

SYNTHESIS OF THE PARISH SYNOD CONSULTATION SESSION

PARISH NAME: **St Elizabeth of Hungary** PARISH CITY: **El Dorado Springs, MO**

1. How many consultation sessions were held at the Parish? ONE -1

2. On what date was the session held /"Open Table"? March 12, 2022, at 630 pm

3. About how many participants attended? = 21 Responses

** 14 were present at the "Open Table" and 7 only answered the Questionnaire and returned to the Coordinator

4. How were invitations issued:

The Invitation/Info Sheet was handed after Mass and some were hand-delivered to their homes. About 3 were mailed. It was announced and talked about by the Coordinator - Phyllis Rogers and Pastor Fr Greg Tran Vi, after Communion two weeks before.

A six (6) page Invitation and Synod Information Sheet (Info Sheet), which included the Prayer, and two (2) pages of the Questionnaire were created, explaining the Purpose of the Synod and the Goals of the Diocese, based on the process guide, the PowerPoint, and the various articles linked, as well as the Mirror articles on the Synod.

The Diocese has not produced the handout at this time. The information made Parishioners aware of what is going on and provided an alternative way as well, to participate via questionnaire, in case they can not physically be at the Open Table.

It was also announced in the Bulletin with a short paragraph and the Logo of the Synod, inviting them and letting them know that The Pope and the Church want to hear their voice and that they are "important".The weekend of the "Open Table", was announced by the Coordinator after Communion. We also played Bishop Rice's video. *It just came out that week.*

5. 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 mailed and hand-delivered Info/Invitations to those who do NOT attend anymore. Upon delivery, they received us with a friendly welcome but did not indicate whether they were committed to participation either way.

Some parishioners spoke with others to get their opinions on what they wanted to share. Noteworthy participation was those returned questionnaires. One Parishioner has stopped attending since last year due to the fear of Covid and being immune-compromised, and yet managed to submit her answers. One Parishioner who sits in the very back on Sundays and whom I have never met until I spoke to her privately, welcomed the Info sheet and returned them answered.

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

Mostly they are parishioners who do not attend regularly, those who stopped due to experiences with past pastors, or due to the Covid fear and have not decided to show up yet.

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

We are happy to enjoy the availability of daily Masses, weekend Masses, and Adoration on Thursdays. Novenas are done in honor of the Mother of Perpetual Help. Penance is available 30 minutes before every weekend Mass, and special Penance services as well. Lent lets us participate in Stations of the Cross and the Triduum. Advent is festive as well and encourages a lot to participate, especially the Psr. Advent also brings out community service zeal of the members.

Our Pastor does his best to encourage us to participate in the Sacraments and church council. He also visits sick Parishioners who especially request the Anointing of the Sick.

PSR has helped develop the faith of the youth and encourages them to do service projects as a group. The invitation to participate in teaching the PSR has helped us teachers grow in knowledge more and more and increase our faith. We strive to be good examples to the youth.

The ladies' council and parish council bring out the cooperation among the Parish members; they are service-oriented and bring activities and connections that will increase our desire for holiness.

We are thankful the Diocese helps also with grants to conferences for the youth. The ladies' council and private members also donate with open hearts.

We also enjoy the devotional booklets that add to our resources.

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

The Covid pandemic caused fear in some parishioners in going to Mass. The immune-compromised opt to do Mass via EWTN and do spiritual readings at home.

One parishioner was disappointed with a letter from the Bishops read at Mass during the George Floyd crisis. It was a call to us Catholics to stop our prejudices and racism and it mentioned a criminal who happened to be 'black'. This criminal was found guilty of committing a crime and attacking the police. This irritated the Parishioner.

We want to grow in the knowledge of the Scriptures. A bible study group for adults was started by a previous Pastor but was not sustained in practice.

We wish for more dynamic speakers to come and inspire us in our faith

A Parishioner contacted the Diocese for Marriage Counselor to help his nephew in his troubled marriage. Sad to say, there wasn't any, and was referred to a Catholic Charities office. We called and also no one was available. It is sad how we can not provide them with Catholic counseling in their troubled times.

