

## October 6, 2018 Parish Gathering

**Some comments were assigned to specific Commissions and/or teams for consideration and action (if deemed necessary).**

Key: CF = Christian Formation, HC - Human Concerns, P&W = Prayer & Worship, FC=Finance Council, PD = Parish Director, PC = Pastoral Council, WS = Worship Space Team, B&G = Building & Grounds

38 participants including Counsel. Commissions and Staff

### **What's working?**

Friendly church – smiling faces – we care about each other-we build friendships

The 9:30 Mass is working well – it's easier for the ministers – we don't need to split the musicians

Young families with children – participating in the Listen to the Word. There appears to be a growing improvement in diversity

Diversification of our church – welcoming others

All the outreach that GS has --- many community outreach programs.

Deacon Sandy, Fr. Marty and Fr. Richard --- all the people that are working at the church and all the committees.

**(Adult Formation)** Enjoy the adult education formation and Spotlight programs – really well put together – takes a great deal of work. Wish we could do more outreach to get more to come. I would like to see get more people to come to these wonderful programs.

The Spotlight planning team continues to use all media possible to *get the word out* –bulletins blurbs, Facebook, Instagram, new brochures created by Karen Cluppert, posters and announcements after Mass. Of course, we're always open to other suggestions. It is true, however, that we have a good number of people attending each week and it's not always the same folks. Different presenters and different topics attract different people. We're into our 20<sup>th</sup> year of Spotlight now. We've introduced a new 'time design' wherein the presenters are asked to a) present their topics for about 40 minutes, b) give a question or two to be discussed around the tables and c) end the gathering in whatever way they want: ask for brief reports from the tables on their conversations, Q&A, concluding comments, etc. This engaging time design has been welcomed by our attendees.

Affiliation with St. James, Sandy Sites, love singing at the confirmation with the St. James musicians.

The GOF program --- good for children to see that the older parishioners are learning, doing crafts, and being like children.

Proud that other faith communities recognize us as a Social Justice parish.

The way we celebrate the sacraments at Good Shepherd – the Baptisms, weddings, and the celebration of life Mass all give visitors a look at how we worship. We had a wedding that was so special that it brought our families together. We had a Celebration of Mass service that left everyone in tears and was very uplifting.

Corn Roast – Love it!

Funeral Masses are meaningful. Being known as the Social Justice Parish

Our Parish Team and the way they work together as a team on our behalf. Recognized by the Archdiocese as working well.

The GS in-reach programs as well as the outreach programs. Many outlets that are so rewarding. Cover a wide variety of interests.

The GS liturgies – the way the Word is spoken to us --- understandable proclaimers --- given the time to digest what was proclaimed rather than rushing off to the next thing.

Appreciative that our parish is financially stable so we don't have to worry where the next dollar is coming from.

Enjoy the men's group that meets monthly. A great couple of hours of study. All the talk and sharings stays in the room except the works.

Like this parish an awful lot. Asked if something happened to GS where I would go. I don't think I need a church building. I would not go to St. James or St. Mary's. I would have a tough time going somewhere else.

Went to 5 different churches when I moved to Men Falls...this was the only church where I felt the warmth.

Accepting of everyone. Accepts all the members of the Hartfel House. Hartfel House all know that they are accepted here

### **What are our opportunities?**

**(FC)** We have a good slush fund but we are overstaffed for the number of parishioners we have. Couldn't we find more volunteers?

- The number of ministries directly impact staff and vice-versa.
- Costs are looked at regularly
- Arch trusts GS to have a Parish Director because of our staff and programs. It was noted that to have a Pastor – the cost would be doubled.

Our performance to our budget is reviewed monthly by the Finance Council. Staffing is a component of budget. Our staff size is appropriate for a Parish with our number of parishioners, the number of ministries and the wide breadth of outreach programs the staff supports. While volunteers can be a way to supplement staff, they are not a viable alternative to replace staff or financially sound.

There is no such thing as a “good slush fund” at Good Shepherd. In the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, there are two types of parishes, financially troubled -or- financially sound. The current level of financial reserves that Good Shepherd has currently available are utilized to provide dividend income to help offset operational expenses, and debt reduction for our long-term capital improvement expenditures such as building and property maintenance. These reserves have dropped over 35% in the last 5 years alone because of our financial responsibilities. Further utilization of these reserves to offset additional expenditures would not be sustainable or fiscally sound and potentially endanger the future stability of our Parish.

