



**St. Charles Borromeo
Parish Submission for the Diocesan Listening Phase of the Synod
February 16, 2022**

As part of the Synod on Synodality that Pope Francis convoked in the Fall 2021, St. Charles Borromeo held three parish listening and discussion sessions:

1. Sunday, December 12, 2021 - held in-person at the church between the 9 AM and 11:15 AM Masses;
2. Tuesday, December 14, 2021 - offered in a hybrid format: online via Zoom or in-person; and
3. Sunday, January 30 - held after the 11:15 AM Mass with an option to attend via Zoom or in person.

Parishioners considered the following four discussion questions based upon the ten thematic nuclei of the Synod Preparatory Document:

1. In what areas is the Church not hearing you?
2. What have your experiences been in talking about your faith with others both within and outside our faith community?
3. How might the Church be more inviting? How do we get people back in the pews?
4. Is there anything else that the Holy Spirit is calling you to say? What would you like to hear from the Holy Spirit?

The questions were discussed in small groups. The themes emerging from these discussions were:

1. the Synod is a welcome change and glad Pope Francis is asking questions;
2. a need for training for lay people in pastoral and leadership roles;
3. open up priesthood to married men and women and to have female deacons;
4. the need for clear communication and guidance from the Church with transparency;
5. the public has a negative view of the Catholic Church due to the sexual abuse scandals;
6. the focus is seen as being on abortion and not sanctity and support of life - life of newborns and their mothers; immigrants;
7. we would like to have and to hear more about hospitality in the Church and all the positive things the Catholic Church does, e.g. Catholic Charities;
8. emphasize Church-based activities for young people (high school through marriage);
9. we should coordinate gatherings and connection with other parishes;
10. the Church is seen as associated with conservative Republicanism in this country;
11. the Church needs to be welcome gay communities; and
12. there is a challenge in some churches of sitting through week after week homilies that are difficult to understand or all over the place.

Below is our consolidated feedback organized by the ten thematic nuclei. As requested, we are also including the notes from each small group session in the appendix to this submission.

1. COMPANIONS ON THE JOURNEY

In the Church and in society we are side by side on the same road. In our local Church, who are those who “walk together”? Who are those who seem further apart? How are we called to grow as companions? What groups or individuals are left on the margins?

- People want spiritual guidance and are looking for a spiritual home. Why spend so much time talking about who's not welcome or allowed in instead of welcoming them in?
- Be a place that's welcoming, where you're recognized when you walk in the door and people call you by name.
- Top-down message from Pope Francis has to be reinforced. So much divisiveness in the world. We have a unique opportunity to be a unifier.
- Priests have supported local people in very trying times.
- Inclusiveness is lacking.
- People feel left out in the cold, particularly younger people. Based upon the messages from some pulpit and the media, it seems the Church is mono-focused on abortion and is not connecting on issues that matter to people day-to-day.
- Gay people are not welcome in many parishes. A participant was approached by a friend of a friend who said he would never go inside a Church again because of the Vatican saying gay people are welcome and that a sin cannot be blessed.
- Abortion topic: too often it is the woman's responsibility. So much judgment is placed on getting pregnant whereas there is little support given for those that do.
- Lapsed Catholics we know are mad about the scandal AND the cover-ups, and have left the church because of it.
- The church is very vocal on right to life, but it only seems to apply to abortion and doesn't apply to the death penalty, gun restrictions, homelessness - that idea should have a focus on other threats to life as well. U.S. Bishops discussion of whether or not to deny Biden communion based on his abortion stance - why are they focusing on punishing people or trying to kick them out of the church? There's so much going on in the US that isn't being addressed with the same intensity
- The people in high positions in the church are not reflective of who the world or our nation is made up on.

2. LISTENING

Listening is the first step, but it requires an open mind and heart, without prejudice. How is God speaking to us through voices we sometimes ignore? How are the laity listened to, especially women and young people?

What facilitates or inhibits our listening? How well do we listen to those on the peripheries? How is the contribution of consecrated men and women integrated? What are some limitations in our ability to listen, especially to those who have different views than our own?

What space is there for the voice of minorities, especially people who experience poverty, marginalization, or social exclusion?

