**Listening Session Summary Report**

**Location: St. Mary Solon**

**Date of Session:** October 28, 2018 **Facilitator:** Tom Tallman

**Your Name:** Julie Agne  **Email:** julie@solonstmary.org

**Approximate number of participants:** 18

**Were small groups utilized? \_\_x\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no**

**If so, how many small groups did you have? 2**

**Briefly describe the composition of the group (age/race/gender/ethnicity).**

14 men, 4 women

Ages 40-80

White

**Were there any impeding factors that could have limited attendance?**

People’s busy lives

Included below is feedback from the Joy of the Gospel study groups, provided by six of the facilitators at a meeting on October 26, who could not come on the 28th.

**Chapter Large Group Responses. List with bullet points.**

**Chapter 1:**

* VBS: Methodist Church joins us, open to community
* Active Pro-Life Group, including support for 40 Days for Life, Informed Choices Medical Clinic & Bridgehaven, Johnson County Right Life
* Welcome letters to those who moved to the area.
* Neighborhood picnics in subdivision areas to bring people together
* *Many items here were repeated in response to Chapter 3 & 4.*

**Chapter 2:**

* *To “be missionary” or “to evangelize” seems quite foreign to most in our parish study groups: What do you mean? As visions of door-knockers appear in their minds. Is this something new? I was never told I needed to do this to be a good Catholic. Somehow the “go and tell” part of being a disciple has fallen on many deaf ears.*
* *If “I were to go and tell” how would I do that? What would I say? Thinking more in terms of apologetics verses accompaniment with/to Christ. Worried that they do not know how to explain/defend the faith.*
* *Lots of fear surfaced: Fear of not knowing what is expected, Fear of not knowing how to do it, fear of rejection, fear of embarrassment. Feeling the need to be perfect/successful – rather than be ok with just planting the seed, just fishing with nets & poles, and trust God in the growth, God in the catching.*
* *But lots of desire too: the desire to connect the hearts of Christ with the hearts of those in need. A willingness to be informed & empowered to do so…realizing the divine physician wants to heal – and many are wounded. Compassion for those whose lives are far from Christ.*
* *Recognized a need to be intentional: with our time commitment to others, authentic listening, be willing to step out of our comfort zone, to go where it is hard, to be ok with being inconvenienced, to be open daily to recognizing opportunities to share the joy.*
* *A challenge – confusion from upper church leadership – a little clarity on beliefs.*
* *Parish Challenges:*
* *To evangelize our own parishioners…the not-so-intentional disciples. To repeat the Kerygma over and over. To share the invitation Christ extends to come and see, come and follow; and Christ’s expectations for those who choose to follow. And to make sure people realize the “risk” is worth it – your life won’t become dull & boring – but rather full & exciting.*
* *To continue challenging/forming/encouraging people in a daily prayer-life of encountering God in Scripture; teaching people to pray.*
* *To encourage hope-filled trust in God’s goodness and his plan for our lives. We can be a people living in joy-filled hope. Letting go of worries, doubts and fears.*
* *To teach them how to share their stories – what was life like before encountering Christ? What was it like when deciding to live for and with Christ? And how their journey or encounters with Christ might offer consolation and inspiration to others. Sharing the hope, peace and joy that comes from a life lived with him. Give them tools for start-up conversations.*
* *To teach the need for and art of accompaniment, of compassionate listening; to learn from saints like Francis and Mother Teresa.*
* *To remind them of their Charisms and their role/responsibility in using them to build the Kingdom – perhaps around the Baptism of the Lord each year – a reminder of our Baptismal responsibility to be missionary. Our parts are needed in the body of Christ. Their lives are crossing paths with others whom God wants to touch through them. To be missionary is not optional for disciples.*
* *To teach them to pray for the people God is putting on their hearts. To not be afraid to invite them to an event or liturgy – putting them in a place where God can encounter them.*
* *To offer more opportunities for reconciliation & actively promote these – now is the time to say, Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet her I am once more to renew my covenant…save me Lord, take me into your redeeming embrace.*
* *To use Lent as a season of dying to self – going beyond self to be with and help those in need. To provide a lot of ways/ideas people can choose to do this.*
* *Overall – to promote personal responsibility & accountability in living out one’s baptism; in making ministries and opportunities happen. We can’t hide behind the “parish” doing this for us – each part of the body is needed. The parish will encourage, support, promote – but we can’t do it for you.*

