

Pastoral Council Notes

10/18/2023

Present: Fr. Andy Switzer, Colin Hayden, Gil Sateia, Becky Tokarcik, Patrick Green, Shana' Harris, Derek Gallagher, Brendan Jarrell, Bill Sagle

Opening prayer and scripture reading.

Fr. Andy reflected on the Synod and remarked on its relationship to our parish:

- we are trying to define our mission
- we must find common threads among people
- reminded us that listening is a skill and we need to listen to the person we are with
- we do not need more documents; we need to define and pursue our mission

Fr. Andy then asked the council members to pair up and consider five questions. Each member was to give responses to how the questions were answered by the person with whom each was paired.

- this was an exercise to make the council more synodal as a body and in practice
- the council members saw how listening takes effort
- listening is the key to being a synodal body

Fr. Andy asked each council member to speak about the first ten pages of the parish synod report. Discussion and comments followed the regarding the status and vision of the parish and numerous themes were identified:

- interaction among parishioners
- the role of young people in the parish/ becoming inter-generational
- dialogue within the church and society
- eschewing “churchy words” in homilies to make them more relatable; maintaing focus
- seeing the priest as a “presider” rather than celebrant; finding ways to participate in the Mass
- do not overemphasize youth at the expense of older parishioners
- a two-way street exists: youth appreciating older parishioners and older parishioners appreciating the young parishioners
- wisdom is a foundation of any parish
- friends are an important facet of church participation
- interaction is a key componment, but Christ must remain the focus
- hearing, not just listening, must become a component of our role
- the participation of women in all aspects of parish life is important at St. Agnes
- hospitality is a key part of the culture at St. Agnes

Fr. Andy reminded the council that they are visionaries more than doers and asked the the council members not become frustrated with that role.

Colin reported that contacts have been made with Good Shepherd Ministries; Brendan mentioned that he will consider going to their bible studies.

Derek suggested that having the young parishioners put on a Senior Ball might be a really fun activity.

Ways to connect with the Shepherd University students was discussed and having a dinner at specified times was suggested. The parish could commit to a meal and host it. This can be a real starting point for the parish to outreach with the students.

- Who will prepare and serve the meals?
- Several parishioners were mentioned as good candidates to prepare the meals

The need for a parish directory came up again and Colin recommended an action plan for it. The status is not clear.

There was discussion about the proposed parish hall: how will it be used?

- classroom space
- activities within the parish
- dinners can be provided there

A new and larger Suggestion & Comments box for the narthex was okayed by Fr. A.

- can be used to start conversation
- constant engagement
- ask parishioners to define our parish Mission Statement as a starter

Closing prayer by Fr. Andy.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 15 @ 6:30 PM