**QUESTION #1**

**UPDATED 7/21/22**

**What did Jesus say to you during your time of prayer for the future of our community?**

* Introduce ourselves at the beginning of mass.
* Make eye contact.
* That he wanted a strong and clear witness from his church, a witness strong and clear on moral issues of our day and strong and clear witness of his mercy and forgiveness.
* Adoration Chapel is a great asset to the parish.
* Stronger effort to invite others to visit the chapel and “advertise” the level of devotion to the Eucharist can be a simple means for bringing others to the community, this could be done via Faith Magazine, Diocesan Eucharistic Adoration Committee (DEAC), bulletin announcements, etc.
* Where are our young families?
* A need for young single group, young adults need affirmation of God’s love.
* Where are the 30,000 Catholics in the West Deanery? Why aren’t they coming?
* Be open to new ideas and new people.
* Be welcoming.
* Be engaged.
* You are wrapped up in money.
* If we don’t work together, we will cease to exist.
* Turn around and greet someone you don’t know before mass.
* Be obedient.
* Love one another.
* Be open to suggestions.
* Everyone has a gift to share.
* We need to be more friendly and outgoing like the “Perfect example of Christ”.
* Reach out to someone who is ill or has been in the hospital.
* Be respectful of one another, listen to your congregation. We are people of prayer and evangelization.
* Meeting people where they are.
* Steady as you go, (even if we get ticked off, determine if its worth talking about, pray about it).
* Family and love. Without family in our community how can we rebuild after covid?
* Love one another in all things.
* To be obedient to the wishes of the community. Pray.
* The future of our community is tied to bringing the lost sheep back into the fold.
* Don’t be negative or judgmental.
* Work with other parishes (especially for youth events) to make programs bigger and stronger.
* Need for more community events like bonfires and casual hangouts.
* Harvest is plentiful, harbors are few.
* Build relationships with those who already attend.
* Love one another, build relationships, get to know each other, “its not about us reaching the lost.
* We need to meet others where they are, introduce them to Jesus.
* Need to commit to adoration weekly because survival of the parish depends on us keeping the 24-hour adoration open.
* Need to find a place in the parish where God can use me in the parish to further his will.
* Need to use Oktoberfest to invite people to join since they are here and if that works add another event.
* To say hello to someone you don’t know.
* To be open to Godly suggestions
* To love one another.
* Pray for and support our community that is here first with gathering, not jobs or responsibilities.
* As fellow parishioners invite someone with a talent to join a ministry, greeters, etc.
* Resume Saturday night dinners.
* Change can be hard even when its good.
* We must change in the ways God is calling us to.
* We must be careful and prayerful that changes are Gods call and not our wants.
* Need to keep calm….don’t worry about changes…God is in charge
* Family and refuge--Its important where family feels they can be real even if they look a little rough sometimes. If our parish feels like family, if it is a place of refuge for its members we can grow and become who God wants us to be, both individually and as a community.
* Adult Catechesis /Renew Small Faith Showing Groups.
* Felt gratitude for the people in the room.
* Recognized our love for one another.
* Haven’t felt a sense of community for a long time and it enkindled in me a response from my heart. This response was that I do belong here even though my identity as a mother of young mother has changed.
* Teach parishioners about the Holy Spirit (open the eyes of my heart Lord).
* Be with Christ, act in love. Be leaders.
* I love you all. As I embrace you all & you embrace me, how can you all embrace each other, here, now, and beyond?
* I would like to see the youth group to be more involved with the ministries of the Mass: EM – Lector – Offering – Greeters – Taking up gifts
* Bring in Inspirational Speakers like back in the day like Dr. Ray maybe now a days Father Mike Schmitz
* resume sense of family - at Fr. Larry announced to turn around and greet someone you don’t know. Also, name tags for all members.
* Two this is a battle spiritual warfare. Possibly make suggestions from the pulpit example importance of having children baptized to infuse the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
* Three bring back ministry fair. This may light a fire for parishioners to find a sense of calling in volunteer.
* During fundraisers, we need 100% participation as goal especially since we’ve left we’ve lost people Covid etc.
* Listen and respect each other and find the time.
* More foundation for the kids.
* Tithe with service|money|love.
* We need more dedicated community time with each other. Just as we are having now. Coming together in fellowship and prayer. Sending to something higher than ourselves. Make quarterly after mass potluck lunch, ice cream, social, or donuts and coffee. We need to reconnect with parishioners on a more personal level. We had fellowship regularly before Covid. It makes me feel as part of a family. We love what we give our time to. Give it to each other.
* Bring back children’s choir start them young.
* ---- What I heard is that our community needs to become a community again. My impression of our parish community is that it is very segregated. There are those who like the Pope and those who don't. Those who are pro-mask, those who aren't. Those who have been around for years and those who haven't. Those who love you, and those who don't. From a new parishioner perspective, it's very frustrating. There is too much self-righteousness. The problem (I think) is that too many people see their own self-righteousness as "witnessing." They think they are leading by example when all they are really doing is pounding their chests and saying, "MY way is the RIGHT way."
* The Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration Chapel is a great asset to the SJBOL Parish. A stronger effort toward inviting others to visit the Chapel and “advertise” the level of devotion to the Eucharist can be a simple means for bringing others into the community. This could be done via a Faith Magazine feature article, advertising space, Information Bulletin announcements, working with the Diocesan Eucharistic Adoration Committee (DEAC), etc.
* Jesus said we need to show love, inclusive of everyone.