- Fundamentally, it is hard for the Church to be in a position to hear when there is a decrease in the vocation of priests. Priests aren't present to hear.
- Given the present priest shortage, we are told and understand that there is need for lay people to step up; here are additional ways to support the church but wonder what is the point of mentioning these and if we are heard; when speaking about these in the past nothing has changed.
- Teens / early 20s need to be attracted to the Church. First world kids lose interest in the Church. Some has to do with the energetic, entertaining nature of other faiths, e.g. Evangelicalism.
- Not hearing people who believe women should have significant decision-making and pastoral roles: e.g. women deacons.
- We need married priests and female priests

3. SPEAKING OUT

All are invited to speak with courage and parrhesia, that is, in freedom, truth, and charity . What enables or hinders speaking up courageously, candidly, and responsibly in our local Church and in society? When and how do we manage to say what is important to us? How does the relationship with the local media work (not only Catholic media)? Who speaks on behalf of the Christian community, and how are they chosen?

- Outsiders think the church is very rule-driven and isn't accepting of people with differing views. Within the faith community, there are many people who are very judgmental about those who don't strictly follow or agree with Church doctrine
- Reluctant to be open about being Catholic with people because people have negative views of the Catholic church. When you mention you are a Catholic to an outside person it's assumed you were abused by a priest and are very conservative. it's upsetting because a lot of us have had great experiences with parish priests through childhood and adulthood
- Too often scandals that make headlines are the topic of conversation.
- The Church does not speak with a clear voice.
- The Church needs better public relations. The positive stories of Catholic service and doing good in the community gets lost in the stories of scandal.
- We need to tell the story of the hospitality of the Church. It is the nature of the Church to be inclusive; it is in the Gospel.

- The main thing we heard from the recent meeting of the U.S. bishops was about who should or shouldn't receive the Host. Why wasn't there discussion of how the American church is going to move forward with the priest shortage. What's their plan?
- Emphasize the vibrancy of the Universal Church.
- People respond positively to Pope Francis, who has shown by doing and by being welcoming.
- Need to shape the message to be more inclusive and not just about following rules.
- Explain why people stay Catholic.

4. CELEBRATION

“Walking together” is only possible if it is based on communal listening to the Word and the celebration of the Eucharist. How do prayer and liturgical celebrations actually inspire and guide our common life and mission in our community? How do they inspire the most important decisions? How do we promote the active participation of all the faithful in the liturgy? What space is given to participating in the ministries of lector and acolyte?

- Evangelize the beauty of having a faith.
- Music
- Strong, meaningful and educational preaching that applies to real life.
- Emphasis sanctity of life in all its forms, e.g. the immigrant at the border is the same as the baby in the womb.
- People experience Masses where the accent of the Priest is so strong that they cannot understand what is being said and, thus, minds drift.
- Use the scriptures to reimagine the stories. Telling stories in a way that is relatable and could bring more people back.
- The Church isn't hearing the people who are interested in the Latin rite Mass.
- Resources vary wildly from church to church - most aren't very engaging - Matthew Kelly and “Dynamic Catholic” - it's a good resource for people to open the door and reengage with the catholic faith — The church should help out and give more resources and have a more coordinated effort to help people digest what the faith is about — something more prepared and polished for communities to interact with.

5. SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR COMMON MISSION

Synodality is at the service of the mission of the Church, in which all members are called to participate. Since we are all missionary disciples, how is every baptised person called to participate in the mission of the Church? What hinders the baptised from being active in mission? What areas of mission are we neglecting? How does the community support its members who serve society in various ways (social and political involvement, scientific research, education, promoting social justice, protecting human rights, caring for the environment, etc.)? How does the Church help these members to live out their service to society in a missionary way? How is discernment about missionary choices made and by whom?

- We need to make sure the Church is a community beyond the priests. It is important that we have a church community connected together so that church-goers are not just connected to the priest and no one else.
- More activities that allow parishioners to live Pope Francis's vision, e.g., climate change actions, making giving/service at the forefront, whether Church's real estate holdings (esp. in Italy) can be used for good/courageously. Everyone has gifts to offer and we need to show that help is needed by being explicit about it. Give people ownership and responsibility.
- How do you foster community when most people bolt right after Mass? (A suggestion came up to tie people to service projects so they feel a sense of involvement and responsibility)
- The church's roles for women are few and "lesser" - it makes women feel unwelcome and unvalued.
- There is a general lack of flexibility in religious education. St. Charles is unique in allowing for flexibility given the realities of family schedules. Other parishes are too strict and rigid in the rules for taking classes and receiving confirmation.
- Parish priests seem to have to be too concerned with the physical condition of the church - is there a sole source that the church can use that can take that responsibility away from the pastors and the priests so they can focus on more important spiritual things? There's a shortage of priests and they have to spend their time on this stuff. role of the laity isn't that well defined so it's not clear how the laity can or should take on that responsibility to free them up from the business of running a parish can we ask parishioners in certain professions to help out with the church

