

St. Rose of Lima Parish Survey

Executive Summary of Findings

The **2014-2015 Pastoral Council** requested that a task force be created to compile a summary report of the Parish Survey which was administered to the parish at large. The Survey was conducted during the months of April, May and June 2015 using both paper copies and an online tool. The **Review Findings Task Force** was formed and consisted of the following members: Luis Aguirre, Sue Clark, Bing Inocencio, Terri Meyer, Deacon Leo Schneider, Jeannie Vanover and Carolyn Stamatakis. In addition to this Executive Summary of Findings, a summary report of the survey data was also compiled.

1. Unity in Diversity

This issue appeared to be of the most concern to the respondents of the English Survey; however, there was not a completely common approach to this issue. Some felt that the parish needs to keep the Hispanic and English Liturgical celebrations, including music, separate from one another. To combine them is “distracting when changing from one language to another” and has the effect of making Masses and other celebrations “too long”.

On the opposite side, respondents indicated that more combined liturgical celebrations as well socializing between all of our cultures would be a very positive step forward. In general, respondents recognized the changing demographics as a very big issue for St. Rose going forward on many levels (liturgical, financial and social) but did not provide a clear way forward for Pastor, Staff and Council Members to consider in the Pastoral Plan.

In general responses seem to indicate a need for both parish-wide formation and relationship building opportunities in this area, as it relates to culture and liturgy.

2. Liturgy

The survey responses indicate that St. Rose continues to have very meaningful liturgies, generally engaging homilies and an excellent music ministry. In fact, our liturgies and our “welcoming community” were the most listed reasons for attending Mass at St. Rose. There seems to be a consensus that we need to continue to do what we are doing in this area, which means careful quality control to insure we keep our liturgies at the level they’re at and have been in the past.

3. Full Participation in Liturgy

Respondents had a number of suggestions as to how we could improve our participation in Liturgy (see survey data for details). A remarkable finding was the need to eliminate or mitigate in some fashion the distractions during Mass e.g., latecomers, children, homilies that are less than engaging (deacons were singled out here). Formation was mentioned as well, indicating that we don’t have the level of Adult Education that we once had in this parish, which helped us to understand why we do what we do. The formation issue was mentioned or referred to in a number of areas.

4. Leadership Development

It is clear from the responses to the questions revolving around this issue that more needs to be done. Comments ranged from “don’t know what the opportunities are” to “I don’t have time”, to “I have been doing

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this for too many years and have aged” to “I have tried to become involved but have been made to feel unwelcome by those in charge”. Significant effort appears to be needed in the Pastoral Planning process to address this issue. Challenges will also be felt here due to the fact that we have a multicultural parish now and have to find a way to combine leadership development across the entire spectrum of the parish. In addition, since “time” and occasionally, “distance” was mentioned, traditional “meetings” need to be evaluated as a tool for organization and other formats possibly developed.

Establishing and promoting a parish-wide organizational structure could contribute to many more parishioners getting involved. Being more intentional about rotation of ministers, succession and training in leadership, personal invitation, reaching out to newcomers and timely follow-up are doable means to this end.

5. Communication

Obviously, the way we communicate with one another has significantly changed since the last time we actually wrote a Pastoral Plan (2004-2005). Our technology within the parish has not kept up with the way people “speak” with one another, in particular, younger adults-25-45 who are the future of the parish. Use of Social Media is vital, blogs are essential, better use of the Bulletin and an updated Website that is truly interactive must be developed and quickly. This was very clear from the commentary related to this issue, along with the Formation that needs to be interwoven with better methods of communication.

Perhaps the Pastor's use of the pulpit during Mass and the bulletin cover could be employed to encourage greater parishioner participation in current opportunities. Another action to consider could be to offer greater formation for staff development in the areas of collaboration, team ministry, staff availability and general responsiveness techniques so that each is prepared to help parishioners discern how, with whom, when and where to get connected.

6. Religious Education

The responses show that this is an area in which St. Rose manages differently on two levels; youth and adult.

Our youth program is well received, received high marks for effectiveness and educational levels. Somewhat surprising was the numbers of children enrolled vs. the number of responses (46) 14 yes and 32 no. Pastoral Planning will need to take a look at this since Sunday Mass Schedules etc. are heavily planned around Rel Ed and at this point in time , parking, overcrowding at some Masses and Mass schedules are being carefully reviewed to see what can be done to alleviate some of these issues. What is the % of the parish actually involved in Children's Rel. Ed. vs. the % of the parish affected?

Our Adult Religious Ed program needs attention. The comments were along the line of “I have no idea if what is available or where to find it” to “I don't have time”. A Pastoral Plan might include some facilitation for this concern to include improved communication, methodology and improved leadership development. Basic formation in a number of areas already mentioned is strategically necessary here as well. To some degree adult formation can also be woven into homilies, announcements, and other communication networks.

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7. Social Outreach

Respondents indicated clearly that St. Rose needs to improve our efforts related to both our understanding of Catholic Social Teaching (more formation needed) and our outreach efforts. While there is appreciation for what we already have in place i.e., Community Based Shelter, TOGO support, etc., there was a theme of we can do more and we are not reaching out to those in our community most in need. One issue in particular was the lack of an organized ministry to the homebound, sick, etc. There were too many individual comments to include them all here, but the Pastoral Planning Team will need to review and evaluate them when determining the placement of resources, both staff and volunteer as well as financial resources going forward.

8. Gathering Space

Completing the Gathering Space remains a priority for many of the respondents. This topic has been covered sufficiently in other areas.

9. Good Stewardship of our Resources

Good financial planning, paying down our debt and smart budgeting are a priority. There is a basic understanding of the need to assist in the maintenance and care of our campus, but again, a general lack of understanding as to how to go about doing it.

Good stewardship of time is a challenge for most of our families in today's busy world. How might the parish create mechanisms that invite participation without creating additional burdens on families and individuals? There is a need to address stewardship of all our resources, including time, space, personnel and talent. With so many comments re lack of time and opportunity to serve, we need to develop better stewardship of all these resources.

Finally, parishioners generally expressed appreciation for and dedication to the particular long-standing charisms of the St. Rose of Lima Parish, namely,

- full, conscious, and active participation in the Eucharistic liturgy, the Source and Summit of our life in Christ,
- a strong sense of community welcome and hospitality, and
- enthusiasm for social justice/outreach,
- while recognizing our richly diverse community and our need to nurture one other in new ways.