

Report for the Synod on Synodality from St Augustine's Church May 13th, 2022

At St Augustine's, our Local Parish Council appointed a sub-committee to meet with a diverse selection of parishioners of our church to discern the Holy Spirit's guidance.

We found that the church's outreach to the poor and evangelism to the world is essential to the life of the parish inside and outside. Many felt that at St Augustine's the social teaching of the Catholic Church is well represented and we should encourage other parishes of the world to take up this work. Each church should have a mission that it is committed to. Not just to do a lot of one off works, but to work on an issue, trying to solve problems and make things better. We can do the one off works as well, but focus and a deep dive can be very healthy,

Regarding liturgy we came to realize that we need to emphasize reverence and adoration while at the same time be open to the traditions and customs of the various cultures represented in our parish community. Being open to the different styles of music is important to keeping the harmony of the church. The church needs to be proactive and involve people who are new to the area and our community. More involvement of the laity into the life of the church needs to be emphasized. The role of women in the church needs to be reviewed as many don't feel that they are treated as equals.

The church needs to find ways to involve the youth in our midst. How can we do this? Should we investigate what churches with successful youth programs are doing? Committee members met with youth in our church and found that their vision included a church that was active in the world, concern for the environment and that we need to do more to build a friendly community in the church. Every church needs to have an action plan to involve youth, start visiting catechism classes, outreach on issues important to youth.

We need to know the faith of the church. Does our community understand the Eucharist? In addition to this, a discussion of the hard questions needs to be encouraged in a welcoming environment. On the other hand, some do not feel listened to. While we can't act on all the concerns, could we do a better job in listening? The size of the church as well as the hierarchical structure were suggested as being a hindrance to listening to the various views and ideas. Gather people together, listen, ask, get the real answers the church has.

Many Catholics are hurt and have had their faith shaken by the sexual abuse scandals as well as the treatment of indigenous children that was mentioned in the news last year. There is a desire that justice needs to be done while they are happy to see that a reconciliation fund is currently being offered. Transparency and communication are also needed to keep the faithful up to date and informed.

The church in the world has gone through two tough years due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Post Covid we can rewind, take to the opportunity to regroup, draw strength from what we have done well and go back into the world living out the Great Commission given to us by Jesus Christ.