6. DIALOGUE IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

Dialogue requires perseverance and patience, but it also enables mutual understanding. To what extent do diverse peoples in our community come together for dialogue? What are the places and means of dialogue within our local Church? How do we promote collaboration with neighbouring dioceses, religious communities in the area, lay associations and movements, etc.? How are divergences of vision, or conflicts and difficulties addressed? What particular issues in the Church and society do we need to pay more attention to? What experiences of dialogue and collaboration do we have with believers of other religions and with those who have no religious affiliation? How does the Church dialogue with and learn from other sectors of society: the spheres of politics, economics, culture, civil society, and people who live in poverty?

- In youth, church and community were often a large part of experience and development, e.g., Catholic school, but now, there are so many other activities to occupy time. Faith is no longer a central part of any conversation or experience given other activities now occupy people's time.
- Make it easier to coordinate with different groups in other parishes. How do we break our own parish boundaries? How do we break down walls between parishes, diocese, other faith groups? How do we work and worship with other people who are like-minded?
- There's the continued impact of the sex abuse scandals.
- The church hierarchy hasn't been transparent with the child abuse scandals - undermines the image of Catholics - can be the ruination of the church — need to be transparent no matter the ramifications.

7. ECUMENISM

The dialogue between Christians of different confessions, united by one baptism, has a special place in the synodal journey . What relationships does our Church community have with members of other Christian traditions and denominations? What do we share and how do we journey together? What fruits have we drawn from walking together? What are the difficulties? How can we take the next step in walking forward with each other?

The synod discussion sessions did not focus on this question.

8. AUTHORITY AND PARTICIPATION

A synodal church is a participatory and co-responsible Church. How does our Church community identify the goals to be pursued, the way to reach them, and the steps to be taken? How is authority or governance exercised within our local Church? How are teamwork and co-responsibility put into practice? How are evaluations conducted and by whom? How are lay ministries and the responsibility of lay people promoted? Have we had fruitful experiences of synodality on a local level? How do synodal bodies function at the level of the local Church (Pastoral Councils in parishes and dioceses, Presbyteral Council, etc.)? How can we foster a more synodal approach in our participation and leadership?

- The Church is often too declaratory in its guidance and doesn't give clear guidance (or sometimes any guidance), e.g., dealing with COVID. The Church guidance is often too late.
- In the spirit of inclusiveness and the declining priests, allowing women to be priest and allowing married priests seem to better reflect the core values of the Catholic religion. Marriage for priests could mitigate quite a few issues that seem to arise.
- Need to provide support for lay women and men who step out to try and help out and who haven't had five years of seminary training.

9. DISCERNING AND DECIDING

In a synodal style we make decisions through discernment of what the Holy Spirit is saying through our whole community. What methods and processes do we use in decision-making? How can they be improved? How do we promote participation in decision-making within hierarchical structures? Do our decision-making methods help us to listen to the whole People of God? What is the relationship between consultation and decision-making, and how do we put these into practice? What tools and procedures do we use to promote transparency and accountability? How can we grow in communal spiritual discernment?

- This synod is a welcome change of being able to come together and voice aspirations and beliefs. It should be part of an ongoing annual process.

10. FORMING OURSELVES IN SYNODALITY

Synodality entails receptivity to change, formation, and on-going learning. How does our church community form people to be more capable of "walking together," listening to one another, participating in mission, and engaging in dialogue? What formation is offered to foster discernment and the exercise of authority in a synodal way?

- Lay people should be able to perform more roles in the church given the diminishing number of priests
- Needs to provide obvious pathways to leadership and pastoral roles: training, discerning what sorts of roles one might be suitable for

Sunday December 12, 2021
10 AM In-Person Session

In what areas is the Church not hearing you?

- The Church is often too declaratory in its guidance and doesn't give clear guidance (or sometimes any guidance), e.g., dealing with COVID. The Church guidance is often too late.
- Fundamentally, it is hard for the Church to be in a position to hear when there is a decrease in the vocation of priests. Priests aren't present to hear.
- Lack of flexibility in religious education. St. Charles is unique in allowing for flexibility given the realities of family schedules. Other parishes are too strict and rigid in the rules for taking classes and receiving confirmation.
- The Church is not paying attention to the realities of the local environment. The Church is growing in certain parts of the country (South and Southwest) and not in the others (Northeast).

