciple" is too fancy. Other faiths have no problem asking "are you saved? Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus"
- We need to cross the threshold of the language barriers
- Our clergy need to be more sensitive to those who are on the fringe.
- What are the fringe groups?
  - Young adults
  - Youth
  - LGBTQ
  - Single twenty somethings that what to meet other Catholics
  - Those who are divorced

- Those who are living with some kind of tension with the Church
- Those who are afraid who have PTSD from COVID
- Survivors of sexual abuse

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## ❖ What were some of the positive descriptions of how the Church is responding to the commission of: **“being sent forth to witness”**?

- Personal invitation is critical. Not digitally or by mass-mailing. A personal phone call. A personal note, followed up by a phone call. We are all called to be disciples and to share the Good News, but are we willing to step out of our comfort zones and make those personal contacts? Or are we simply relying on passive methods? Make people feel welcome and of value when they do participate in activities or when they volunteer. It is not necessary to like someone to love them. So, even when the person who volunteers or chooses to participate doesn't seem to fit in, remember that Jesus didn't discriminate. He chose the sinners, the tax collectors, those on the fringe of society. ALL should be welcome, even when they don't fit our preconceived notions.
- Solemnity. There should be no question--especially for the sake of children--that mass is something holy. Higher-quality vestments and more frequent use of hymns from our Catholic heritage would help foster this recognition, along with removal of lengthy requests for money before mass and advertisements for the gift shop after mass. More than one scheduled confession time per week (at a time that is difficult for those with children active in weekend events).
- Adult education in apologetics, how to talk to those who think wrongly of Christianity and Catholicism
- Intentional discipleship!..first we need a good explanation of what this means. In this day and age, we need to learn how to be apostles in a world that is a river rushing away from Christianity. We need to focus on repentance for the forgiveness of sins. We need the resources to go against the current, to develop a thirst for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a new Pentecost.
- I think the Church might motivate intentional discipleship by doing more to help ALL people understand the history of our salvation. For example, our parish in particular could more actively encourage this by suggesting daily reading of the Bible (or listening to the Bible being read in the podcast by Fr. Mike Schmitz) and then following up during Mass, through digital communications (other than facebook), etc. Understanding our history helps us to see more clearly the situation we are in and might motivate us to intentionally follow Christ and God's Word.
- We should evangelize primarily by actions, not words. St. Thomas Aquinas reference.
- Personal witness is sharing our own experience of God with others. An idea was expressed about possibly recording videos of parishioners – particularly those who have gone through the RCIA process – sharing their witness. Those videos could be shared on the website, social media, in other parish gatherings, or possibly in Gathering Space after Mass (during coffee and donut time). Ideally a variety of aspects presented – men, women, elders, teens, children, various ministries, etc.

- FOCUS was mentioned as a youth-to-youth program on college campuses in other areas. This comment came from a new parishioner. It was not known whether this program is available in our area or not. Training for college youth who then reach out to other Catholic college students.
- Summer and/or Spring Break activities for young adults was mentioned as a way to encourage youth and young adults to be active in the parish. One suggestion was a carnival in the church parking lot, with such things as a pie auction, and a dunking booth. Having activities that are open to the community as a whole, and promoted as such, could be beneficial. Back-to-School-Bash like Baptist church does, family movie night, Trunk-or-Treat, etc.
- Chuck-a-Buck was seen as a positive community witness. A desire was expressed to have some specifics on how the funds are used – rather than a dollar amount given to a particular organization, parishioners might relate better to saying something like, “donations purchased xxxx number of meals for the homeless”. Those donations could also be used in videos on the website, social media, etc. mentioned above.
- A baby shower for Options Pregnancy Center and Christmas gifts for nursing home residents were given as suggestions for community outreach.
- A float in the Christmas parade was seen as a positive statement about the Catholic Church in our area. Not having a float or other presence in the parade was seen as making a negative statement. The float doesn’t need to be something that will win a prize, but something that says the Catholic Church is active in Branson.
- Possibly partnering with the National Institute of Marriage to minister to couples in crisis. The Institute is based in Branson. Referred back to comments about divorced/separated individuals not feeling welcome.
- OLL has an important presence in various agencies in the Branson community –
- Parish encourages outreach to those in need.
- Many volunteers in community
- OLL involvement in Elevate Branson, Salvation Army, CAM, etc.
- We have the largest number of volunteers of all the other area churches
- “Ozark Mountain Cares” has their offices in our parish center
- Name tags
- Our Lady Cares