**QUESTION #2**

**How do we reach 30,000 Catholics that are not going to church?**

* Perhaps more outreach in schools—both private and public. By the end of the summer, all elementary and middle schools in Erie public schools will be community schools. This may be the opportunity for partnership.
* Move one foot at a time. (This is how a body reaches anything not already within it, even the jar of peanut butter in the cupboard.) Advertising doesn’t work for growing a family. Overflowing love, personal contact, and adoption are the ways families grow.
* We are to be like God in love. We can not be our true selves without others to love. We need more to come to believe we need them like the air we breath and that they need us.
* Prayer. Personal relationships with those he shows us to befriend. Service in some form. Testimony-This is who Jesus is for me, this is what he did for me.
* Most important issue to focus on is being a parish, just as the early Christians quarreled over lineage, so too, do BOL and St. Joe’s at times.
* We must live, love, and own our faith so that our lights will shine before humanity. Not loving our history, culture, and traditions more than loving our Lord Jesus Christ.
* West Erie Deanery- 50,000. Prayer and following Jesus. Hopefully- When Christians are being the salt of the earth- it makes them thirsty. Our hope gives hope.
* Start with the means of contacting inactive parishioners and making personal invitation to return. This can be a phone call, letter, or if possible, a visit by a fellow parishioner known to them.
* Pray and keep inviting people to come.
* Pray for them. Reach out to them. Welcome them back.
* Building relationships and spreading our faith through schools and mentioning programs and church activities and things that are also allowed to be shared as long as other faiths are also allowed in these settings (city school and united way worker).
* That’s a million-dollar question, isn’t it? I wish I knew the answer and I wish it were a simple answer. I have immediate family members who are catholic and do not go to church, I can’t even reach them.
* If they are too proud to follow the precepts of the church, then it seems they can’t be bothered being Catholics anyways.
* Use Oktoberfest to reach out. Have a couple (or even one) community event in out parking lot (food, music, games). Start with a dynamic Mass in church. Invite anyone and make it free sort of like a parish picnic but for all and free.
* Outreach EX. Playground meet ups for young families. (Jessie from Sacred Heart is already doing this) where it can be advertised. Once people feel connected to people, they see God and could be more willing to come to church.
* Social events with other parishes—MULTI PARISH EVENTS.
* We need to use Oktoberfest to invite people to join since they are already here and if that works, add another event to draw people in.
* Be positive. Focus on community. Be an example “Jesus is living inside you”.
* Become better as a community first, then let that be a light to others who have fallen away.
* St. Paul Street Evangelization’s program, talk to a parish that is doing this successfully.
* The recent study “Behold” that Therese Brown and I held had a great response. Nearly 60 women of all ages signed up. We did a lot of personal invitation, and the course did not intimidate. Great entry course. Personal relationships with Christ.
* Pray and invite them to come to mass especially at St, Joseph BOL Church. The liturgies lift me up and draw me closer to God. Thank you, Fr. Larry & Fr. Mac!
* Like the disciples did- we have to encounter people personally. People don’t come back to church because they saw a Facebook post (usually). People come back because they were invited by someone, they trust who has shown that he or she loves them, is willing to listen to them, and can confidently and accurately answer their questions.
* What are we inviting them to? Is everyone in this parish, every demographic, confident in saying “there is a place for you here?” I honestly don’t know if I could say that to a young family today (even though I do). I understand 10,000x over we need to be other focused, but it is a both/and. If we do not have a vibrant loving community that is Jesus centered people wont and belong.
* If people don’t see they NEED Christ, they are not going to make it a part of their day/week. So, we have to figure out how to get that reality across to the Erie community in General. There are possibly two main layers to that problem. First, those that deny the reality of sin and the consequences of their sin, they will not see the need for Christ. So all the programs and even the joy of the Gospel itself isn’t going to make a difference to those people. Second, the “step up” from that might be lukewarm Catholics who really enjoyed watching mass in their pajamas with a cup od coffee during the pandemic. I think that as long as livestreamed masses are available, we will not see those people return. If or when we solve those two problems, we need to be offering a truly beautiful liturgy t5hat ia a place of complete focus on the worship of God. There is no reason that a place like St, Joe’s should be losing families to the Extraordinary Form. I would say the majority of those people are not denying the validity of the Ordinary Form or Vatican 2. I think most likely just looking for a beautiful liturgy..a place to find refuge from the ugliness of the world, where they can just breath and slow down, and experience the reality of Heaven on Earth, which is what the mass is. Remove all distractions and allow us to focus on God.
* Prayer. Invitation to those we meet / evangelization. Follow up.
* With our Enthusiasm. Discussing ways to share it with others.
* Pray that they will return. That’s a tough one.
* Maybe do a come back home night to all who left. Maybe advertise in the welcoming way. Fr. Doerr talk on coming home. Maybe testimony some parishioners why we are still here.
* Anonymous surveys to find reasons why they left.
* Phone calls sharing that they are missed from our parish family.
* What specific needs do they have that would bring them back. (Example transportation?)
* Power of prayer. Encourage feedback from parishioners and try programs videos etc. to help people understand the beauty and wonder of the sacrifice of the mass.
* Synod Results:
* Getting our children back to church so they may have their children baptized.
* Living the word, finding love and wisdom from the least of our Brethren.
* I hate plans people want to help. Let them volunteer as we get going and things will unfold and we will have greater engagement.
* We need dynamic programs that will attract specific groups and we need to advertise them on social media. We need something for young families. Something for single people. Something for new people. Something to attract non-Catholics to our church. We need fellowship! St. Joe's needs a Facebook page that is actively used to talk about how great our parish is so that people will want to be there. It can't be just scripture and links to livestreams. That doesn't attract people (sorry, it just doesn't). We need photos of actual people doing things at our parish - working in the food pantry, at Pints with Padre, learning about our faith, having fun! That is how to attract others - make them want to be part of something dynamic and exciting!
* Start with a means of contacting inactive Parishioners and making a personal invitation to return. This can be a phone call, letter, or – if possible – a visit by a fellow parishioner known to them.
* Have more options to serve them.