What have your experiences been in talking about your faith with others both within and outside our faith community?

- In youth, church and community were often a large part of experience and development, e.g., Catholic school, but now, there are so many other activities to occupy time. Faith is no longer a central part of any conversation or experience given other activities now occupy people's time.
- Too often scandals that make headlines are the topic of conversation.
- People often think of Catholic Church as cold, homogeneous (not diverse) and problematic.

How might the Church be more inviting? How do we get people back in the pews?

- We need to tell the story of the hospitality of the Church. It is the nature of the Church to be inclusive; it is in the Gospel.
- The Church needs better public relations. The positive stories of Catholic service and doing good in the community gets lost in the stories of scandal.
- We need to make sure the Church is a community beyond the priests, e.g., knowing the names of fellow parishioners.
- How do you foster community when most people bolt right after Mass? (A suggestion came up to tie people to service projects so they feel a sense of involvement and responsibility)
- More activities that allow parishioners to live Pope Francis's vision, e.g., climate change actions, making giving/service at the forefront, whether Church's real estate holdings (esp. in Italy) can be used for good/courageously
- Everyone has gifts to offer and we need to show that help is needed by being explicit about it. Give people ownership and responsibility.
- It is important that we have a church community connected together so that church-goers are not just connected to the priest and no one else.

**Synod Notes
December 14, 2021**

In what areas is the Church not hearing you?

- The Church isn't hearing the people who are interested in the Latin rite Mass
- Not hearing people who believe women should have significant decision-making and pastoral roles: eg: women deacons.
- Lay people should be able to **perform** more roles in the church given the diminishing number of priests
- Needs to provide obvious pathways to leadership and pastoral roles: training, discerning what sorts of roles one might be suitable for
- People who want spiritual guidance **and** are looking for a spiritual home. Why spend so much time talking about who's not welcome or allowed in instead of welcoming them in

What have your experiences been in talking about your faith with others both within and outside our faith community?

- Outsiders think the church is very rule-driven and isn't accepting of people with differing views. Within the faith community, there are many people who are very judgmental about those who don't strictly follow or agree with Church doctrine
- Reluctant to be open about being Catholic with people as we don't know what the reaction will be
- Not comfortable talking about my faith experiences because people have negative views of the Catholic church

How might the Church be more inviting? How do we get people back in the pews?

- Opportunities and activities that people can participate in that represent the values of the church
- Be a place that's welcoming, where you're recognized when you walk in the door and people call you by name
- Get more attention for the good things they do vs. the crappy things

Is there anything else that the Holy Spirit is calling you to say? What would you like to hear from the Holy Spirit?

- Make it easier to coordinate with different groups in other parishes. How do we break our own parish boundaries?
- Why don't we want to have greater connection or collaboration with other churches who are geographically close (eg: St. Boniface and Assumption). Can we develop larger regional goals and groups? How do we break down walls between parishes, diocese, other faith groups? How do we work and worship with other people who are like-minded?

- The main thing we heard from the recent meeting of the U.S. bishops was about who should or shouldn't receive the Host. Why wasn't there discussion of how the American church is going to move forward with the priest shortage. What's their plan?
- Why is the church so associated with one political party?

Appendix

Notes from Small Group Sessions

Sunday December 12, 2021
10 AM In-Person Session

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- Everyone has gifts to offer and we need to show that help is needed by being explicit about it. Give people ownership and responsibility.
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Synod Notes
December 14, 2021

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- Needs to provide obvious pathways to leadership and pastoral roles: training, discerning what sorts of roles one might be suitable for
- People who want spiritual guidance **and** are looking for a spiritual home. Why spend so much time talking about who's not welcome or allowed in instead of welcoming them in

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- Outsiders think the church is very rule-driven and isn't accepting of people with differing views. Within the faith community, there are many people who are very judgmental about those who don't strictly follow or agree with Church doctrine
- Reluctant to be open about being Catholic with people as we don't know what the reaction will be
- Not comfortable talking about my faith experiences because people have negative views of the Catholic church

How might the Church be more inviting? How do we get people back in the pews?

- Opportunities and activities that people can participate in that represent the values of the church
- Be a place that's welcoming, where you're recognized when you walk in the door and people call you by name
- Get more attention for the good things they do vs. the crappy things

Is there anything else that the Holy Spirit is calling you to say? What would you like to hear from the Holy Spirit?

