

June 13 Listening Session - A Report back from the Advocates

On June 13th we gathered as a community for the advocates to provide an update on the archdiocese' plans for St Pats and to hear thoughts and ideas from the St. Pats community.

Breakout Groups included the voices of approximately 70 parishioners, who were invited to share thoughts and visions for our community. As promised, the advocates recorded and reviewed all of the heartfelt statements and ideas that were shared. This will help to inform us as we move forward both in our conversations with the archdiocese and considerations of our next steps as a parish.

Following are the THEMES that we heard:

- A majority expressed that they did not feel heard by the archdiocese. This was expressed in terms such as “disheartened”, “feeling dismissed”, “angry”, and “unheard”
- The importance of the community and staying together was emphasized over and over, noting that “The Community” includes the entire community as one, and not the separate communities that the archdiocese indicates.
- The most frequently mentioned preferred option for going forward was to continue to be paired with Christ our Hope
- Merging with another parish was not a popular option. Quite a few people asserted that they did NOT want to merge with another parish. The most frequently mentioned permutation on a merger was being a mission of St. Joe's.
- A variety of approaches to “fighting back” were suggested by a few people, each including coordination with other targeted parishes, a protest at the archdiocese, and hiring a canon lawyer. Use of media was the most often cited approach.
- A number of alternatives were also suggested, each by a few people including creating our own church, a Future Church model (liturgy of the word together, faith sharing), and pairing with another non-Catholic congregation.

What's next – Deacon Dennis is meeting for a discussion with the Archbishop on July 13, which was scheduled after Deacon Dennis and Fr. Bryan indicated their interest in a letter to Archbishop Etienne in continuing with St. Pats and Christ our Hope for another three years. Once the outcome of that conversation is known, the Advocates will gather to discuss next steps. We ask everyone to pray and to continue envisioning how we continue to move forward as a community.