**QUESTION #3**

**What do you think is the most important issue we need to focus on?**

* How can we break through the negative perceptions that have been wrongfully spread about our faith?
* Engage and mentor the next generation to keep them connected. Give them and their families a reason to be here.
* Living our community prayer.
* Our modern society is more isolated, self centered, self-focus. We need to more than mass. We need to encourage and teach lifestyle evangelization.
* Getting back 30,000 people back because God wants us to be people who have the good news.
* Being a parish, just as the early Christians quarreled over lineage, so too, do BOL and St Joe’s at times.
* The number of people who have not returned to mass.
* Shocking number of people who have stopped attending! Honestly, I don’t understand why they have stopped except possibly maybe they never knew Jesus or understood the mass and the Eucharist to begin with.
* On-going acknowledgement of the presence of various age groups, vocations (single, married), etc., with different needs for faith formation etc. Part of the acknowledgement is an on-going and repeated request to make everyone’s needs known to the pastoral staff and the parish leadership team members.
* Bringing people back after covid. Lots of people are using that as an excuse.
* Keeping our parishioners here and not leaving our church.
* Community, building back as it was. Create a united front to bring people back, reaching out to parishioners who no longer attend our masses and let them know they are missed.
* Being a vibrant parish and not closing our doors.
* Attitudes of people and the clergy, one feeds off the other.
* Restoration and healing. We know several families who have left and people with hurt feelings. We would love to see attempts at reconciliation and even trying to bring some of the families back.
* Evangelization of those who are not attending church or those who have never been catechized.
* Bringing back members who have left the Catholic church (our parish).
* Retaining the youth.
* Catechesis of all.
* Welcoming. Caring for one another.
* Create sense of community with gathering that are just to gather, not a lot of planning.
* Getting Catholics back into a community and going to mass. Get the names and addresses, send them an invitation inviting them back from the parish.
* Unity.
* Adult catechesis.
* Forming disciples who can invite people to Jesus. All others other issues will require disciples.
* Help people grow in their love for Jesus. Restoration and healing: Can staff, leadership, community have honest hard conversations in love and generosity? Can we receive it? Execution: Does the parish operate effectively? Every meeting I have been to in the past 3 years has been about ideas with little execution or follow through. It feels like a waste of time after a while.
* There needs to be a united message (“Catholic”) and less divisiveness. Communication.
* I do think it’s a challenge to find the most important thing, because I don’t want to negate other important things by doing so. However, If I may, I’m going to choose 2 things I think are equally important. First, “too many clicks” point on the synod summary really resonated with me… that things seem to require moving mountains. I personally have hesitated to volunteer to lead things on my own because there seem to be so many unwritten rules about things. I’m afraid to make a mistake that I don’t even realize is a mistake. And second is a huge part of why we joined St. Joe’s because I wanted a parish with a lot of families and a vibrant youth ministry. Tim is doing a great job with the music ministry, but there was definitely a hole left for our youth. Several St Joe’s youth now attend the youth ministry events at OLP since they hired Sara Beaver. She is doing an amazing job. And I’m grateful for that ministry because it did fill that gap for my girls. However, it feels uncomfortable and uncomfortable and disconnected to have them involved in something so important at a parish from our own. It doesn’t help the “family” feeling.
* Energizing our parish community after 2 years of limited connection with others: bring people who left HOME, encourage contact among those who stayed, reach out to our “neighbors”.
* Taking each step one at a time.
* getting back on the same sheet of music. We need fellowship where people can become one community again and not a big group of individual parties
* On-going acknowledgement of the presence of various age groups, vocations (single, married), etc., with different needs for faith formation, etc. Part of the acknowledgement is an on-going and repeated request to make everyone’s needs known to the pastoral staff and parish leadership team members.

