



Synod Report

January 31, 2021

updated April 7, 2021 to reflect implementation status

St. Patrick Mission Discernment Synod Team

We are grateful for the generous and capable commitment of the following parishioners whose leadership and commitment to the vitality, growth and sustainability of our parish has made this Synod successful:

Synod Leadership Team

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Sr. Beatrice La Framboise

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GENERAL SUMMARY

The St. Patrick Mission Discernment Synod organized 15 separate topical area sessions and together they generated 161 recommendations designed to enhance and expand our parish vitality. Subsequently, the lead Facilitators for those sessions, together with additional input from the entire parish, combined the recommendations for optimal impact within the sessions and with an eye to synergies existing between sessions. Finally, the recommendations were grouped by 12 proactive Initiatives and combined into 6 major categories for pastoral planning purposes. Following are the results of this bottoms-up process of mission discernment for a growing and dynamic Catholic faith community.

Update status legend:

- In-flight Initiative Actions are highlighted in Yellow with the Lead and Parish Council (PC) Liaison names indicated.
- Completed Initiative Actions are highlighted in Green with the month of completion indicated.
- For the current progress against in-flight Initiative Actions, please see the parish Connection Board.

CATEGORY 1: External Culture of Encounter

Culture of Encounter is one of the five Vitality Categories that were the primary focus of our Synod. Pope Francis and Archbishop Etienne have both spoken that Faith is an encounter with Jesus, and that we must do what Jesus does and encounter others. They are encouraging us to look beyond ourselves to the needs of others, to reach out, build friendships beyond our circle, and meet people on the peripheries, the most poor and vulnerable, migrants, and refugees. The following four Initiatives reflect our commitment to follow this call with immediate actions that will enhance and express our vitality as a parish.

Initiative A: Ecumenical and Interfaith

Ecumenical and Interfaith is a Vatican II initiative that calls for restoration of unity among all Christians and for interfaith dialogue with non-Christian faith traditions. At St. Patrick church this Ministry was formed in 2004 as one outcome from our first Parish Synod. Over the years it has grown into a partnership with three regional interfaith organizations who collaborate organizing annual events that feature religious education, spiritual celebrations, and charitable works for the poor all around us. The current Synod has introduced recommendations that will amplify our leadership in the community by integrating outreach programs such as food security and racial equity into our traditional events and thereby extend and deepen our relationships with faith-based individuals and organizations in our region.

Implementation Summary:

People: Ministry members and Category Action Leaders as appropriate

Vitality: High (culture of encounter external; both the Pope and the archbishop place high value on ecumenical initiatives)

Constraints: None

Time Considerations: Immediate

Recommendations:

- 2021 Action A (Lead: John Hale, PC Liaison: Byrony Treser) - Expand the St. Patrick planning group for the Interfaith/Ecumenical ministry to include representatives from the parish ministries.
- 2021 Action B (Lead: Laura Ash, PC Liaison: Byrony Treser) - Connect FAME and St. Patrick: organize an event in 2021 that will involve several different segments: music, movement, food security.

Initiative B: Social Justice

Social Justice Ministry focuses on a wide variety of social concerns, shares information, and makes plans for proactive community involvement. First and foremost, we have a nearly 30 year sister parish relationship with Nueva Trinidad in El Salvador, to where we have sent at least 10 teen and adult delegations. In addition, St. Patrick parish has a long history of advocacy for just public policies, nuclear weapons abolition, immigration reform, criminal justice reform, farm worker solidarity, School of Americas Watch, care for creation, Catholic Advocacy Day. The current Synod introduced new ideas for expanding the impact of this committee by integrating youth engagement through service projects, promoting and working toward Racial Equity, and augmenting our visibility and influence for just and equitable policies through closer collaboration with other churches and faith traditions in our geographic area.