A Parishioner said the Mirror arrives late and the activities posted are already passed.

A disappointment is knowing that a parishioner leaves because he doesn't agree with a church teaching, especially on Contraception. Another left due to a difference of opinion with a former Priest

We need to announce that our Church has a library of religious books available to all for borrowing, to be a part of helping increase knowledge of our rich faith. Also the links to social media platforms like "The Bible in a Year", Ascension Press, Hallow App, as some are announced in The Mirror newspaper

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

Since we are a small church, we tend to have close relationships with each other. We see great examples of our fellow parishioners who are quick to assist, who continually encourage

one another, and keep the church running. We have a Pastor that is open to communication and continually enjoys and builds relationships with each family.

Our Ladies Council and their spouses also show good examples of being intentional disciples. Not just talk but they choose to be active movers in the Parish. The office, the dinners, the decors, the altar linens, altar banners, and housekeeping, all are examples of intentional disciples. A group of people makes available their time and resources to keep up with the upkeep of the grounds. These are all positive examples of choosing discipleship.

To feel welcome at the reception area and feel a connection with Greeters and Pastor, prepares you with a sense of desire to deepen your relationship with Christ. Our parish has Coffee & Donuts on 1st Sundays and socialization/ dinners usually after Saturday Mass. It allows us to open ourselves and develop relationships with one another, especially those we look up to.

One said, in Youth Formation, one has been led to more activities in the Parish and the knowledge of discipleship. We carry the responsibility and privilege of being a part of their learning experience. The PSR was active even during the two years of the Pandemic. We tried to do lessons via phone sessions and also encouraged parents to be more active in the education of their children.

Our youth also do a good job altar serving and joining in the music ministry. We do not have a regular organist but she donates her time from the mission church - St Peter- when she is needed. These are examples of service as disciples.

To answer the call to duty and discipleship.

On PSR, we agree that the Confirmation can be earlier. The teens who are in middle school need that training for faith conviction and will be better equipped for the challenges of high school peer pressure and social issues confusion.

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

One said they would like to have Homilies that give out traditions, scripture teachings, or historical context.

The news of our church hierarchy sometimes discourages us, especially the sins of sexual abuse. A stronger stand on politicians who do not care about the scandal of "pro choice/ pro

abortion' is needed to keep the morale of those who strive to be faithful to the teachings. We feel that they have committed a great sin to their sheep by allowing this to happen. It is a discouragement. This disappointment with the leadership affects their decision in contributing to the church resources, ex DDF

We need to reach out to those who left the church by sending them "hello cards" that have a caring message for them, in the hopes that they will come back. It is a challenge to be frank and open, yet admonishing them. We know they love God but that decision to live the commandment of attending Mass is a choice they need to make.

We also have challenges is keeping the youth after Confirmation, sometimes due to lack of parental guidance. We need also to maintain connections with the college kids and create prayer partners or parish mentors

Maybe if they disagree with a church teaching ex birth control, and they left the church, a pastor can go and explain the Catholic teaching and may encourage them open their minds to the truth.

We are not visible in the local newspaper, especially for important events like Easter "Coming Home"

Some personally feel we need to stop locking doors of the Church . One mother complained about coming in five minutes late and she kept knocking at the door and nobody heard her. Her family comes to Mass seldom and that one chance stopped her as well. Her family is an irregular attendee.

11. What were some of the positive descriptions of how the Church is responding to the commission of "being sent forth to witness"?

Our church PCCW participates in the Ministerial Alliance projects, even if our present Pastor is not yet active in it

Our Youth Group represents the Church in the annual community Clean Up

Various parishioners are very active in their personal capacities as well, in local projects ex. Hope center and the Food Distribution at the old Woods Grocery Lot. Others participate in hospital auxiliary groups, or seasonal gift donation drives, esp gift wrappings at the Baptist Church, VFW, Women's shelter, School activities, Senior Center, Nursing Homes, Thrift Store.

PCCW is open to visiting private members' homes and to say hello

PCCW initiated the sponsoring/adopting of a seminarian by our Parish.