**QUESTION #4**

**What do you think would be the best new Mass times for the good of everyone?**

* 10 am sounds like a good compromise. How will that impact Religious Ed?
* 10 am Sunday 4:15 Saturday is helpful for older parishioners when it gets dark earlier.
* 10 am and 4:15. With combining masses there is a concern with parking. 8:30 people might use as an excuse there was no room for me to park. Needs to be marked more clearly where we can park. Small lot? Big Lot? Will there be a St Joe’s BOL sign for visitors?
* 10 am and 11 am fellowship. 7:30 pm evening allows for fun things after like family games and learning German dancing.
* 4:15 very popular and we need it, 10 am Sunday good compromise; still could have Religious Ed from 9-9:45.
* 4 pm and 10am to impact the least number of adoration hours as possible, also, coordinating with the Cathedral for an agreeable CCD time.
* 4:15 pm for those who work Sundays and 10 am to give local people an option because most parishes have early or 11 am.
* 4: 15 pm 10 am
* 4:30 Saturday 10 am Sunday so then I can listen to my Polkas to and from church.
* 4:15 and 10 am perhaps music can alternate each week to the next from traditional to contemporary. Compromise!
* 4:15 pm traditional music. 10 am but will the mass have praise and worship music? Can’t really compromise that. Will early mass goers go somewhere else?
* 4:15 vigil mass for those who work and the elderly. 10 am contemporary because no other parish has that mass time.
* Have no preference but 10 am does seem like a good compromise between the 8:30 and the 11 am.
* 10 am seems fair.
* We like the 4:15 and the 10 am but our teens really like the 7 pm and were
* definitely bummed that it might be eliminated.
* 10 am and 4:15 pm.
* 10 am because that’s the only time there is not a mass at other churches.
* 10 am good compromise and 4:30 pm would be better so no confusion for a nonmember who is seeking Saturday masses.
* I like the 11 am so you don’t have to rush but I wouldn’t mind 10 or 10:30 am.
* 10 am and 4:15 perfect time for devotion and time for family also.
* 4:15 and 10 am is the best compromise that will be the most accessible to the greatest number of people.
* 4:15 and 10 am makes good sense.
* 4:15 and 10 am even 11 is ok.
* 4:15 and 10 am
* 4:15 and 10 am I am fine with any times.
* I think 10 am would be nice except I am worried with all the masses combining I am worried about covid, how will we all safely all fit?
* To partner with Cathedral and have 0 conflict they could eliminate 8:30 and have a 10 am and we can keep our 11 am.
* 4:15 and 9:30 or 10 am on Sunday.
* 5 pm and 10 am. 10 allows for earlier CCD and 5 pm allows for Saturday evening activities.
* A Saturday evening or Sunday at 10 am. I can’t speak for others because I don’t know their circumstances.
* 2 Sunday masses because people travel to here. We need to buffer the times with our ministries.
* 4:15 and 10 am.
* 4:15 or 4:30 – Traditional and 10 am – Contemporary. Reaching a variety.
* 4:15 and 9:30 or 10am excellent compromise.
* 10 am meets in the middle.
* I feel that we should have 2 Sunday masses based on musical preference that exist in the parish and simply because more people prefer to go to mass on Sunday. If the more traditional music gets assigned to Saturday, then those who prefer that will feel slighted and if contemporary gets assigned on Saturday, then those people will feel slighted. Even though it is convenient some weeks to attend on Saturday, but it seems to be a less-attended mass. Therefore, I think we should have 2 Sunday masses.
* I would prefer a 930 mass. But to be fair if you split the time between 830 and 11 mass goers that would make it at 9:45 mass which is a good compromise.
* We are personally fine with any of the times that will be chosen. But, since we often have our grand children to pick up, the later on Sunday the better.
* Do not think we should combine contemporary and traditional masses one on Saturday traditional as it has been four or 415 Sunday 10 or 10:30
* I kept thinking about words from old-time hymns that our 11 o’clock group could easily do especially Tim and Jacki. Older people with this mask may feel more comfortable. Unfortunately, some do not understand the mass and rely on uplifting feeling well there. Example power in the blood. In the garden. He lives. Because he lives. Jerusalem the holy city Jerusalem. How many of Kristy. Also some of Jacki‘s praise and worship songs are beautiful.
* The earlier the better. After mass we do parish life. Breakfast. Conversation. Interaction. Get up and get moving.
* Catechesis of the Good Shepherd:
* I like the idea. I think you have to start young to create a good sense a good base to follow Jesus.
* It sounds like an amazing way to educate and found the flame of faith in our children.
* Excellent especially for the children to get the best foundation of their faith and to understand it better much better than what we had which was the Baltimore catechism only.
* Saturday, 4:15pm, because it is already established and there is no reason to change it. Sunday, 10:00am, because there currently isn't a Mass at that time in Erie and because it breaks the day up less.
* I left an envelope in the Sacristy on 6.5.22 marked “Fr. Larry. Not Hate Mail / LOVE Mail” with a detailed idea that included coordinating a shared Mass schedule between SJBOL and the Cathedral. Both Parishes win as every group (Saturday Vigil, Early Sunday, later Sunday/Contemporary) gets to keep “their” Mass preference. And the Bishop gets to role model that EVERYONE must be open to change.
* We need to focus on being one body of Christ. There are so many divisions within our church community.
* Saturday 6pm or 7pm, Sunday 10am. Why? All the Saturday masses 8n the area are around 4:30pm. Let's be different and offer an attractive time to attract newcomers. Sunday 10am is fine since no other parishes have that time (at least until they change their mass times). I understand from a manpower standpoint why we need to reduce. One of these masses should be charismatic and youth based like the Sunday evening mass started out being if we want to attract new youth.

