

NOTES FROM SECOND SYNOD MEETING

The members of our parish feel a need to sift through social media for information. They look for alternative sources to read other than what they seem comfortable with or are used to reading. However, social media can be very negative. Still, parishioners share information with others via the social media (i.e. Facebook) or paper media, such as the bulletin. Most of our communication comes before and directly after Mass on Sunday.

Parishioners are concerned that we don't know much about other churches. As a rural small parish, we sometimes feel very isolated and would like to hear about and embrace other churches, whether Catholic or Protestant, and how they are coping with the world today and how the Holy Spirit is leading them.

We have a powerful history of clerics within our church and the universal church. However, we need to consider how the current move away from clericalism could affect our lay leaders and parishioners. Some parishioners asserted that to empower the laity we need to prioritize individual conscience over the norms of canon law. At least one parishioner suggested that this approach could be applied to issues such as gay marriage or divorced parishioners receiving sacraments.

Many activities at or involving the parish are not known about, including those of the pregnancy center, the Knights of Columbus, and CEASA. This parish needs better parish communication, with the bulletin and our website.

Our church feels like "coming home." Our parish meets the needs of the community by providing support to those who ask without question. We give help via organizations within our small community. The community expresses their appreciation and holds our church in esteem. Fr. Jim's locally-focused ecumenism is noted and appreciated [i.e. Appomattox martyrs' services & sunrise service]. We hope to add an ecumenical ministry to the parish council. Social media information is available; however, it needs to be used more effectively. Suggestions about communication included adding to the bulletin a condensed Parish Council report, and "a view from the pew" &/or "a view from the pulpit" to voice questions, issues, concerns or announcements.

There seems to be a slight lack of participation in the parish, we hope for more involvement by the laity. We should be doing more with immigration, homelessness and work with other churches to help with solutions without judgment. The laity need to be more involved because it is our "job" as baptized people! The divisiveness of the nation is seen within our parish. When there are conflicts within our groups there is sometimes no good way to resolve the issues with others except via our priest/shepherd Fr. Jim or Deacon Lou. We do often also "agree to disagree." We need to see each other's opinions with an open heart and unbiased eye. Many in our world culture don't know how to have a civil conversation. We feel we need to act locally to help with our world, our universal church, and our parish church and parishioners.

February 5, 2022 Attendees:

Lou Burgess
Mary-Jane Burgess
Fr. Jim Gallagher
Mary Fishback
Todd Craft
John Seaquist

Sheila Seaquist
Charles Graf
Mary Graf
Cecilia Harmon
Paul Harmon
Alice Doeppe
Renee May
Bonnie Toth
Mary Metzinger
Tom Metzinger
Scott West
Bernadette Servis
Diane S. Bradish