



## Synod Meeting Summary

May 3, 2022

St. Mary's Parish

Joplin, MO

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

**On what date was the session held?** May 3, 2022

**About how many participants attended?** 55

**How were the invitations issued?** Bulletin, announcements at Mass, Facebook, Email, JACS website site, and personal invitation from parish council members

**Were there any groups of people whose participation was especially noteworthy and why?** There were a number of people who typically don't attend other parish events (maybe due to covid) and Parish Council.

**Were there specific groups of people who did not participate and why (if known) did they not participate?** Groups not in attendance: Young adults (18-30 years of age), those having left the parish, general public, school age parents.

1. How is our parish currently journeying with the people of our parish and our community in their walk of faith?

| Parish                                     | Community  |
|--|--|
| 1. Small Faith groups                      | St. Vincent de Paul                                  |
| 2. Bible Study: men and women              | Support the Catholic School                          |
| 3. Parish Council of Catholic Women (PCCW) | Knights of Columbus (locally and national)           |
| 4. Rosary Sunday                           | PCCW (locally and nationally)                        |
| 5. Knights of Columbus                     | RCIA   |
| 6. Youth Group                             | St. Peter's Outreach                                 |
| 7. Stations of the Cross                   | Stations of the Cross in public park                 |
| 8. Lenten Mission                          | Catholic Charities                                   |
| 9. Adoration                               | Cross Lines  |
| 10. Morning/Evening Mass (T-F)             | Support for victims of war or natural disaster areas |

2. How is the Holy Spirit challenging us, our parish, our diocese and the universal church to seek the understanding of the Holy Spirit?
  - a. Challenge: Encouraging attendance at these types of gatherings in order to share and listen to others
  - b. Challenge: Reminding us we are a community of believers, not 100+ individuals sharing a space each Sunday
  - c. Challenge: To realize the Holy Spirit is a gift from God, given to everyone, not just the Apostles
  - d. Challenge: To go outside our comfort zone and reach out to others
  - e. Challenge: Satan challenges each of us to ignore the Holy Spirit
  - f. Challenge: other ways to connect with the Holy Spirit other than prayer
  - g. Understanding of the Holy Spirit:
    - i. More homilies teaching on the Holy Spirit
    - ii. Bible studies and small faith groups allow for sharing an understanding of the Holy Spirit
    - iii. Provide resources for parishioners to take some responsibility for their own faith understanding of the Holy Spirit
    - iv. Provide opportunities to pray together to the Holy Spirit before or after Mass
    - v. The Holy Spirit challenges our curiosity which leads to questions-where to go for the answers

3. How have your experiences, insights, and concerns helped or hindered your ability to grow in your faith?

- a. Experiences:

| Helped   | Hindered   |
|--|--|
| Surrounded by people who are strong in the faith | Cradle Catholics lack a sense of community as a necessity for growing in the faith |
| Members foster hope when in a crisis             | Lack of program follow-thru by the parish council                                  |
| Life changing events sometimes                   | Some experiences within the  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| brings members back to the faith          | church cause people to search out other churches                |
| Church Traditions                         | Live streaming Mass now that Covid is less of a danger          |
| People in the pews                        | Low attendance, many not yet returning to Mass                  |
| Sense of “special community” of believers | Lack of small faith groups                                      |
| Opportunities for adoration/Rosary        | Noise of the world  |
| Bible Study opportunities                 | Lack of understanding of the true presence of Christ            |
| Liturgical ministry opportunities         | Slow return to liturgical ministries                            |
|   | Putting other activities before the needs of our spiritual life |
|   | Church is too political   |

b. Insights:

| Helped                                   | Hindered  |
|--|---|
| Participating fully in the liturgy       | Distracted during Mass                              |
| Appropriate music for all to participate | Noise level in the foyer prior to the start of Mass |
| Applying the readings to today’s world   |   |

c. Concerns:

1. Will the Church continue to exist?
2. Church has become too liberalized
3. A group of “cafeteria Catholics”
4. Lack of participation in Mass and other parish activities
5. Not having all ministries returned for week-end Mass
6. Do we have a place?
  - Where our misery meets God’s mercy

- Where everyone is known by their name
- Filled with people who participate in all pillars of stewardship

#### Comments at large:

- Find ways to invite and encourage people to return to mass
- Contact people who are no longer attending St. Mary's
- Church feels empty
- Lots of activities, few participants
- Need a sense of community
- Doing less since pandemic
- Making people feel welcomes like other churches do
- Our Catholic Churches are not cohesive
- Music is frustrating when we do not have a choir full time
- Hire a music director
- Hire a religious education director to provide religious education to all children, especially those in public school, making PSR a priority for all families when it is done professionally
- Return to the Sign of Peace, and passing of the offertory baskets as well as bringing up the offertory gifts
- The only way we love God is to love our neighbors
- To be better informed about what is happening in the church
- Minimal public presence or awareness to the community
- Prior to joining JACSS, the happenings of the church were less apparent
- How do we increase our footprint in the community?
- Attempt to use our faith to guide our views on many issues in the world using the Holy Spirit to guide and council us
- The Holy Spirit helps us Catholics make a stand on what is ok or not in the world
- St. Peter's/St. Mary's (building under one umbrella)
- What are we missing? Not good at evangelizing, or reaching out to those who step away from the faith
- We are not listening to God or the Holy Spirit
- People do not like or want change

- The business of life-too much to choose from that takes us our time
- RCIA type for adults-a review of the faith
- Need senior outreach
- Need a way to get to know others in the parish
- Retreats for spiritual growth

Each table's top three:

**Rick Metsker:**

- Need a way to connect with people in the parish and get to know each other, ex: small groups
- Need to know who to call or have a procedure to call
- Programs to help us grow in our faith

**Denis Desmond:**

- Concerned about lack of attendance of Sunday Mass
- Lack of understanding of others of the Catholic faith including the Holy Spirit and the Eucharist
- Church has become too political

**Margie Black: \***

- The challenge is accountability
- We are not listening to God or the Holy Spirit
- Through Eucharist, service, and ministries we have opportunities to be together

**Jim Mobley:**

- Be more welcoming and energetic
- Fellowship opportunities: Have Sunday School, Bible Study for all ages between Masses
- Have a more progressive Mass, geared more toward young adults as well as a traditional Mass

**Steve Williams: \***

- The only way we love God is to love our neighbor
- Follow thru with programs we start
- Church is our community

**Kristy Buccieri: \***

- We practice our faith each week when we reflect Catholicism in the community
- Increasing our footprint in the community
- Major life changes can bring people back to the faith, we need to be ready to welcome them back

**Scott Lone:**

- Opportunities for service: St. Vincent de Paul, Knights, PCCW

- Challenged by the Holy Spirit to do more than just sit in a pew each Sunday
- Cafeteria Catholics

**Stephanie Elbert: \***

- Need a sense of community
- How do I become involved with the community through my Faith?
- Missing the joy of our faith

**Patty Wheeler:**

- We have opportunities for involvement with lack of participation
- We have opportunities for spending time with Jesus at Holy Adoration, and personal reflection
- Catholic School system is available yet we sometimes overlook the needs of the public-school children

The \* sign after a few names designates that I pulled from my memory what I recalled as the three items they mentioned at the meeting. In the notes, the three items were not clearly listed.

Report respectively submitted by:

Patty Wheeler

May 15, 2022