**Chapter 3:**

* K-4th Family model of formation
* 2nd Grade First Communion & Reconciliation – Parent/Child formation based
* 5-6-7th grade father/son, mother/daughter nights scheduled throughout year
* 5-6-7th grade small groups of girls led by women mentors, boys by men.
* 8 Grade Confirmation prep – also small groups & mentors
* 9-12th Grade youth group
* Guest Speakers, ex: October Series of 4 Respect Life talks
* Monthly Marriage on Tap Date Night – with meal, childcare, enrichment/fellowship
* Series of three baptism classes facilitated by trained mentor couples.
* A variety of adults studies offered throughout the year, from Financial Peace University, to studies on Mary Holy Spirit (the Wild Goose); 33 Days to Merciful Love/Morning Glory; Barron’s Catholicism, Conversion Stories & Pivotal Players, Oremus, Praying for Adult Sons & Daughters, Bible Studies, Who Am I to Judge?, Scripture in Mass
* Monthly free book/cd give-aways of 44 copies.
* 150 monthly copies of the Word Among Us; doubled at Lent & Advent
* Annual Men & Women’s Conferences
* Lenten Parish Mission
* Evenings of Adoration & Worship
* Mother’s Play Group/Book Study
* Seasonal Prayer, ex: Mary Untier of Knots & Ribbons in May, Family Remembrance Candles in November, Rosary in October; Series of Six Fatima Prayer Services
* Pilgrimages: two to New Mellary this summer, Marriage Pilgrimage to Holy Hill Wisconsin this fall and to Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe last fall
* Treasures of the Church – evening with the relics
* Eucharistic Adoration on Monday evening and Friday am
* Pay for 3-6 teens to attend Leadership, Evangelization & Discipleship week in St. Paul
* 35-55 teens attend annual Steubenville Conference in St. Paul
* 10-20 attending NCYC
* Men’s Saturday & Sunday AM prayer groups
* Overnight Men & Women’s retreats
* 500 book give-away – Christmas Gift Bags
* Active Prayer-line with 250 member list.
* 100+ have attended a Christ Our Life Conference

**Chapter 4:**

* Weekly visits/communion to the homebound
* IC Free Lunch Program
* Hospital Visits by Deacons
* Prayer Shawl Ministry
* GriefShare Ministry
* Flu Shot & Blood Pressure Clinics
* Monthly collections for Solon Food Pantry, Volunteers
* Bingo at Care Center
* 6th Grade VBS – Service Week
* Annual VBS Kids Against Hunger
* Weekly Mass & Rosary at Care Center
* Care Center Giving Tree, providing 100+ gifts to residents, delivered by K-4 families
* Monthly service projects by K-4 families, including: Coats for Kids, Operation Shoe Box, personal hygiene items for El Salvador Medical mission trip.
* Not the past two years – before that annual teen mission trips with 12-20 youth.
* Annual event for Mary’s Meals
* Youth/Families preparing meals at Ronald McDonald house
* LIFT group (Ladies in Fellowship Together) non-Catholics join the weekly gathering for knitting/cards-games/seasonal craft which is delivered with meals-on-wheels
* Upcoming Fight the New Drug series of three presentations – involving whole community in the planning & promoting
* Series of presentations by Parish Nurse opened to community, ex: Alzheimer’s Awareness, Prostate Cancer, Eye Disease
* KC Breakfast with Santa/Cookie Walk is advertised to community
* Fall Harvest Festival brings in the community
* Meals to families with newborn or illness
* Annual Parish tithe, currently $29,000 to a variety of organizations serving in the area
* Solon Church Help Fund – to provide monetary help to local people in need.
* Provide transportation to parishioners in need.

**Chapter 5:**

* Need for personal conversion – daily renewed commitment to Christ. Personal transformation is needed before we can reach out and share the joy. “Christ’s presence welling up in them” You have to be changed before you can go and have the impact to change others.
* It isn’t missionary or discipleship – it is missionary discipleship
* “Spirit filled evangelization full of joy and fervor” has to show through us and in all that we do. Make others ask – “what is going on with that person, I need that in my life.” People are watching and we need to be mindful of what we do and say.

**Participant Surveys**  *There are many who participated in the study groups along with the group facilitators who would also be good candidates for the following – but were unable to join us on October 28th.*

**Question 1:** Jeff Geistkemper, Dennis Uhl, Marty Kelchen, Mark Sovers, John Donatelli, Darren Benzing, Geri Kohlhaas, Duane Krob, Don Myers, Ruth Myers

**Question 2:** Dennis Uhl, Marty Kelchen, Mark Sovers, Darren Benzing, Ruth Myers

**Question 3:** Dennis Uhl, Marty Kelchen, Mark Sovers, Darren Benzing, Ruth Myers

**Question 4: List responses with bullet points.**

* + I would like to see more focus on how we can make changes to make a difference
  + Focus less on youth and more on education of the parents
  + Narrowing the focus, move on the core of the subject and make a true plan and just a “hoop” to jump through
  + Adult families who have the church and are still in the community at different churches.