**QUESTION #5**

**What do you think of the “Catechesis of the Good Shepherd” proposal?**

* I am in favor of it. It will be beneficial to our kids and for all teachers to be on the same page, so that they can transition year to year with continuity.
* Excellent! I feel our children are the most receptive, pure, beautiful vessels! THEY ARE OUR FUTURE!
* 100% Jesus wants us to.
* I don’t know enough about it to have an opinion. I have heard there is some controversy in the application. In general, catechesis needs to present the fullness of truth at the age-appropriate levels and in age-appropriate ways which ensures that the faithful know what and who they are being faithful to.
* I was blessed to have grown up with an uncle who was a priest in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. My parents also taught me about the Catholic faith from a very young age. Our children need parents committed to teaching their children so that the seeds of the faith are planted and nurtured to grow.
* Montessori based, hands on. I think this sounds amazing. Kids need to interact to engage and this looks promising.
* Montessori based.
* Sounds like a good idea.
* Good idea.
* I support it because I think it will really feed our children and set them on the right path to true discipleship. Very good idea. Much better to have children involved early and hands on.
* In favor of any program that would bring people back together.
* I believe.
* Love this idea! Don’t know enough about it but it sounds amazing.
* The description sounds wonderful. Who doesn’t learn best by “hands on” and becoming familiar with all that is used at mass. I know the “teaching mass” is not allowed. Is that a Diocesan rule or higher up? (Vatican) This catechesis could “lure” young families to our parish both new and old ones who left could come back.
* Good idea.
* I like it. The classroom model continues to be put to bed. We **all** need the experience of encountering Jesus.
* I think its good. I haven’t personally look at the curriculum but have a deep respect for the Montessori Method. Most Sunday School curriculum dumb down the Gospel- hopefully this one doesn’t.
* Sounds good. Hopefully very helpful to the children.
* We are excited to have the opportunity to try a new approach to catechism. The new approach would appeal to the younger students and better satisfy their educational curiosity.
* Yes, because Montessori works. We need to get to our children young. It will be a good idea to “specialize” by offering something unique to other parishes.
* Love it! I would invest personal time and treasure to it. I remember when I was teaching 1st grade about sin and the grace and God inspired me to give the children rocks and feathers. Sin is like rocks we carry, and grace is like feathers.
* Wonderful, good method.
* Absolutely yes. Should do it ASAP Families are going to make decisions about children’s faith formations now. We can’t wait.
* I think there are some positive aspects of it. However, I think in some ways, its just a different curriculum. It does not sound very engaging for sure. But, when it comes to catechesis, I actually prefer a family-based program. Its important that parents are SUPPORTED in raising their children in the faith, as opposed to the “drop off, pickup” mentality. Not to mention that a family catechesis approach allows for the catechism of the parent too! And the reality is that my generation and the generation before were all very poorly catechized. This can help that! Church of the Beloved Disciple in Grove City uses this method, and in my opinion, they would be a good model to look at to see how it could be applied to our parish.
* It has merit and suitable for active learning
* Honestly? I don't think I really understand it. Is it only for families with children? I need to research it more I think because I don't really understand what my role would be in this (or if I even have one).
* Dear Father Richards, Man of God, son of God, son of man, thank you for the invitation to write. There were 7 question lines on the town hall handout (good for you), this is the only one I can complete. I too believe the future is optimistic because of the Catholic faith. Without the Catholic faith I would not find the future optimistic. In context to the townhall meeting, what does a bright future look like? Paradoxically, sort of, the Good Shepherd left the 99 to save the one. The lost one saw a hand or a crook but knew before he saw the face. Simple, and for that while the 99 were abiding. The great and growing oak tree, sprung from the acorn, is the magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. It is the protection and encounter to the "tail wagging the dog" pressures, meet us where we are mentality, of our strong modern culture. "What is Truth." We have a broad tent so to speak. The attachment is for consideration, iron sharpening iron perhaps, and also perhaps when tested, revealing what is not iron. Praise be Jesus Christ now and forever! Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (Mission Satement)

