

## **SYNODAL PARTICIPANTS AND GATHERING EXPERIENCE**

Gatherings were held via Zoom

1.5 – 2hr meetings

Meetings were accepted well, people were talkative, open, fair, and respectful

12 males Age 45-80

11 females Age 40-80

4 Youth Age 13-15

### **Theme I Journeying Companions**

#### **Who is outside of Church?**

People have left the Church: anger/poor liturgies/scandal/Church teaching

People choose not to journey, content going to Mass

Young families: Church not a priority like sports/school activities

Older members tired of volunteering

Live-streaming keeps people at home, away from the larger community

Migrant workers/immigrants/homeless/addicts/LGBTQ – looking to journey

Woman on birth control– or who have aborted a child

#### **Who are we journeying with?**

St Paul's Good Sam Committee journey's with migrant workers

Journey primarily with older parishioners

Different age groups/ministry groups/staff – all journey separately

In our Universal prayers we journey together with those in need

#### **How do we better journey together?**

Understand the journey and communicate better

Integrate activities between ministry teams

Find ways to invite- informative email/E-mail bulletin/social media

Build awareness- increase parish activities that engage people

Ministry Minute- a personal witness after Mass sharing about different ministries

Revive Webster Council of Churches- better interaction with other churches

Catholic Courier should be more inviting – future looking

## **Theme II Listening**

### **What prevents us from listening?**

Preconceived notions about others, judgement, dismiss others views  
Living in the past- “tradition,” we’ve always done it that way  
Ignorance of culture/language/custom: young v. old, city v. suburb,  
Prejudice– racial/religious/gender/political  
Youth, LGBTQ, immigrants, others speak in a way we don’t want to hear  
Parish ministries not integrated/interactive  
Women being heard, unvalued! Lost feminine perspective  
Legal immigrants troubled by “illegal” immigrants

### **Listening to Youth**

Teens attracted to social media/entertainment/sports/games  
Break through filters kids develop: understand vocabulary/body language/voice/lived practical life;  
Provide safe environments that allow youth to communicate openly/honestly.  
Provide a judgement free zone where kids feel they are heard.  
Confirmation students felt they were being heard

### **Mechanisms for speaking/listening**

Spend personal time listening to the Word of God- prayer/scripture  
Recognize own biases/stereotypes/fears preventing us from hearing/listening.  
Live our faith, share our Eucharistic experience and make it contagious!  
Quarterly diocesan/parish listening sessions  
Suggestion box at Church  
To parishioners who have left church – reach out in letters, phone calls.  
Group sharing, prayer groups/bible study/Adult Education  
Be open minded/use inclusive language

## **Theme IV Celebrating**

Reconnect with youth/young families  
Promote participation in Liturgical Ministries  
Social gatherings that draw families/promote community celebration/worship  
Offer a variety of uplifting music for young and old: piano/guitar/horns/choirs  
Find ways to make parish life more engaging, make people aware of Christ’s presence  
Explore ways to make Mass more engaging/uplifting/spirited/joy-filled/inviting  
Homilies need to be personal/apolitical/engaging/meaningful/relevant

We need to be more fully aware of all the activities our parishioners are involved in  
Est. Adult Ed yearly goals: climate change, social teaching, safe practices; bring together experts to speak  
Reach out to those who have left via letter/e-mail/call  
Recognize/appreciate the diverse views of parishioners on major issues- birth control/homosexuality/LGBVQ  
Promote dialogue with other faith communities in all aspects of social/religious life

## **Theme V Co-Responsibility in the Mission**

### **How do we give the people in our community a voice?**

Have open forums for experts to discuss important social, theological, spiritual issues

Recognize/appreciate the diverse views present in the Church.

Promote hospitality/listening environment/help others identify their gifts

Support service oriented organizations as St Paul's: KoC, Bethany House,

Hope House, Webster Comfort Home, Afghan refugees, Dmitry House, CRS

Provide parishioners with opportunities to live the Gospel call to serve the poor and share their gifts/grace/resources

Confirmation student's asked community of St. Paul's to come together to help with needs for woman served by Margaret House

KoC helped purchase ultrasound equipment for local organizations- used to show mothers pregnancy is a life not a problem.

## **Theme VI Dialogue in Church and Society**

### **How do we reach out to parishes/diocese?**

Recognize our shared commitments and missions

Engage other local Churches, e.g. Webster Council of Churches.

Engage more with Knights of Columbus Trinity Council

Be more active as a faith community with regard to issues such as: Consistent life ethics

Encourage advocacy for social justice, e.g. signing petitions

Be a voice in the conversation about racism, migrant workers who pick crops in our area, healthcare for underserved communities, the dignity for mothers who terminate births, the well-being of the infirmed and elderly, and people in group homes.

Collaboration with neighboring parishes- ID common goals/interests to build bridges and foster dialogue

Invite other churches (non-Catholic) to come to discussions, retreats, parish functions

Gathering of Choirs for evening of shared worship/song

Shared retreats between different parishes, each one hosting, with daytime and evening sessions to accommodate more individuals' schedules