

SYNTHESIS OF THE PARISH SYNOD CONSULTATION

SESSION PARISH NAME: St. Peter the Apostle

PARISH CITY: Joplin

How many consultation sessions were held at the parish? 1

On what date(s) was the session held? May 5, 2022

About how many participants attended? 40

How were invitations issued?

By bulletin, parish announcement, Facebook page, and personal invitation.

How did you invite and connect with those at risk of being excluded or those on the peripheries?

The youth of our parish and schools were specifically invited. The Facebook page was used to reach those who may be homebound or not attending Sunday Mass.

Were there any groups of people whose participation was especially noteworthy and why?

While most of the attendees were considered “regulars,” there were some new families and some who do not regularly attend parish events.

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

There was no obvious lack of participation from any specific group.

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

The availability of daily Mass and Eucharistic Adoration, the feeling of the parish as a home for so many, the way that families with young kids feel so welcome are all positive indications.

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

Our youth do not take an active part in Mass after middle school. We need to emphasize our PSR and other youth programs more. Many people have wonderful testimonies of faith but we don’t find the chance to share them with each other. Since the pandemic, many people have fallen away from the need to attend Mass and practice their faith. New parishioners do not often have a way to make connections with others.

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

Our FIAT young families group and our Outreach House do a good job of reaching out, connecting parishioners, and serving those in need. We are encouraged by our Catholic faith and traditions knowing we don't need to try to be another church, we are the Church founded by Christ and we can learn to live that identity more. Many Catholics are living lives of evangelization by being inspiring leaders to those around them, even if they don't realize it.

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

Many parishioners feel inadequately educated in their faith, especially when family and friends ask them questions about the faith. We need to bring back some form of adult formation, Bible study, or discussion group. We should do a better job of reaching out to the sick and homebound (not just the priest) and intentionally pray for each other. Mass and Eucharistic Adoration should be more communal and less individual and private experiences, and connect us to each other and those in the world who need love. Our parish and schools could be better united in mission. Parishioners who see a need should work to provide for that need, rather than waiting for somebody else to do it and relying on the same few people who do everything.

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 good outreach to the homeless through the Outreach House, St. Vincent de Paul Society, and many local resources. Parishioners should be reminded that they can get involved and support these ministries. Our funeral dinners are a good way parishioners gather to reach out in kindness to the grieving. Our Catholic radio station and, until recently, the Faith in our Hometown TV show were good ecumenical efforts and cast the Catholic Church in a positive light.

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 can better engage our young adults in those ministries. We often have a hard time thinking of creative new ways to reach out. We don't do a great job of forming adults in the faith and showing them why it's important and how rich the treasury of the faith is. Reaching the homebound and the wounded non-practicing Catholics should be a priority, and parishioners can be trained and empowered to share their faith better. We feel that we should be doing more to bring in the youth.

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

There was optimism and recognition about what strengths the parish has. There was also an agreeableness and gratitude about engaging in this process where the parishioners could listen to

each other and be heard by the priests and staff. While it is easy to recognize problems and lacks, we found it more challenging to think creatively about solutions and to find ways to engage the laity instead of putting burdens on the clergy.

What tensions or disagreements emerged from the listening process?

Not much tension emerged among the participants. The people involved showed different emphasis on various aspects of parish life, from liturgy to social ministry to intellectual formation, but there was widespread agreement on the priorities addressed.

What was significant, surprising or unexpected during the consultation session?

Each group had very insightful contributions and they were surprisingly unique and different from each other.

What new perspectives or horizons opened up?

In some areas, the parish is institutionally providing great opportunities, but it was recognized that the parishioners don't always take advantage of those opportunities.

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

The Holy Spirit brought a sense of peace, joy, and harmony to the participants, making us recognize that taking time to stop and discern the life of the parish community is well worth it.

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?

We recognized that we have a treasure in the Catholic Church, in its prayer, liturgy, traditions, and care for the poor and vulnerable. Not only should the parish make a renewed effort to actualize these realities in the life of the people, but the parishioners should engage more fully, step up as leaders, and use the gifts of the Church as opportunities for service and evangelization to those on the margins.

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

We all know that our parish has been great in the past, is great in many ways now, and has potential to grow in many ways. Stopping to discern and discuss this potential gave us all a hope for being the local Church in new ways and seeing how the parish can continue to grow and serve Christ which we wouldn't have thought of on our own.