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- Why don't we want to have greater connection or collaboration with other churches who are geographically close (eg: St. Boniface and Assumption). Can we develop larger regional goals and groups? How do we break down walls between parishes, diocese, other faith groups? How do we work and worship with other people who are like-minded?

- The main thing we heard from the recent meeting of the U.S. bishops was about who should or shouldn't receive the Host. Why wasn't there discussion of how the American church is going to move forward with the priest shortage. What's their plan?
- Why is the church so associated with one political party?

Synod Notes
January 30, 2022
In-Person Group 1

In what areas is the Church not hearing you?

- In the spirit of inclusiveness and the declining priests, allowing women to be priest and allowing married priests seem to better reflect the core values of the Catholic religion. Marriage for priests could mitigate quite a few issues that seem to arise.
- Abortion topic: too often it is the woman's responsibility. So much judgment is placed on getting pregnant whereas there is little support given for those that do.

What have your experiences been in talking about your faith with others both within and outside our faith community?

- Teens / early 20s need to be attracted to the Church. First world kids lose interest in the Church. Some has to do with the energetic, entertaining nature of other faiths, e.g. Evangelicalism.
- People outside our faith community look down upon you for having this practice.

How might the Church be more inviting? How do we get people back in the pews?

- Evangelize the beauty of having a faith.
- Inclusiveness is lacking. Putting out a message of more progressive thoughts and behaviors would bring people back to the Church.
- Emphasis sanctity of life in all its forms, e.g. the immigrant at the border is the same as the baby in the womb.
- Use the scriptures to reimagine the stories. Telling stories in a way that is relatable and could bring more people back.
- Gay community needs to feel more included.
- Top-down message has to be reinforced. So much divisiveness in the world. We have a unique opportunity to be a unifier.
- Have an annual Synod.

Is there anything else that the Holy Spirit is calling you to say? What would you like to hear from the Holy Spirit?

- There needs to be ownership of the mistakes.
- The people in high positions in the church are not reflective of who the world or our nation is made up on.
- Acknowledgement of giving the people a voice. Democracy vs. authority structure.

Synod Notes
January 30, 2022
In-Person Group 2

In what areas is the Church not hearing you?

- Role of women: women being asked to help more with daily religious events, but can't say Mass. Need to provide support for lay women and men who step out to try and help out and who haven't had five years of seminary training.
- People feel left out in the cold, particularly younger people. Based upon the messages from some pulpit and the media, it seems the Church is mono-focused on abortion and is not connecting on issues that matter to people day-to-day.
- Gay people are not welcome in many parishes.

What have your experiences been in talking about your faith with others both within and outside our faith community?

- People associate the Church as conservative Republicans in this country.
- There's the continued impact of the sex abuse scandals.

How might the Church be more inviting? How do we get people back in the pews?

- Emphasize the vibrancy of the Universal Church.
- This synod is a welcome change of being able to come together and voice aspirations and beliefs. It should be part of an ongoing process.
- People respond positively to Pope Francis, who has shown by doing and by being welcoming.
- Need to shape the message to be more inclusive and not just about following rules.
- Explain why people stay Catholic.

Is there anything else that the Holy Spirit is calling you to say? What would you like to hear from the Holy Spirit?

Synod Notes
January 30, 2022
Zoom Group 1

1. In what areas is the Church not hearing you?

- We started with a question from a participant: if you are not being heard, how have you attempted to be heard? So here we go, with someone saying and wondering if it is worth speaking:
- The Church is dense; it is a large organization and has a lot of interests.
- The Church does not speak with a clear voice.
- Given the present priest shortage, we are told and understand that there is need for lay people to step up; here are additional ways to support the church but wonder what is the point of mentioning these and if we are heard; when speaking about these in the past nothing has changed:
- We need married priests and female priests
- We were reminded of St. Paul's letter to the Galatians that and this is not a quote: ...there is no longer male or female; we are all one in Christ - Jews and Gentiles
- People experienced Masses where the accent of the Priest is so strong that they cannot understand what is being said and, thus, minds drift.
- Glad that the Pope is asking us questions. The Vatican is its own rich little city and it is hard seeing Jesus connected to that. Historically, flawed people have made decisions, such as indicating the the pope is infallible.
- This leads people to ask "why," Asking why had gotten a participant in trouble for asking in a Catholic School.
- A question about having a training for lay people to do some of the things priests do came up: Several years ago at St. Charles there was a program for lay people to learn what they could do. It was a three or five year commitment for training lay people; not sure if anyone at St. Charles attended.