Implementation Summary:

People: SJ Committee and Action Leaders as appropriate

Vitality: High

Constraints: None

Time Considerations: Immediate

Recommendations:

- Action A (Kate Speltz/Maureen Little) – Continue and expand our 28-year Sister Parish relationship with Nueva Trinidad and the many delegations between St. Pats and NT. (Host an Information Night or Party to engage parishioners with Nueva Trinidad as part of entire parish; provide history of our journey over the decades, esp. for new parishioners and invite COH)
- 2021 Action B (Lead: Liza Neal; PC Liaison: Robin Rowedder) - Continue and expand St. Patrick's decades-long efforts on advocacy: educational presentations, emails/letters/calls to legislators. Participate in multi-parish climate advocacy, (coordinated by Patrick Barredo) and Racial Equity advocacy, Catholic Lobby day, Faith Action Network, Earth Ministry, etc. (This includes stories such as convincing a legislator to switch sides on the death penalty issue and persuading a legislator to not sponsor legislation to weaken consumer protections).
- 2021 Action C (Lead: Chris Covert-Bowlds; PC Liaison: Robin Rowedder) - Actions and advocacy: Organize social justice letter writing for advocacy
- Action D (Mickey Dunn) – Organize monthly Service Opportunities for youth

Initiative C: Homelessness

Homelessness is one of the highest social justice issues in our region and we have raised our voices in advocacy for compassionate public policies for some time. This Synod, inspired by our focus on Encounter, brought forward recommendations for personal encounters with the homeless in our city, regular support of organizations like Nightwatch, and providing space in our parking lot for persons living in cars. The session first recommends implementation of Deacon Dennis' Sacred Encounter Program to promote personal outreach to and engagement with people on the streets of Seattle. Additionally, the session recommends we research the complex issue of allocating parking space to provide a safe and reliable location for one or more people living in a car, until permanent housing can be obtained.

Implementation Summary:

People: Action Team

Vitality: High

Constraints: None for Sacred Encounters; Permits, Security, porta-potty, Neighbors for safe parking, requires a significant amount of research

Time Considerations: 90-day feasibility study

Recommendations:

- Action A (Dennis Kelly) – Implement the Sacred Encounters Program-sandwich makers/ families to sign up for a (weekly) shift to do the assembly cooking).
- Action B (TBD) - Create a **safe parking area** in our parking lot to support and enable people living in cars (Connect to Seattle Urban League program); a significant, highly organized, vetted program with high success rates.). <https://urbanleague.org/about/>
- Action C (TBD) – Continue our regular support of Nightwatch

Initiative D: Food Security

Food Security is another priority social service issue that received high rankings in our Synod, especially at this time during the pandemic. Ideas included working with other churches on food distribution to neighbors, a pop-up meal offering, continuing our relationship with Noel House for food and relationships. Considering the logistics involved, this initiative focused on expanding support for existing food service programs.

Implementation Summary:

People: Action Team Leader

Vitality: High

Constraints: Volunteers

Time Considerations: Immediate

Recommendations:

- 2021 Action A (Lead: Ginny Kenyon; PC Liaison: Brandon Huxtable) - Crossover with Racial Justice as well. Creating an ongoing relationship with FAME. Working with Food Security with FAME. They have a huge food distribution program.
- 2021 Action B (Lead: Ginny Kenyon; PC Liaison: Brandon Huxtable) - Engage with St. Mark's Cathedral for food security initiative.

CATEGORY 2: Expanding Diversity

St. Patrick church is located in North Capitol Hill in a neighborhood transitioning from a traditionally white, middle-aged population to a younger, more diverse demographic due to tech employment opportunities and a central, walkable, transportation-friendly neighborhood. Our parish has a reputation for being a welcoming community and we enjoy the rich diversity afforded by our special needs families and other communities, such as LGBTQIA+. However, we value diversity, and the Synod focus on vitality has made increasing the diversity in our membership a priority.

Initiative A: Outreach to Families with Special Needs

Our Deaf & Deaf/Blind members and our L'Arche members are integrated into our liturgical ministries including eucharistic ministry, readers, greeters, ushers, and movement. St. Patrick has much experience working with special needs members, especially with regard to sacramental preparation as well as integration into the community as a whole. The Synod has raised awareness that there are many Catholic families with special needs in our region that find the environment of more traditional parish communities less sensitive and less responsive to their needs. Making this initiative a priority and publicizing our compassion and capabilities is an exciting new way we believe we can increase parish vitality and increase our membership.

St Patrick Church was the host of the Mass for the January 2018 meeting of the NCOD (National Catholic Office of the Deaf) which was held that year in Seattle. It was inspiring to have this national organization to visit Saint Patrick's. We see this Mass as an important event that raised awareness of our parish at the national level and we should continue this ministry.