We are open to sending "Hello" "Thinking of You" cards to parishioners who are not active at the moment

Our Parish donates funds to people in crisis with their electric bills, etc. When they knock at the Rectory, they are now asked to give their name and situation to the police so they can be verified

We are very open to helping with the Soup Kitchen for the homeless which happens at the Methodist property. We can help with the ingredients and other resources needed; maybe volunteer a day to serve as well.

We are open to having a clothes drive for the winter, especially providing what is needed most like Jackets and socks.

Through the years, fellow Parishioners help fellow members who are in need. They all work together when they find out someone needing help.

12. What were of the challenges, disappointments, or frustrations conveyed, in describing how the Church is responding to the commission of "being sent forth to witness"?

We need to go out "As a Parish" for community outreach.

Our church does NOT do Mass online however, our Parishioners use EWTN and other media.

Some feel they can get phone calls because they miss people's connections

Also, the Sunday Bulletin is not received by those who miss Mass; therefore, they don't know what is going on, or they miss the teachings or homily in it.

We need to be present in the local media, short articles, or even small brochures or pamphlets at public places, like local flea markets

The community has a lot of drug problems. Some parishioners have experienced a car in our lot being broken into. A female parishioner also experienced her car being banged at to be admitted, while parked at the community center. So we fear sometimes having an open door for a soup kitchen activity.

One Parishioner said she can bring a friend but would not want to go without an invitation. We can start offering Invitations and asking who wants them and offering a day to join the Mass and see if they want to continue with RCIA

13. During the overall consultation process, what dispositions, attitudes, or feelings were notable?

Overall, participants wanted to contribute their experiences and opinions for the further development of our Church.

What tensions or disagreements emerged from the listening process?

No tensions were felt during the process.

What was significant, surprising, or unexpected during the consultations process?

The significant opinion was the overall observation that "As a Parish", we are not out there together at an event, reaching out as much as we can. Although, notable are individual participations in different organizations and service projects.

Another significant topic is the realization that our other members need to be made aware that their participation is needed to run a Parish. The same core people can get overwhelmed.

What new perspectives or horizons opened up?

We are enlightened into realizing that we can do more in the community as a whole Parish. Our Ladies are involved in the community and the youth group participates in the yearly city clean-up, however, we can do more "As a Parish". For example, in the soup kitchen.

What were the fruits of the Holy Spirit brought about through this experience?

The fruits of Faithfulness, Generosity, and Charity -Service, was brought about by this Synod.

Faithfulness to the teachings and what is required of us as Catholics, despite the problems of this world. We have to keep going on! ; Generosity towards those in need of our understanding and kindness, time and talents; Charity-Service to those we need to reach out to as Christ's disciples.

14. 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?

Conversion of the hearts of members who have not yet attended regularly since the Pandemic.

The attitude mostly in need of change is 'Service' attitude, both in our Parish and towards the

Community. We need attitudes of "what can I do" from other members.

Our Pastor can represent our Parish in the Ministerial Alliance and this can build a significant relationship with the community. This can promote our role in missionary outreach in the community and show that the Catholic brothers and sisters can also be present and living example of Christ's disciples. This can also inspire other members to join, especially if the Pastor invites them personally.

15. What dreams, desires, and aspirations for the Church were expressed by participants?

We dream that our parishioners who presently attend will continue to participate at Mass and the Sacraments. We dream that they remain steadfast in their faith and be interested in continuing their knowledge. We dream that our Parish can provide that stimulus!

We dream that others "wake up" and get inspired to come back to church; to be inspired to help in the Church.

We aspire to go into the Community "As a Parish"!

We desire that parents of our youth will continue to send their children to Mass and to PSR classes so that they can be deeply rooted in their Faith. Our church desires this very much because we value our next generation; for parents to continue to be active teachers and examples at home; to bring them to Mass.

We also desire to activate more the youth group and although, the youth number is lower than other parishes simply because we have fewer young families, we can do more service projects within the Parish first, and then the community as well.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam,

Phyllis Rogers- Synod Coordinator

St Elizabeth of Hungary and St Peter the Apostle

April 9, 2022

