

PASTORAL MISSION COUNCIL | MEETING MINUTES | 11/10

Approval of Minutes

Reports: (20 Minutes)

- Leadership Report
 - Men's retreat review; "wonderful spirit among them", rich experience
 - Parishioner re: guide/consultant for the building & grounds, please inform Fr Chris, Dcn Steve, &/or the PMC, etc
 - No ads in the bulletin, website, etc for the time being; more personal 1:1 reachout
 - Architect, exp in construction, etc
 - Landscape architect from couple's retreat?
 - Desire to combine efforts of the school and parish B&G committee/initiative
 - Ramping up w/ efforts toward Advent & Xmas and acknowledging the new, blended communities and traditions
 - "A lot to celebrate!"
 - Being proactive in planning things out and communicating w/ necessary groups/committees, etc
 - Re: last council meeting – the Synod ("Vatican III")
 - The continental phase
 - The reports from the Nam continent reflected local reports
 - Women's leadership is a running theme throughout the continental reports
 - Moving forward to combining the reports from StJ & StP, to incorporate the results into our mission

Extended Discussion – Jesuits West Apostolic Planning – Questions (90 minutes)

- Where and in what ways do I see the "signs of the time" or how do you see the Spirit moving in our parish today?
- How do I hear the parish being called: what opportunities might we be invited to pursue; what future do I imagine and desire for our parish?
- What obstacles might we face in pursuing this future, and how might we face these obstacles?

Notes from the Session:

- First round of sharing; speaking & listening, no response from the other participants; the following are the themes or keywords from the various participants, in response to the three questions of the session:
 - People seeking community, belonging
 - "A church in hospice"
 - Growth of lay leadership
 - Desire for engagement & connection
 - Disconnect between the institution & the lay/congregation
 - Simple things, little acts
 - "pizza parties instead of a living wage" – analogy for how the lay are treated vs how they should be treated
 - "Intransigent teachings" of the institution, contrasting with "the small good things" done by its followers
 - Deep desire for ritual, & a longing for meaning-making; the Church can fulfill this desire, but it's not currently attractive

- Hopeful, but not optimistic about the future of the church and its prominence in the world
 - Those acting in the Holy Spirit “doing little things with great love”
- Second round of sharing; discussion & responses:
 - Vatican II, ~60yrs ago, 2k+ bishops updated the Church in 4 years; “& the votes weren’t close”
 - “[This synod is] a historic opportunity to claim the promise of Vatican II for us & our future; we *have* to do it.”
 - Retaining ritual and beauty in Mass/worship, traditions, etc, doesn’t need to take away from the push toward increasing the role of women in the church, supporting of equal rights, etc.
 - Focus on the important things – WWJD?
 - A hymn: “beauty ever ancient, ever new” – continuing revelation in Church tradition; the Church *can* change
 - From another participant to the sharer: “thank you for reminding me about the simple things”
 - Macro vs micro – institutional change vs “what we can grow *here*”
 - Simple things like changing language and referencing traditions can go a long way – e.g. in using gender-inclusive language: referring to “the prayer that Jesus taught us” (or something similar), instead of “The Our Father”
 - A lot of anger being expressed toward the institutional church and the hierarchy in this conversation
 - “anger is what we feel when something we love – our faith – is threatened”
 - “love is a call to action”
 - “It’s been 60 years since Vatican II, & nothing has changed”
 - “we need to be banging down the bishop’s door!”
 - We need to speak out & be heard – by the bishops, politicians, etc
 - Toward the end of the session, one participant asked the group: “How can we bottle [this energy] & what has happened at this table?”
 - Furthermore, “why are we only talking about women as *deacons*?”
 - The larger world needs us to do this
 - Fewer young people in the church – they’re not mad, etc; the church is irrelevant to them, so they ask “why bother?”
- Synthesis of the session:
 - A sense of not being heard or taken seriously; identification of a growing chasm between some of the beliefs that the church officially defends/supports, and what a majority of its followers actually believe
 - Anger toward the institutional leadership of the Church, for various reasons, including: a general lack of inclusivity, lack of women in leadership (or lack of opportunities/roles for women to take on leadership)
 - Desire to direct lay action in two directions:
 - WWJD, “the small good things”, local acts of justice & mercy;
 - More consistent, persistent (“louder”) pressure on Church leadership to enact change
 - Fear of inaction/stagnancy leading to the declination or collapse of the church as an institution on the global stage, sliding into irrelevancy. If the church is not attractive to the next generations, how will it continue to grow?

- Summary, Next Steps and Action Items
- Closing Prayer and Intentions