More social interaction both *within* the deaf/deaf-blind community and *between* the deaf/deaf-blind and hearing communities is seen as a path to growing the deaf and deaf/blind community.

Implementation Summary:

People: Action Team Leaders

Vitality: High

Constraints: External Communications

Time Considerations: Immediate

Recommendations:

- Action A (Huxtables) - Facilitate more social interaction for deaf, deaf/blind and L'Arche core members, more deaf friendships outside of L'Arche, liked seeing Huxtables give reflections, Eddie (deaf core member) as EM, opportunities to give more deaf members and core members space to share written and video reflections on the website and social medias to reach people who are church shopping. More reflections on faith and disability. Incorporating more creative ways to pray such as through art, refreshing new style of prayer night.
- 2021 Action B (Lead: Elaine Clark / Ellen Carpentier; PC Liaison: Elaine Clark) - Organize Game nights, teaching sign language, movie night, ASL class after Mass again because it was enjoyed in the past, retreats, discussions with deaf priests, collaborating with Portland, other churches in

federal way offers game nights and camps. Activities should be advertised to all; these activities can be part of our identity.

- Action C (Sandi Tennyson) - Organize and produce Talent shows, sharing gifts, could be very fun, less formal than Mass. If the Archbishop comes, it is an opportunity to include Core Member David Bishop like he does in the Inclusion Mass, growing contacts for more families with DD through L'Arche and the Archdiocese. The Archdiocese sees the deaf and special needs communities as vital and will support us in growing this community, which will hopefully make us less vulnerable.
- Action D (TBD) - Reach out to families with children/adults with disabilities.
- Action E (TBD) - Connect (continue to connect) with national and state groups, as well as possibly connecting with local churches that we haven't worked with before.

Initiative B: Outreach to LGBTQIA+ and Other Communities

LGBTQIA+ members have taught us an important lesson about being a welcoming community, which is: before promoting ourselves publicly, first check in with our current members to understand what they value and what we could do better for/with them. We have created ambassadors by listening to them in a series of book study workshops and learning how we can best engage with them authentically and what accompaniment means in our relationships with them. The Synod now gives us the opportunity to apply what we have learned in partnership to increase our relational vitality and work together to grow our membership.

Other communities we want to engage with are NW Child, Seattle Prep, Seattle Prep Alumni, and Christ Our Hope.

Implementation Summary:

People: Action Team Leaders

Vitality: High

Constraints: prepare and publicize sacramental preparation services for special needs families

Time Considerations: Immediate

Recommendations:

- **2021 Action A (Lead: John Dunn/Kathleen Emry; PC Liaison: John Dunn) - Form an LGBTQIA+ committee to enact the Recommendations**
- Action B (Pete Delaunay) - Reach out to LGBTQ+ community through Seattle Gay News and other local media by running ads and providing articles -possibly using some excerpts from Fr. James Martin's book, Building A Bridge; also consider flying Pride flag and staffing a booth at the Pride festival
- Action C (TBD) – Be intentionally welcoming of LGBTQIA+
- Action D (Pete Delaunay) - Expand Seattle PREP and NW Child relationships
- Action E (TBD) - Encourage interaction and engagement between St. Patrick and COH around issues of immigration/sister parish (see # 1)

CATEGORY 3: Celebration of Sacraments

Celebration of Sacraments is one of the five Vitality Categories that were the primary focus of our Synod. It has been noted that a critical element to the generation of the celebration of more sacraments, is the generation of more parishioners. We believe that hosting more social events will attract more people to the parish, and more people in the parish means more sacraments. Finally, inviting other parishes to join with us to offer sacramental prep together, such as we have done with our Confirmation preparation in 2017 and 2020, increases the visibility of the parish and can lead to more people joining the parish.

We continue to value liturgical movement and the visible presence of women on the altar.