A method of catechesis(religious education) that will deepen one's relationship with God. Catechist formation in catechesis of the Good Shepherd is both instructive and experimental. It captivates both the head as well as the heart. It has a holistic approach for the adult, enriching the adult in a background of scripture and liturgy, theology and prayer as well as the pedagogy of the young child, helping the adult(catechist) to see what face of God the young child most needs in order to enter into a relationship with God. Therefore: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd requires the adult(catechist) to receive training in the method in a manner that is “retreat like” giving time and space to absorb the richness of what it means to live ones baptismal covenant and grow in the love and knowledge of God.

The Kerigma(5 points)

* That Jesus Christ, in fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament, was sent by God, Preached (by word and deed) the coming of the Kingdom of God,(in obedience to the will of the Father) died, was buried, rose from the dead and was raised (reunited) to the right hand of God in Heaven.

**Prayer of Saint Teresa of Avila**

Let nothing disturb you.

Let nothing frighten you,

All things are passing away;

God never changes,

Patience obtains all things,

Whoever has God lacks nothing:

God alone suffices.

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Mt 6:21

* I like it. The classroom model continues to be put to bed. We all need the experience of encountering Jesus.
* I like it. Its new and fresh and needed.

**QUESTION #6**

**What are your ideas for the future of our parish?**

* Suggest we will need to consolidate in order to be a stronger representative of the bride of Christ. This will lead us to more robust involvement in program especially for the youth who are the promise of the future.
* That it stays at St Joe’s. I like the educationals /get togethers. EX: Bible studies, book studies, anything to help me know more of the Bible and Spirituality.
* More conversations like these. Thank you!!
* I believe we are strong parish. Evidenced by the large turnout. Down side of that is evn with that, follow through with even this form is low. Speaks to peoples overall limitation on involvement. Except that social media and online content will be more prevalent and use that to engage as opposed to lecturing about needing to be present. It may be a way to engage.
* Healing wounded people. Every act without love wounds ourselves, others, or both. Some have had giant crushing blows, others are dying from millions of paper cuts. We the church offer more than better coping skills. Through God we can offer healing and restoration.
* Live our Community Prayer.
* We need to follow through with the Adoration chapel meeting in 2021 suggesting a video of how or why to have a Holy hour, with witnessing of the benefits received by some adorers. This could be made specific for our chapel or apply to Hope TV as well.
* If we go to one mass on Sunday morning I think a class, teaching, getting to know your faith, hour would help the faithful, and be a informational inspiring, enticing opportunity for those who may be searching.
* Bigger and stronger.
* Easy family and community events.
* Sky is the limit in Christ!!!
* Work Towards unity. Ongoing adult catechesis.
* Fellowship, less work for parishioners, more gatherings for community.
* Bring a parish mission or speaker every year!
* I love our parish and I know it will have a blessed future.
* Love for our community here at St. Joe’s, help one another to know Christ in a personal way, heal division, focus on unity.
* Add fellowship to our agenda as we can after masses etc. Increased communication efforts.
* Keep reaching out to others in your everyday life. Listen to others and meet them where they are. Lead by example. Love people and pray that God becomes important in our community, state, and city again.
* International Faith Formation and Fellowship. “Safe space to learn about and discuss sensitive topics such as what should our response be to celebrating pride month?
* There is no grief support among any Catholic church that I can find. It would be great not only for me but for so many others, to start a Catholic Grief Support Group here at our church, where people of all faiths could come to and experience the healing love of Jesus through the Catholic church.
* Hopefully to grow. To focus on others on others, not self. To reach out to people and meet them where they are, to become a giver not a taker. Make room for the Holly Spirit to dwell in us—great start.
* A summer Christian concert outside to reach those who do not attend mass, A Christmas concert but not a mass, A Easter concert “to reach the lost”, Welcoming night for new members.
* Have Fr Larry turn off his mic during the singing- especially for the live streaming because the music ministry can not be herd other than the music director.
* Parish picnic and ongoing fellowship opportunities. Continuing Ed- Educating the parish about Catholic Social Teaching and then specifically addressing how our parish corresponds to people living in poverty, people of color, those with gender identity issues, etc. So not just learning about it but how can we live it out as a parish.
* Sometimes less is more. I think we will see this as the masses become fewer. By consolidating resources (lectors, servers, etc.) We can have more vibrancy without burning people out. It is also easier for new people to join in when they can join in on a large group. Other ministries may also find this helpful as well. Are we trying to hold on to ministries that are trying to die because “we’ve always”? Is this keeping people from investing in new ministries that need the time and talent expended on dying programs? I suspect “yes”