- Our Lady Cares
- Agency luncheon has been incredible to share with one another. Some people have said they've never been in a Catholic Church. We have opened the door and they peaked in.
- People came out of the wood works for Project Connect.
- Helping to humanize others.
- Our parish outreach through the various helping agencies is exceptional and a beautiful witness to our faith. Living our Catholic faith in the surrounding community gives witness to our Christianity and also helps to educate and inform those who have questions about our faith. Actions speak louder than words.
- The priests are extremely active with their ministry to students at College of the Ozarks.
- By working together in common charities, forming a stronger Christian bond, getting more involved.
- We offer financial support to several local charities that help the poor in our community and host a regular luncheon for all the local churches to gather and discuss needs.
- Our parish actively participates with other churches in the area to help the poor. I think we could improve on that and attempt to do some ecumenical worship and prayer together. We could focus on our similarities and learn about our differences.

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❖ **What were some of the challenges, disappointments, or frustrations conveyed, in describing how the Church is responding to the commission of: “being sent forth to witness”?**

- We do reach out to the homebound and those who are residents at care facilities and this is a beautiful ministry.
- Our website is the best tool. Offering help to those who want to know more about our Faith, but also to help those who's left, to find their way back
- We provide the majority of the volunteers at local charities by preparing sack lunches and delivering them to the less fortunate. We host the Loaves and Fishes program and help pack boxes at the local food pantry.
- I don't know how our community tries to help those most in need. Our welcoming team and other ministries DO try to reach out to all people in our assembly, initiating conversation, assisting with directions, seating, information about the area. But this is for ALL people, not

specifically for the marginalized.

- One comment was that it is better to do a few things well than to do many things on a mediocre basis. We need to take care not to become too fractured. Chuck-a-buck was mentioned in this regard in that we are not using our resources to “re-invent” or duplicate something that is already available in the Branson area; rather we are expanding the good those agencies are already doing. Maybe we could do more in letting the community at large know where/how those resources are being used. Knights of Columbus was mentioned as an organization within the parish that does a number of outreach activities/donations, but the parish and community is not always aware of those activities. “It’s in the bulletin” isn’t enough to raise that awareness. It was noted that whatever activity/ministry the priest promotes from the altar is more likely to be supported by parishioners, for example, Fr. Dave’s challenges to “donate a ton of food to CAM”, or to volunteer at the outreach program for needy in the area.
- Teach Catholics about the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist
- Better understand -- treasure what we have
- Outreach starts with us -- we witness through our actions
- We are Christ’s presence to others -- we’re his hands & feet
- Share books such as Matthew Kelly’s “Rediscover Catholicism”
- Make brochure about our parish & Catholicism
- Give out brochures about the church such as “Top Ten Questions Catholics Are Asked”
- Welcoming committee is lost. We need to be very intentional that we see new people as a local
- New mother’s ministries
- Parish wide pot luck and invite whoever
- Apologetics
- The pastors could give more of a scripture based homily to connect to our catholic faith.
- More catechesis for the adults
- Catechesis program?
- More meals (meals for the youth and more pot lucks)

