

Pastor's page: Eucharist and Liturgy, the Second Pillar of Our Vision Statement

“We seek to nourish the faith life of the parish by celebrating meaningful liturgies, and offering opportunities for a wide range of prayerful experiences.”

The second brainstorming session on the development of an Action Plan to implement the five pillars of our vision statement, was led by Sr. Angela Gannon, CSJ. All sessions began with, and concluded with prayer to the Holy Spirit. The workshop was composed of representatives from the Pastoral Council, Stewardship Committee, Finance Committee, Family Life Committee, the Pastoral Team, deacons and other ministry groups. The group working on the second pillar, “Eucharist and Liturgy”, produced three goals for our parish to accomplish within the next year.

Goal #1: Increase the number of ministers in liturgical ministries. We will accomplish this in three ways - 1) Each current minister will invite one person to join a liturgical ministry. “Each one, reach one.” - 2) Speakers after communion time, once a month, will highlight a liturgical ministry (Lector, Usher, Greeter, Music Minister, Sexton, altar server, Eucharistic minister). Liturgy committee and current liturgical ministers will organize this. - 3) The Bulletin will highlight the liturgical ministry of the month, and invite parishioners to participate in a liturgical ministry.

Goal #2: Provide opportunities for ongoing ministerial development (spiritual, theological and pastoral) for current ministers. This will be accomplished in three ways – 1) an evening/day retreat for liturgical ministers on site or off site. – 2) research and share with liturgical ministers study resources for lectors, EM's, Ushers, Greeters, Music ministers, and leadership guides for all. Liturgy committee or subcommittee will be responsible to implement this. – 3) Homebound parishioners, First Communion families, and Confirmation candidates will be invited to pray for those who are in a liturgical ministry.

Goal #3: Provide new experiences of various forms of prayer (Lectio Divina, Jesus prayer, Charismatic, Ignatian, etc.) This will be accomplished in three ways – 1) Research will be done on best practices in the development of spirituality at other parishes both locally and nationally. New prayer experiences will be offered to parishioners from this gathering of information. The parish Spirituality Committee will take on this responsibility. - 2) Social media will be used to encourage, invite and educate adults on spiritual traditions (Franciscan, Ignatian, Dominican, Marian, Benedictine), as well as contemporary prayer forms. - 3) Workshops will be provided on various types of prayer. The Spirituality Committee will implement this.

The celebration of the Sunday Eucharist remains the high point of our spiritual life. The Second Vatican Council called the Mass the “summit and source”. When we pray we

come in contact with the living God who is always there for us. God takes the initiative. We simply quiet down and dedicate some time to open our minds and hearts to the Lord.

Reflect on developing ‘prayer of the heart’ by our Holy Father, Pope Francis, in his address to catechists. “Being a catechist (or a Christian!) is not a title, it is an attitude: abiding with him, and it lasts for a lifetime! It means abiding in the Lord’s presence and letting ourselves be led by him. I ask you: how do you abide in the presence of the Lord? When you visit the Lord, when you look at the tabernacle, what do you do? Without speaking... “But I speak, I talk, I think, I meditate, I listen...” Very good! But do you let yourself be looked at by the Lord? Letting ourselves be gazed upon by the Lord. He looks at us and this is itself a way of praying. But how do you do this? You look at the tabernacle and you let yourselves be looked at... It is simple! “It is a bit boring, I fall asleep”. Fall asleep then, sleep! He is still looking at you. But know for sure that he is looking at you....This warms the heart, igniting the fire of friendship with the Lord, making you feel that he truly sees you, that he is close to you and he loves you.”

Peace, Fr. Bruce