2. What have your experiences been in talking about your faith with others both within and outside our faith community?

- It has been / is hard to have a discussion because of the scandals in the Church.
- There is not a lot of talking; however, when talking with Catholics, participants received invitations to attend the other Catholics' parish. When speaking with non Catholics, people were also invited to a non Catholic Church, such as Episcopal, and asked wouldn't you like more bible studies.
- Not much speaking with family - they don't talk as there is a divide on topics - on the topic of abortion reminding us that Trump defunded Planned Parenthood.
- A participant was approached by a friend of a friend who said he would never go inside a Church again because of the Vatican saying gay people are welcome and that a sin cannot be blessed.
- When speaking among Catholics, abortion has been discussed; a question arose:
- Can the Church be open minded to contraception?
- The Church is pro birth but it does not seem to care about babies once they are born. Another participant said that there is assistance from shelters and Catholic Charities.

- Priests have supported local people in very trying times.

3. How might the Church be more inviting? How do we get people back in the pews?

- Music
- Strong, meaningful and educational preaching that applies to real life.

**4. Is there anything else that the Holy Spirit is calling you to say?
What would you like to hear from the Holy Spirit?**

- We did not get to this question per se. However, when replying to question 1, one participant said that the Holy Spirit was calling her to speak up about other ways the priest shortage could be addressed and that would be to have married priests and female priests.
- After the breakout groups, in the large group, some topics that came up were:
 - need for change
 - need to have an Annual Synod
 - need for priests to be more relatable to parishioners' lives namely re family life
 - need for activities in the Church (or for another sacrament) for young people between Confirmation and adulthood - for those in high school and college - who seem to receive Confirmation and then that is it for them.
 - Female Deacons

Synod Notes
January 30, 2022
Zoom Group 2

In what areas is the Church not hearing you?

- The church's roles for women are few and "lesser" - it makes women feel unwelcome and unvalued
- The church is very vocal on right to life, but it only seems to apply to abortion and doesn't apply to the death penalty, gun restrictions, homelessness - that idea should have a focus on other threats to life as well. U.S. Bishops discussion of whether or not to deny Biden communion based on his abortion stance - why are they focusing on punishing people or trying to kick them out of the church?
- There's so much going on in the US that isn't being addressed with the same intensity
- Synod is good because we usually don't have the opportunity to be heard at all. there's not an efficient method to communicate to the church and let it know how we feel. There's a lack of connection of the church around the world. There needs to be a better way and more frequent opportunities to be in conversation with the church

What have your experiences been in talking about your faith with others both within and outside our faith community?

- When you mention you are a catholic to an outside person it's assumed you were abused by a priest and are very conservative. it's upsetting because a lot of us have had great experiences with parish priests through childhood and adulthood
- The church hierarchy hasn't been **transparent** with the child abuse scandals - undermines the image of Catholics - can be the ruination of the church — need to be transparent no matter the ramifications
- Lapsed Catholics we know are mad about the scandal AND the cover-ups, and have left the church because of it.
- The church has become associated with certain issues. Because of that it's taboo to talk about your faith and live it out and share it which is sad.

How might the Church be more inviting? How do we get people back in the pews?

- The Catholic church isn't the go-to place to find a spiritual home
- Need to have transparency on scandals
- Shout out to Fr. Bill -he's honest and a breath of fresh air

Is there anything else that the Holy Spirit is calling you to say? What would you like to hear from the Holy Spirit?

- Parish priests seem to have to be too concerned with the physical condition of the church - is there a sole source that the church can use that can take that responsibility away from the pastors and the priests so they can focus on more important spiritual things? There's a shortage of priests and they have to spend their time on this stuff. role of the laity isn't that well defined so it's not clear how the laity can or should take on that responsibility to free them up from the business of running a parish can we ask parishioners in certain professions to help out with the church

- Resources vary wildly from church to church - most aren't very engaging - Matthew Kelly and "Dynamic Catholic" - it's a good resource for people to open the door and reengage with the catholic faith — The church should help out and give more resources and have a more coordinated effort to help people digest what the faith is about — something more prepared and polished for communities to interact with.
- It's hard to have universality when people believe radically different things - can you decentralize certain things (faith and spirituality related) and centralize others (eg: business, building help, etc).