- People want more of the homilies. Should we have a setting and platform where Father J. Can talk a while? PODCAST or a pot luck and talk?
  - Have a call committee to go after the one which is lost.
  - Making groups for singles and those who are divorced.
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- ❖ During the overall consultation process, what dispositions, attitudes, or feeling were notable? What tensions or disagreements emerged from the listening process? What was significant, surprising, or unexpected during the consultation session? What new perspectives or horizons opened up? What were the fruits that the Holy Spirit brought about through this experience?
    - It was wonderful to see so many positive opinions! Most people were very happy with our parish and the Catholic Church as a whole.
    - It was awesome to hear all these ideas, turn them into constructive criticism (not all of them were worded kindly), and make a plan for how to implement these ideas into our parish.
    - It was surprising to see how many people were “fed up” with youth not coming to Mass or with the sinfulness of the LGBTQ community. One opinion was that the Church operates within this set of rules and you need to abide by it and that homosexuality is a sin and that is just the way it is, they need to change.
      - Again, it was surprising to see that SO many people saw extending love to any gay person was immediately condoning their actions. The idea of loving someone whose actions you don’t agree with seemed very foreign.
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- ❖ What did participants have to say about areas where the Church or your parish is in need of healing and conversion in its spiritual life, culture, attitudes, structures, pastoral practices, relationships, and missionary outreach?
  - “Project Connect” -- sharing agency services continue this outreach to Taney County
  - Fr. J -- we’ll be hearing about “Transform” soon -- where one project becomes the focus of outreach for entire community -- we’ll hear more soon
  - Continue “Loves & Fishes” -- decision was made by outreach leaders that this is no longer needed

- Have occasional free dinner in our parish -- outreach to those in need, chance to build community
- Restart Neighborhood Cluster gatherings but hold them in the parish hall
- Attend Community Prayer Breakfast
- Problem -- people don't want to make effort -- How do we overcome this attitude
- We need to promote Our Lady Cares and the agency luncheon.
- We need to have a committee for Loaves and Fishes and get it running again.
- Two minute brag board at the end of Mass and couple it with social media to share what ministries are doing!
- We need to push coffee and muffins after the Masses.
- To reach out to those who are not here, have a very open event. Like back to school bash, and trunk or treat.
- Community events need to happen to strengthen the relationships.
- Could we share parking lots for a huge carnival with the Baptists neighbors?
- A mother's luncheon on Mother's Day

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❖ What dreams, desires, and aspirations for the church were expressed by participants?

- How do people fall away from their faith? Possibly due to not feeling valued or welcome, due to health reasons, because they have been hurt, or simply because it's easier to stay home. How do we respond when we realize someone is missing? Do we merely think to ourselves, "I wonder what happened to Joe?" or do we reach out to that individual/family? Again, personal contact. When we recognize that someone is missing, WE need to reach out to them to find out why they are missing and what we can do to offer support, encouragement and to bring them back. With those who are unchurched or who have fallen away from an active faith life, it means being willing to share our own stories in words and works and to offer the invitation. Again, personal invitation. As Catholics we are dreadful at inviting others to come and see what we are all about. Why is that? I have no answers to that question, but I believe it is something we need to look at .

- Get good canters and build a good choir. It's currently lacking..years ago OLL had a gentleman that led the choir and did a fantastic job. Need that again
- Offer opportunities on regular basis to reach out to those who want to belong, but don't know how, or are confused by what other's have told them (giving wrong information).
- We can volunteer in other areas in the community such as at the Free Clinic. We can also be the face of Jesus in our community by loving everyone and helping when we see a need.
- Perhaps we can offer some type of social gathering(s) where people physically ARE in the community? Meet people where they live (hotels, apartments), where they have activities (RecPlex, parks), etc. Once the dialogue is started, perhaps the unchurched will recognize some positive reasons to become part of the parish community.

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Fr J. you mentioned last Sunday you'd like to know our likes and dislikes about being Catholic. Here a few of mine:

- I love receiving and distributing communion. I receive it in honor of my Mom who has dementia and is no longer able to receive communion.
- I love saying the rosary before mass and sitting in silence prior to mass, especially on weekday masses when there aren't as many people attending and it's quiet.
- I dislike that we, the Catholic church, is constantly asking for money (sometimes for 3 different appeals on a Sunday).
- I dislike that it seems our churches go overboard with decor, stained glass, gold chalices/ciboriums, etc--why not keep it simpler and use those funds toward more practical expenses.
- My best friend's Mom was a Catholic but stopped going b/c she didn't agree with St John Paul II, and she was pro-choice.

On a separate note, why are Mass times at 7pm for special masses? Why not make them at 6pm?

Colleen Wehrle

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