

Pastoral Council Notes

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

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

Opening Prayer: All

Scripture Reading: Acts 15

Using the scripture reading as an example, Fr. Andy reminded the council that the early church went through a synodal process much like we are asked to do today. We are living in similar circumstances as the early church leaders.

Kim Connor gave a presentation of Laudato Si:

- a film "The Letter" will be shown on October 1
- wants to build energy around Laudato Si
- flyer and website announcement
- plans to open the film to the community at large
- environment is an issue that draws youth
- committee developed organically within the parish

Discernment follow-up from the retreat:

- feedback taken from the council members
- roles discerned for those in attendance: Derrick Gallagher & Brendan Jarrell to Pastoral Council; Dominic Massiminoto future Liturgy committee; Steve Bledsoe to Finance Council; Michael Ambrose to Vicariate pastoral council

Retreat was Synodal:

- what direction is the Holy Spirit leading the Church?
- Stop, listen, pray then see what emerges
- look at tradition and look at what could change
- our Synodal report gives us a vision

Themes that emerged from the retreat and discernment:

- Community involvement
- Youth focused activities
- Constant synodality

Impressions from the retreat included:

- deeper conversations
- an example of the unity needed within our parish
- a chance to step away from pragmatism and allow things to happen; not just checking things off a list
- engage the parishioners in continuous synodality: a suggestion box and survey are recommended
- examples of helpfulness within the parish: helping parishioners with basic needs, food collections, homeless dinners, transportation
- outreach is needed: the synodal report is a beginning not an end
- define a common Christian identity of a St. Agnes parishioner
- encourage participation
- discover talents within the parish and find ways to use them; move out of institutional structures to be part of the community
- do more in the community – help with housing, assistance, etc – to be recognized as a committed parish
- find ways to spread the word to non-traditional parishioners
- make parishioners aware that time after Mass is important and valuable; find ways to engage them
- youth focused activities; get young families involved to build a more vibrant and active parish
- synodal implies listening; people have to speak to be heard; develop a survey to begin to hear the parishioners
- become the “home church” for Shepherd University: people need to be a mentor as much as young people need to have a mentor
- create an atmosphere of inter-generational service
- become a parish that is constantly engaged in dialogue and activity

St. Agnes Synodal report:

- Fr. Andy requested that council examine the first ten sections of the parish's synodal report
- what are we accomplishing ?
- where are we falling short?
- find action points within the first ten sections

Christine noted that our Synodal process at St. Agnes began with everyone – every voice – hearing from the periphery.

Parish directory: a new directory is being planned. Joe Vernice volunteered to organize the directory.

Fr. Andy believes that we need more diversity on the Parish Council.

Next meeting is Wednesday, October 18 at 6:30.

Fr. Andy gave the closing prayer.