* I think a church brochure describing our parish and all our outreach ministries we have that serve the poor, homeless, and hungry for new members it could describe Oktoberfest, Pints with Padre etc. I did not know about the many facts of our church ministries and who we are serving, this would fill the void. It could include explanations of the painting and murals and our beautiful German Altar and its history too. Welcoming, friendliest parish in our Diocese should be a motto/mantra. Our clothing store needs to be more involved with leaving our own donations available to those we support during the 2 weeks we host the homeless shelter.
* Restructure how we operate. Are we empowering leaders and staff and creating effective prayerful systems/structures that bear fruit? We have to be growing with Fr. Larry to be preparing for 8 years from now. We are invested, we have to do everything we can.
* Talking with other parishioners you can truly feel the joy, energy, love, and caring come back!!! After this time of “aloneness” it is so rewarding. Fr. Larry it has begun again with you. The timbre of your voice, your sincerity, your spirituality of mass. The Music Ministry. Bring back our teams (Healing Prayer Team). Teaching groups-advertising them, not just for our parishioners but for all our brothers and sisters in all parishes! We are family! This is our home!!
* Working with St. Peter Cathedral in a Parish Family/Network model is the proactive way to ensure that SJBOL sustains as a standalone parish with its own identify while staying true to the traditions of Catholicism. The Orthodox Priests typically in residence at the Cathedral can be welcomed to celebrate mass at SJBOL without concerns re: their preaching etc. As noted in first person “Pints with Padre” after covid, it is difficult to collaborate when there isn’t any shared theology. The Cathedral is the only option in the Erie West Deanery for sharing resources.
* Pair a “seasoned” parishioner or family with new or returning parishioners or parish families. Having one person to really help you transition into the parish. Its easier to be introduced with people who already know people then you feel more comfortable especially if you are an introvert.
* Much more teachings on the basics of the Catholic faith. So many people don’t know why and what of their faith (adult catechism) and of course that means knowing Jesus personally and following him. Also, home groups- it gives a family and support base within the main body. Really helps people feel connected and accountable. How do we journey with each other? We’ve seen over the last 47 years that small home groups are a key to a growing church. Home groups do not replace going to mass! Its just a support system to help people grow and feel connected. So, there should always be an adult Bible study going on, to learn the word, to know God and make Him known!
* Find ways to enhance the flame of love and service so parishioners are not lukewarm. It was mentioned to three women from our parish are now in prison. Prison ministry in person rosary centering prayer etc. is very powerful, but very few volunteers. As was coated at our meeting the harvest as abundant but the laborers are few.
* Fun mentioned. Bingo (sorry Father) Get together to bring in outsiders also may be already be thinking of joining Saint Joe’s BOOL. People lesson went in different environments. We need more people to come to, or back to church and they keep Saint Joe’s VOL in existence.
* Ideas to build community at Saint Joe’s
* Project family photos of one 5 x 7 frame family names membership ages locations next
* On stage introduction how are gifts teaching landscaping technology etc.
* Hotdogs curly fries picnic in community center.
* Bring people to Jesus. Go God is Trinity equals relationship. We need to spend time together! We need to get our young families back, worshiping together, offering each other support on parenting. Making each other feel comfortable at mass when our kids are not behaving. Young people and families need each other. It is hard for us to attend other events outside the Sunday holiday. Living 45 minutes away. However we will do everything possible to help our parish to grow and thrive.
* Cameras although good took personal and made public interior changes of anxiety of being live in front of an audience. Mother Theresa want to change the world. Go home and love your family. We love what we give our time to. Let’s give it to each other intimately getting to know one another.
* Focus more on parish community. Let’s use our community center. Simplify if don’t over plan. It will develop. Look at kids for an example. And too many distractions reduces interaction.
* The kids are asset. Get them together in the community center. Throughout the building blocks again for the little ones. Families learn from families. How to care, interact care share etc. we want our kids around other kids kids.
* Easier to commit time before mass or after mass we are already coming. Keep the sabbath spending time with one another, our families these those seeking to do the will of God.
* Look and use examples of Amish kids and families!
* donation of chalkboard art supplies child walk sidewalk chalk
* wiffleball
* volleyball
* badminton
* kickball
* bowling
* jump rope
* spending all day together
* Bible reading no secular talk or complaining
* fruits of this is community!
* Kayak trip
* Fishing trip, baseball game, swim party pool, beach day, picnic, 200 meet etc., app to let families know what each other are doing, not Facebook.
* Meet and greet with religion talk, sisters etc.