Initiative A: Celebration of Sacraments

Implementation Summary:

People: Deanna Tighe - lead

Vitality: High

Constraints: None

Time Considerations: This year

Recommendations:

- Action A (Deanna Tighe) - Organize and host more social activities, inclusion of L'Arche core members as EMs, greeters, and bringing up gifts. Focus on finding ways to increase comfort in communicating with people who communicate differently
- Action B (Betsey Beckman) - Continue to engage in liturgical movement
- Action C (Dennis Kelly) - Increase visible presence of women on the altar
- Action D (Deanna Tighe) - Share sacramental preparation and liturgies with other parishes and schools

CATEGORY 4: Faith Formation and Spiritual and Prayer Support

What does love require? To serve as a beacon of light to those seeking wisdom to love with Christ's love, it is necessary for St. Patrick parish to have programs that support individual and communal faith development. Prior to staff transition and COVID 19, our community had formal programs scheduled through the church, as well as informal groups scheduled by individual parishioners. With the staff changes and COVID 19 in the past two years, offerings for adults have included a few online events (LGBTQIA+, racial equity awareness, and movies about social justice and church history). Previous informal activities have included groups such as Greg Speltz' study of "Joy of the Gospel", but these were not publicized or available to the community at large. With onset of COVID 19, our children's faith development program has been "on hold". Faith development endeavors and spiritual direction are critical elements necessary for St. Patrick parishioners/parish to continue to thrive. Now is the time to discern the direction to which Holy Spirit summons us.

Initiative A: Faith Formation – Adults

Ongoing formation in faith for adults has been an integral part of the life of the parish. With an ever-changing world, it is important that adults understand how their faith helps them navigate through the many questions, concerns and challenges. In addition, inviting adults to a deeper relationship with God and appreciation of their Catholic faith is a crucial task for building a vibrant, compassionate and active community of faith. Continuing and expanding the online opportunities for faith formation which have been offered in these COVID times may be a new avenue to explore for the future.

Implementation Summary:

People: Request leadership from those familiar with Joy of the Gospel (such as from Greg Speltz' group; possibly Tim Brunk, or someone else). Use DVD that is available.

Vitality: High (also important connection with institutional church)

Constraints: Many activities can be carried out online, but those lacking access will not be included.

Consider “hybrid” once able to access Paddy's place. Will Faith Formation activities pre-empt Wednesday movies? Scheduling conflicts need to be considered and parties consulted to make intentional decisions about what is best.

Time Considerations: Since a program has already been planned on our behalf for lent, consider it as an Easter program.

Recommendations:

- 2021 Action A (Lead JoAn Choi; PC Liaison: John Farrell) - Generate online Faith Formation classes for adults: Develop plans with the community rather than for the community, such as:
 1. Pope Francis: Joy of the Gospel (DVD via zoom)
 2. Women in ministry, women deacons, divine feminine, language in common prayer
 3. Heal our Church
- 2021 Action B (Lead: Paul Sampson; PC Liaison: John Farrell) - Continue Paul Sampson's Wednesday Movie nights with church history and/or social justice themes.
- Action C (TBD) - Contact Tim Brunk for input regarding his offer for teaching of Church history or another topic. Query community members regarding themes and timing.
- 2021 Action D (Lead: JoAn Choi/Lisa Dennison; PC Liaison: John Farrell) - Continue offering Race and Equity education such as: 21-Day Ignatian Racial Equity Challenge from Ignatian Solidarity Network

Initiative B: Spiritual and Prayer Support

See how they love one another! None of us will thrive on our own, and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The community provides spiritual support to members and others through individual and communal events that deepen our love of God and our love for one another. This initiative addresses Culture of Encounter from an internal parish perspective. It reflects recognition that our members ground themselves in personal spirituality, work together to build a strong faith

community, and are better guided to apply our vitality by reaching out, building friendships beyond our circle, and engaging people on the peripheries, the most poor and vulnerable, migrants, and refugees.

Implementation Summary:

People: Trained ministers such as lay spiritual directors for some situations, volunteer lay leadership for others such as “prayer chains”.

Vitality Index: High

Constraints: Financial resources to compensate leaders.