**(HC)** Question if our outreach is going to the right groups --- political groups. (specifically disagrees with donation to Voces e la Frontera by Human Concerns)

- One of the few organizations that helps immigrants. Concerns have been voiced by others.
- Question if any one organization should be given a \$2000 contribution.
- 2 different statuses an organization can have – political vs. non-political.
- Did go on the website and clearly had a political bias.
- The group referred to teaches English to immigrants.
- Charter member loves church yet had some of the same concerns does not have the same concerns any longer.
- Volunteer with the organization believes the core mission is to help people.
- Voces shut down freeways and jobs. (Palermo’s)

The Human Concerns Commission and Deacon Gene Outreach Committee acknowledge the concern that we should avoid funding organizations that call out political bias in their literature, websites or activities. Going forward, Good Shepherd will only donate through 501(c)(3) charitable tax-deductible organizations and not 501(c)(4) non-tax-deductible entities. The Committee will change their written criteria for evaluating funding requests to reflect that requirement, and make efforts to identify what programming is being funded in the future.

Requests must be in compliance with the Church’s social justice teachings and adhere to the revised written criteria.

**(P&W)** Like to have the readings on the screens. Some people have hearing problems. Could we do it for all Masses. (need volunteers) Suggested a notice in the bulletin that if the parishioners like the reading on the screen – if they would like to volunteer.

- If the youth ministry takes on the tech ministry – we would only have them for a year or two.
- Clarification that we are talking about only having the readings on the screen.
- Have we had a chance to talk with other churches about how they provide the visual during Masses.

In our ritual God is made present in the Word by proclamation. In other words we experience the Word rather than read it at that time. Maybe we could provide a copy of the readings to help people who are hearing impaired.

**(P&W)** Can’t hear the prayers that are offered at the prayers of the faithful.

Having the Priest or Deacon repeat the prayer back to the assembly is helpful. A microphone might be too disruptive.

**(P&W)** Cannot see the babies that are being baptized.

- Comment made that we don't need to have the eyes on the baby --- that it is our presence that is important.

Response: It was agreed that our presence is most important. The presider can invite children to come to the font for better viewing.

**(P&W)** The choices of songs are questionable at times. Not everyone knows the songs that are chosen.

We would like an example of which songs were being referenced. Songs are chosen to go with the Season and Readings of the week.

**(P&W)** When the usher comes around at Offertory time not much is put in the basket. Instead of a collection – could we instead invite anyone who wants to give to come to the altar to make their contribution.

Mike, an usher said, “1/3 of parishioners put something in the basket, and most people would not be comfortable walking up to the altar”. It was also noted that many people give their contributions via mail and electronic banking.

## Questions

Have heard something about the Parish space discussion. Sandy addressed the donation that had been made and the status of the discussion. Many possibilities. Committee has been formed. Information will be made available to all parishioners.

Thoughts on the loose change challenge was a thumbs-up. (8 parishioners hands up)

## Questions/Comments brought to George Koleas after the Gathering.

### What's working?

**(Adult Formation)** I would like to see small group meetings held in homes

**(P&W/Stewardship)** I like the fellowship after Mass. Maybe we could have fellowship before Mass.

There is a 1 hour fasting rule before Mass, so no food or drink could be consumed. Regular hospitality after Mass would be great!

Everyone is very welcoming

### What are our opportunities?

I thought we were not supposed to problem solve but just give our ideas.

**(PC)** What happened to answer the problems and questions from the survey? Was anything changed?

Anytime surveys are conducted the results are shared with the various commissions and groups and they take action as deemed necessary.

**(P&W)** Music is driving away parishioners at the 4:30 mass.

Is the comment referencing the choice of songs, the musicians, or the singing? There are liturgical reasons behind the songs that are chosen.

**(B&G)** Now that former custodian is gone, the cleanliness of carpets, bathrooms, floor in Daniels Hall leaver much to be desired. As one walks in the front (Main) door , they see the terribly spotted and dirty carpet. This is disgusting and not a welcoming sight.

The carpet described in this item has been cleaned. The conditions of our facilities are affected by weather conditions. These conditions are monitored regularly and appropriate action is taken as issues arise.