* Monastery field trip, Seminary field trip, invite Sisters to mass.
* See you need to fill in the board: ie. Children shoes helmets etc. baseball gear, soccer gear etc. phone in contact.
* Picnic at Behrend under pavilion
* Wintergreen gorge hike and swim
* Fr. Mike Bernard homily on Trinity Sunday:
* - if we put anything above relationships were frustrated
* - Relationships and love as what life is all about. Essence of God Trinity. Relationships are more important than success relates to Trinity. “We were created to be faithful not successful” Mother Theresa
* We have a need to belong and to be known. Pictures of family on walls at Saint Joe’s.
* - Bring back fellowship. Have "picnics on the yard" after Sunday mass and invite people to bring a picnic and sit out on the grass by the grotto. Create more groups for specific demographics, as mentioned in #2 above. Groups for singles, families with small children, people who are grieving. Maybe even a book club.
* I also think Pints with Padre should be on a different night than Praise & Worship. Both in one night is too much. Also, it makes Pints with Padre start too late. I think Pints with Padre should be held off-site also. I'm sure we could work with a place like The Brewerie at Union Station or Molly Brannigan's to have it and I truly believe you would attract more people, especially younger people. Meet them where they want to be rather than ask them to come to a place they don't want to be. You just might get them to come back to church. Also, having it somewhere other than the Community Center makes it less formal. The couple of times we've been to Pints with Padre(s), you sit at the front of the class and want people to ask questions. It's uncomfortable and formal. It needs to be more laid back and relaxed.
* Last thing...for now...Mike and I both miss when we were still "becoming Catholic." Back then, we had the opportunity to sit down with you and just ask questions - about the faith, about the Mass, about everything. We are very good at feeding ourselves - we research things and study...but it isn't the same as having the chance to sit down with a priest and just talk. I think more opportunities to do that, either with you, Deacon Jim or even the new seminarian, would be wonderful. Especially as new Catholics who still don't always feel like we know what is going on.
* Hi Father, I had some thoughts while listening to the congregation brain storm session. I also had an idea while in our small groups but its not for small minds so kept it to myself. I’ll send it under a separate email.
* Narrated Mass – I never heard the term teaching mass before but this sounds like it. Something that you or someone can break down and explain how and why we do things. This would be super helpful for folks “looking” for a home and not sure why we do the things we do. The Mass is a beautiful thing that many folks have no idea the meaning of! I think this should be a staple in our parish and promote the heck out of it diocese wide!
* Themed Pints with Padre – Something people don’t know what to ask. Like what Mike Brown stated, specific topics and even difficult topics, could be discussed as a church family. Gender Identity, Politics, LGBTQ, etc…
* Front Row Families – Not sure why this disappeared but we LOVED this when the kids were small and so did the rest of our large family friends. It made us feel welcomed and supported through those rough baby and toddler years.
* QR Code – when giving out flyers for whatever, definitely use QR Codes for url links.
* My Parish App – I am on the app but NEVER use it. Kristen checks it when notifications appear. Can the office send the synod report link through the my parish app? This my parish app can be exploited a heck of a lot more… not sure how but it sounds like a great tool. How do you get guys like me to get on that app? Lol
* Last but not least is a sensitive one but the Lord put it on my plate to deliver. I’ve heard some folks are afraid to volunteer because of fear of getting yelled at or ridiculed. This is nothing you don’t already know, but it is a thing.
* Here we go.. People all over the country and world know you. Lets take all the incredible line items discussed in todays town hall meeting and have them be an underlying tone for an incredible catholic experience right here in Erie that is promoted around the county and around the world, based off the ecosystem your travel and influence naturally creates. St Joes buys all the neighboring properties in the blocks of 26th street, 25th street, 24th street, Sass to Peach. Renovate the buildings worth saving, tear down the ones not. Build catholic centers for the local public and the country/world Catholics looking for a home and a good shepherd. Think university, study centers, gymnasiums, retreat centers, etc… This could be the Saint Joseph neighborhood, not the Federal Hill neighborhood.
* Instead of regroup in, expand out. - That’s my big crazy audacious idea.
* Working with St. Peter Cathedral in a Parish Family/Network model (page 15 of the Erie West Deanery report) is the proactive way to ensure that SJBOL sustains as a stand alone Parish with its own identify while staying true to the traditions of Catholicism. The Orthodox Priests typically (and currently as of 7.6.22) in residence at the Cathedral can be welcomed to celebrate Mass at SJBOL without concerns re: their preaching, etc. As was noted at the first in-person “Pints with Padre” after covid, it is difficult to collaborate when there isn’t a shared theology. The Cathedral is the only option in the Erie West Deanery for sharing resources.
* not sure I have new ideas, but collaboration with other parishes is key.