

SYNTHESIS OF THE PARISH SYNOD CONSULTATION SESSION

PARISH NAME: St. Denis **PARISH CITY:** Benton

PARISH NAME: St. Lawrence **PARISH CITY:** New Hamburg

How many consultation sessions were held at the parish? One combined

About how many participants attended? 35

How were invitations issued? Bulletin insert, email to parishioners, Facebook posts, personal invitations by Pastoral Council members.

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? No

Were there specific groups of people who did not participate and why (if known) did they not participate? We did not have much participation by parents of younger children. We don't know why, but it matches the attendance at Mass. Many do not make it a priority...sports is their priority.

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

Our parishes offer weekday masses, a rosary before each mass and adoration on Fridays. Special feast day celebrations are held on the feast day of St. Lawrence and St. Denis.

"Fr Bala is a holy man, and also Fr. Michael before him".

Children's Masses at St. Lawrence are very well attended masses.

Mary's Way of the Cross during Lent was well attended.

We hosted Tim Francis for more to experience the wonder and miracles of the true presence of Jesus Christ in the communion hosts we receive.

What were some of the challenges, disappointments, or frustrations conveyed, in describing how the Church journeys together to "grow in holiness"?

The parish use to have book studies, and sessions like Renew, but over the years we have become 'Brain Dead'

We have had two parish missions this year, one in Advent, one in Lent, they were very poorly attended, less than 30 people.

Need better communication between the two parishes and between other closely neighboring parishes.
Grow enthusiasm for the faith in Scott County.

We need clear, concise teaching and reinforcement from the pulpit. More direct and to the point.

We need to bring back the traditions, not only bring them back, but explain why they are important.
This too starts from the top...Pope, Cardinals, Bishops, and priests.

Younger Catholics want "Steubenville" like atmosphere, we don't offer it.

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

Like the pastor's notes in the bulletin.

We've started to have parish missions again.

Our ladies are involved in "circles" that work together for funeral meals and church cleaning.

We have the opportunity for people to help at the food pantry.

What were some of the challenges, disappointments, or frustrations conveyed, in describing how the Church journeys together to "form intentional disciples"?

Suggestions:

Sunday School for young children so parents can attend mass together in a more non-distracted way.

Daycare of very young.

Need an explanation of what an intentional disciple is.

At announcements do a brief. "Did you know...and give a quick Catholic Catechism lesson.

Reinforce the importance of different parts of the Mass— help people understand it's not all about the homily.

Need to reinforce the importance and beauty of being able to receive the body of Christ!!!

Renew stewardship drive to get more people involved

Make confession more accessible and easier to go to.

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

We have a welcoming committee for new parishioners.

We have a Food Pantry.

We have a stand at Neighbor Day. We are visible in the parades in town.

We’ve begun small ways of positively inviting the parents of all school children and pre-school children to special events and prayer.

Our parish joins other parishes at ecumenical Lenten Lunches.

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”?

The priest needs to contact people who have fallen away. Personally Invite them back.

We need to make personal contacts with new parents, new home-owners, and those who have had deaths in the family.

Some people feel inadequate and unimportant, so they do not participate. We need to ask them to be involved in specific small ways, not layer too much on them when they first become involved. Don’t overwhelm them with responsibilities for a church function or committee.

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?

There were not disagreements or tensions. One of the most fruitful outcomes of the evening was that parishioners from both parishes were communicating and being actively involved...showing they cared about the Church.

Most groups conveyed some type of desire for the two parishes to communicate and collaborate more, with each other and with other neighboring parishes.

Many groups had mentions of “just beginning”. Do something to engage younger families, start small and grow.

Many expressed the need for more people to make it personal...for more parishioners to reach out and act on a personal level.

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?

The Pope and the other Church leaders are too liberal. Conservatives are not being heard. The true teaching of the Church is not being communicated and honored. We need clear, concise teaching and reinforcement from the bishop and the pulpit.

Church leadership is split. They are not making firm statements on what the church believes.

Conservative Catholics take issue with President Biden being told he can take communion even though he supports abortion.

Divorced Catholics feel left out. Annulments make kids feel bastardized. Annulments are like paying for confession and that is wrong.

We need Sunday School for young children so parents can attend mass together in a more non-distracted way, and even daycare for very young.

We need to be more welcoming to everyone at every single Mass.

We need to use technology better for better communication.

The Church needs an accelerated Deacon program.

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

Help the school parents understand the importance of their presence in the faith of their children. Help them understand their role in the eternal life of their children.

Before the readings give the background of the reading.

Before Mass, announce specifics of the Sunday.... "Divine Mercy Sunday", why and what it is. 3rd Sunday of Advent, why special? Etc.

Sunday School for young children so parents can attend mass together in a more non-distracted way. Daycare of very young.

Music/Dance/Block party...music brings people together. Food trucks. Ice Cream Social. Bring people together to socialize.

Work together with other neighboring parishes, Knights of Columbus, and Boy Scouts, start, form a Troop of St. George to encourage growth for our parishes.

Can we use a group of the parents of our Parish School children as a sample group to create a dialogue...ask what can we do differently? Then understand the issues and form a task force to address and engage specifically.

More parishioners invite people to sit with you at mass. Embrace people who we see back in church after a long absence after COVID.

A Compassionate Care group or committee who intentionally reach to new parents, those experiencing a death in the family, a divorce, loneliness, etc.

Help parish members to present and preach the word of God...it's not just up to priests and deacons. But help them to know how.