

Listening Session—Ss. Joseph and Cabrini November 4, 2018

With around 50 people in attendance, Michael Hoffman led our listening session, as we worked our way through the five questions from the exhortation of “The Joy of the Gospel” by Pope Francis. Following are some bullet points of discussion that was had among the five groups of parishioners.

1. In what ways does our parish reflect Pope Francis’ vision of constantly going out beyond the four walls of church to reach those who are not with us on a regular basis?

Our parish center and Parish Life Coordinator living and being extremely active in Richland, Brighton, and Pleasant Plain create quite a Catholic presence in the community.

Altar and Rosary activities:

Funeral dinners

Great Iowa Tractor Ride

Congregate Meals

Ragbraii

Annual Bazaar

Coffee and Rolls

Prayer Services

Send Cards to Sick

Communication is key to bringing people back. Email, text, church website, etc. More than just the weekly bulletin.

Not as many priests to be active in the community—it is up to us. Shirley (PLC) is spread thin with all she does. Need to keep in contact with past parishioners. Some may feel alienated. Maybe justified issues.

2. What are the greatest challenges to evangelization in our parish?

One Mass time might be a detriment. Fewer children. Distance of church. Losing our Catholic kids to other churches. Church isn’t a priority. Too many other commitments for our time.

Cultural issues prevalent in society. Need to expect integrity in business and politics. Morals must begin in the family with lessons and good examples. Must emphasize good moral principles. Our society seems to be negative at times. We need to be more positive. Be a welcoming parish—for the most part we do a pretty good job of this. Invite people to join us. How to keep energy up during worship and make people feel that they want to belong.

Issue with RCIA—other churches accept people right away without the months of instruction.

Media—abuse scandal an issue.

Young people want to be entertained. Music is important.

3. To what extent does our parish form evangelizing disciples of Christ-including youth, young adults, and the on-going formation of people of all ages.

We are the seeds, spreading our faith in the community. We need to be the example for young people.

Get young people together. Social activities for kids.

Blog or website. Communication is a key.

Christ in Others Retreat is a popular evangelization tool. 50 - 60 kids—only 50% are Catholic. We are all one family. Example from adults—we all have problems. God will always be there.

Promote: National Young Catholic Conference

Christ Our Life Conference

Christian Experience Weekend

Marriage Encounter

Bible Study

Diocesan Youth Activities

Figure out how to keep the energy and enthusiasm going after attending retreats and conferences.

Cards at Mother Cabrini
Polishville Dances

4. To what extent does our parish and you, as a parishioner, reach out to those on the “margins,” e.g. to those who are poor, sick, elderly, those of cultural diversity, or those who might feel disenfranchised?

Reaching out:

Benefits for people in need—house fires

Oakville flood—cleaning out a flooded house

Christmas Caroling

Lord’s Cupboard—monthly donations

Community REACH organization

Lots of service projects

Donating East Pleasant Plain rectory to Amish family

Service projects

Coffee and Rolls money to various causes

Send cards to sick

Poinsettias to elderly and homebound

Christmas gifts; gifts to our college students

Taking kids out to do service projects

Sewing for Haiti

Fr. Damian is extremely welcoming—always thanking people for coming to Mass and those helping with the service.

Combining our parishes wasn’t easy, but was accomplished with friendly acceptance and cooperation

Address abuses—we must live up to the standards of our faith

5. What resonates with you in the Pope's words? What challenges you?

Patience—working through our issues

Knowing how to pray

Be enthusiastic about our faith—promote our faith—“advertise” by our example—“They’ll know we are Catholics by our love!”

Be more welcoming and inviting. Say, “We miss you,” instead of “Why aren’t you coming to Mass?”

Reignite our passion for the Eucharist. Teach the difference between our faith and other religions: We receive the real Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ each time we receive communion.

John Lamansky—recently ordained priest from our parish

Lead by example

It will take all of us working together to promote the Joy of the Gospel!