Time Considerations: High; Scheduled according to situations and needs

Recommendations:

- Action A (Eileen Murphy) - Continue and publicize grief support group. Provide individual and communal spiritual direction for those in need.
- Action B (TBD) - Schedule *Women's retreat, with virtual contingency if pandemic persists. Can JoAn and Lisa set this up?
- 2021 Action C (Lead: Lisa Dennison/Deanna Teague; PC Liaison: John Farrell): Continue with Encountering God program

Initiative C: Faith Formation – Youth and Children

A vibrant faith formation program for children and youth has been a priority for the St. Patrick community over the years. Re-establishing a program that takes into considerations the dynamics of modern family life will ensure our commitment to the growth of faith for our young people. To do this with intention requires a staff person (now Deanna) working with parents to develop a plan that provides formation in the Catholic faith on a regular basis. Such a program would include sacrament preparation as well as creating opportunities for involvement in liturgy and outreach ministry.

Implementation Summary:

People: Deanna and a new hire

Vitality Index: High

Constraints: Needs leaders and other volunteers, needs resource to hire youth minister.

Time Considerations: without delay

Recommendations:

- 2012 Action A (Lead: JoAn Choi; PC Liaison: John Farrell) - Rekindle/expand or generate online (during COVID) and/or in-person Faith Formation program for young children
- Action B (TBD) - Reach out to families that have their kids baptized at St. Patrick, inviting them to Catechesis program
- Action C (Dennis Kelly) - Hire middle school and high school youth & young adult minister to work on programming, events, service projects, vision of parish youth program

CATEGORY 5: Communication

We recognize that communication is a critical element to increasing St. Patrick's visibility, and vitality as a Vatican II parish. St. Patrick's communication platform aims to promote parish activities by deploying three distinct planks:

1. Internal Information: Encouraging transparent internal information about parish business, news, liturgy information, special events, ministry programs, activities and sacraments
2. External Information: External communication aims to promote St. Patrick internal information to key external audiences or groups.

We also encourage St. Patrick parishioners to promote parish information via word-of-mouth to friends, associates and neighbors.

Initiative A: Internal Communication

Our best advocates are our current core group of parishioners, but they need ongoing current information to spread the word about St. Patrick. These advocates should be encouraged to promote the mission of St. Patrick whenever and however fits within their comfort zone.

The new website for St. Patrick (www.stpatrickseattle.org) will serve as the communications platform or "mother ship" for information about the parish. The home should serve as the 'front page' for the parish with news and views everyone can use! Online social media outreach will all circle back to the website where more information can be found, as well as volunteer opportunities for special projects.

The website home page will become a bulletin board or 'front page' with links 'for more information' about current events, outreach & volunteer opportunities, liturgical information & archive.

Implementation Summary:

People: Staff update parish calendar, communications action team

Vitality: High

Constraints: None

Time Considerations: Update the website front page weekly

Recommendations:

- 2021 Action A (Lead: Kim and Tom Stege; PC Liaison: Kim Stege): Ensure that website is accessible and updated

Initiative B: External Communication

Conventional press releases, advertising/notices coupled with robust social media outreach aims to promote St. Patrick church to groups beyond our current core parish community. Primary communication would be about events, special programs we are doing to encourage people to join, and volunteer opportunities. We have opened the door to LGBTQIA+, youth, 98102/98115 neighbors, and we plan outreach going forward with divorced Catholics, those seeking a spiritual home, alcoholics anonymous and those with special needs.

There is need to establish a communications group to develop posts (sourced from the St. Pat's calendar) aimed at 98102 online forums, Seattle Gay News and directing visitors to the new St. Patrick website for more information, how to volunteer and how to join parish initiatives supporting those suffering on the peripheries and the Sacred Encounters ministry.

Implementation Summary:

People: Staff calendar updates provide content for contacts & posts, communications action team: Kim, Pete, Sandi, Sharie, Betsey, Kathy

Vitality: High

Constraints: None

Time Considerations: Bi-weekly

Recommendations:

- 2021 Action A (Lead: Pete Dulaney; PC Liaison: Rosa Allen) - Promote and advertise events from the Parish calendar: communications action team creates 'posts' that are repurposed across all external communications channels:
 - Weekly parish bulletin to all parishioners (forwardable to others)
 - 98102/98115 online forums including "Next Door", meetup.com
 - St. Patrick's Facebook page: photos, posts
 - Outreach to Seattle Times 'Sketcher' to sketch the church, labyrinth garden
 - Write a short piece about St. Patrick's for the Seattle Times
- 2021 Action B (Lead: Pete DeLaunay; PC Liaison: Rosa Allen) - Open Facebook for our online mass - Facebook page is limited, the door to our church seems closed.
- 2021 Action C (Lead: Pete DeLaunay/Kathy Shea; PC Liaison: Rosa Allen) - Publicize the events/initiatives/programs to surrounding communities such as collecting socks for the homeless, desserts for Josephinum, meals for Noel House
- Action D (TBD) - Advertise Liturgical Movement as a Youth Ministry opportunity
- Action E (TBD) - Implement Jennifer Kelly's idea of L'Arche Videos advertising St. Patrick
- NW catholic magazine ad for our ministries, interpreted Mass, making videos of the deaf community
- Action F (TBD) - Engage in more outreach opportunities, many people don't know what we are doing, advertising virtual mass
- Action G (TBD) - Welcome unchurched/formerly churched in neighborhood
- Action H (Pete DeLaunay/Kathy Shea) - Outreach to LGBTQIA+ community through Seattle Gay News by running ads and providing articles - possibly using some excerpts from Fr. James Martin's book, Building A Bridge We have been invited to submit articles to Seattle Gay News that could focus on liturgy
- Action I (TBD) - Promote ASL interpreted mass – we are the only church in Seattle

CATEGORY 6: Operations

The Operations category comprises supporting elements that enable our other focal areas. Synod participants have suggested potential opportunities to enhance our use of facilities, improve our infrastructure to support both staff and ministries, and to clarify our responsibilities and decision-making in context of our joint parish relationship with COH.

Initiative A: Operations – Facilities, Infrastructure and Financial Stability

To clarify responsibilities and decision-making processes, we suggest a short-term committee comprising St. Patrick and Christ Our Hope staff and select Ministry heads meet and review/define and better document roles and approval processes. Additionally, this effort will look for possible expense reductions and initiate a process to understand reasons for parishioner departures.

We have three lightly used facilities. To enhance use of these we suggest engaging an external consultant to assess them for potential additional uses consistent with Archdiocesan guidelines and within the constraints of zoning and land use regulations. Along with identifying these opportunities, upgrades to meet associated codes will be defined, as well as a process to engage the Roanoke Community Council and neighbors. Uses within existing guidelines are currently being pursued with Seattle Prep and Northwest Child.

Depending on the above outcomes, a plan should be developed to upgrade our aging technology to enable increased staff on-site presence and security, enhance technical capabilities to reach staff and parishioners and improve record-keeping and general efficiency, perhaps leveraging Christ Our Hope infrastructure.

Implementation Summary:

People: Staff and select Ministry Heads; external religious property-use consultant

Vitality: Supporting

Constraints: Compliance with zoning/property use regulations, Roanoke Community covenants, funding for renovations, as required.

Time Considerations: Immediate, consistent with Covid-19 constraints.

Recommendations:

Action A (Lead: Mary Ellen O’Keefe/Peggy O’Brien-Murphy; PC Liaison: Mary Ellen O’Keefe) - Confer with staff, ministries, organizers to clarify how we go about decision-making regarding parish events. Who holds authority to decide about the big picture? Who holds responsibility for overall organizing? A committee is needed.

- 2021: Action B (Lead: Peggy O’Brien-Murphy; PC Liaison Mary Ellen O’Keefe) - Determine boundaries for facility use.
- Action C (Pete DeLaunay) - Engage Kidder Mathews Religious & Educational Facilities group perform assessment of facilities.
- 2021 Action D (Lead: Mike Wagner/Emilio Marasco; PC Liaison: Mary Ellen O’Keefe) - Invest in infrastructure in order to have a physical presence of staff at St. Patrick parish office.
- 2021 Action D1 (Lead: Sandi Tennyson; PC Liaison: Mary Ellen O’Keefe) -- Help parishioners or other community members, who do not have what they need to connect to the internet,

receive what they need to do so, whether it be a device, training, and/or monthly internet service.

- Action E (TBD) - Clarify staff roles - how are responsibilities distributed between the two parishes?
- Action F (Mary Ellen O’Keefe) - Initiate exit interviews to identify reason for parishioners leaving the parish.
- Action G (Finance Council) - Reduce Expenses
- 2021 Action H (Lead: Dennis Kelly/Mike Wagner; PC Liaison: Mary Ellen O’Keefe) – Seek additional revenue through expanded use of existing facilities