

Presenters' Notes - St, Patrick Advocates to Archbishop Etienne 4-45-22

Slide 3

INTRO

I have the privilege of beginning our presentation by quickly introducing the loving and diverse St Patrick community. A parish that engages the faithful in liturgy, has strong lay leadership, embodies faithful stewardship, and forms disciples

I will be brief to leave room for multiple voices as is our practice.

Welcoming – if you had an opportunity to view the sharing of our community with Bishop Muggenborg you will have heard about St Pat's charism of welcome

- HH with children with disability and some young people themselves welcomed and embraced
- Single people who have experienced invisibility feel seen
- Immigrants feel welcome

Community – not just people who sit next to one another on Sunday morning

Liturgy – central to our community

- Celebration of our relationship with God and one another
- Is not just something you attend, but something you participate in

Peace and justice in the broader world

- People
- The earth

Inspired by Vatican II and endeavor to be church as called by Pope Francis

Slide 4

We received the Parish Toolkit in the course of this process

We believe it was mischaracterization

- provided feedback that we hope you had an opportunity to read and absorb

We have heard that we are small

An injustice to conflate our faith community's size with a perceived lack of vibrancy and vitality.

Advocates implemented a Survey as part of our process to hear from the entire community

In part it asked about community members' relationship to and involvement in the community

- Extremely high level of involvement in the parish
- Very high level of involvement in worship
- High Level of Involvement in outreach beyond our walls
 - o preparing meals for a homeless shelter
 - o Sister parish
 - o Faithful citizenship
 - o Sacred encounters with people experiencing homelessness

Slide 5

Engages the faithful in liturgy

creative and inspiring Liturgies are enhanced by music and sacred movement

True celebration of the mass and sacraments

- you yourself experienced Archbishop when you joined us for confirmation

Full participation by congregation

Survey 73% somewhat or very involved in one or more of the Worship ministries

- Music ministry
- Sacred movement – engaging and involving the children
- Setting the Environment
- Baking bread
- Reflections
- Welcoming

Slide 6

Engages the faithful in liturgy (continued)

- ASL Signing
 - By interpreters, which enhances the liturgy for all
 - Signing by the congregation
- Reading, including deaf and children
- Offering and communion distribution including members of the L'arche community

Liturgy as celebration in which all actively participate

Slide 7

Enjoys Committed and experienced Lay Leadership

- developed through our history of working with pastoral coordinators

Active and engaged councils

- Parish Council working with pastor on the overall life of the church
- Finance council
- Liturgy Committee
 - All elements of Liturgy

Lay-led Initiatives -

- Discernment to be a sanctuary church transitioning to sister parish,
- care for creation team – our own parish facilities, grounds and behaviors
- noel house ministry and meals for a homeless shelter
- Social Justice Committee - educating ourselves, letter writing, advocacy

Slide 8

Lay Leadership

Faith Formation –

- children, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd
- youth ministry, involving youth in St Patrick community and the broader world
- adult faith formation – study, discussion, and prayer

Synodal Church – have intentionally gathered to collectively discern – listening and discussing issues together with the goal of hearing where the Holy Spirit is calling us

2004 – new Pastor; \$50,000 debt; unclear identity

- o 150 parishioners; 26 workshops; 8 primary outcomes
- o Community resolved debt in three years without budget cuts
- o Affirmed our identity as a parish endeavoring to live out the renewal of Vatican II fully and with enthusiasm

2008 – Reviewing, Evaluating and reinvigorating 2004 process

2020– Gathered again to see how we could grow

- o 140 parishioners, 150 ideas, 13 initiatives. 10 approved 2021 projects
- o Inspiring example of productive clergy-lay mission partnership
- o Evidence of the advanced Culture of Evangelism within our community

2021 – 2023 – Actively implementing and participating in Pope Francis’ global synodal process on Communion, Participation and Mission

- small group gatherings; individual conversations; written responses

Lead by lay members of the community

Slide 9

Faithful Stewardship

we are **financially stable** and sustainable

- Balanced budgets; we carry no debt
- Reserves for Capital Recovery;
- No Deferred Maintenance
- Generous Household Giving
- Finance council

Grounds and Buildings

- **major upgrades and enhancements** have made it a warm and inviting worship space (baptismal font, elevator, Paddy’s Place social hall, upgraded sound system, reconfigured pews for better access by deaf and developmentally disabled, labyrinth, ...)
- self-maintained by our extraordinary facilities “Posse”

Liturgical environment

Slide 10

Forms Disciples

Mission Driven: To see and be Christ in the world

we attract and form **disciples** for community outreach ministries based in faith

- Culture of Encounter and commitment to service, particularly for those most in need
- Active St Vincent de Paul
- Sister parish relationship with El Salvador for 30 years

- Noel house
- mobilizing Laudato Si Climate Justice dialogues

Life-long Faith Formation and Development Programs for our community

- Catechesis of the Good Shepard through youth and adult ed
- Rich Community Life for our relationships
- Liturgical and sacramental emphasis

Faithful Citizenship – engaging in the world for social, racial and environmental justice

- framed by Catholic Social Teachings, and the words of Pope Francis

66% of responders were somewhat or very involved in one or more of our many Outreach ministries.

We continue to grow in faith, and have grown in numbers during Covid

Slide 11

A parish that engages the faithful in liturgy, has strong lay leadership, embodies faithful stewardship, and forms disciples

A parish with openness and Creativity

We recognize our shared responsibility for the life of the Church and the spread of the Gospel and are a community prepared and able to be partners in the gospel with the archdiocese as together we consider necessary new models for the future

Slide 12:

- You have just been given a picture of the community of St Patrick Church that shows it to be a faith-filled, welcoming community that is undeniably vibrant, with creative liturgies and evangelism across its many active ministries.
- Since the announcement of the Strategic Planning decision to merge our parish with another, we have been asking, How does closure/merger of St. Pat's benefit the Archdiocese?
- Following are some of the mission and goal statements communicated to us as underlying the decisions for parish closure or merger.

Slide 13:

- But ... We have received no explanation ...
- We want to take note of the *2013 Procedural Guidelines for Modification of Parishes* which states...
- You will hear from individual advocates on what closure would mean for them and the community.

Slide 14:

- We believe that "The loss of parishioners ...
- The many people committed to issues of social justice and care for creation will carry their commitment elsewhere, but the synergy of the people together in our community amplifies these commitments.

Slide 15:

We know that the Archdiocese is aware of our consideration of a possible canon law appeal – something we very much hope to avoid.

We also acknowledge also that the Archdiocese is well-aware of the elements of canon law and guidance from the Vatican regarding modifications of parishes. We want to briefly review a few key points that we consider fundamental to our objection to closure. These come from the two important guidance documents from Rome that you are all familiar with:

- **PG 2013:** Congregation of the Clergy, Procedural Guidelines for the Modification of Parishes, the Closure or Relegation of Churches to Profane but not Sordid Use, and the Alienation of the Same
 - **Instruction 2020:** Instruction "The pastoral conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelizing mission of the Church", of the Congregation for the Clergy
- We acknowledge that the Archdiocese can, and should, consider the welfare of the Archdiocese in considering the modification of parishes.
 - However, based on our presentation to this point, we believe that ...

Slide 16:

- We wish to also comment on consultation with the Presbyteral Council. According to the 2013 Procedural Guidelines ...

Slide 17

- Good morning, it is my opportunity now to focus on the future of St Patrick Parish.
 - Hopefully, you have a better idea of our community and the many ways that we contribute to parish vitality, particularly with regard to your criteria for creativity, flexibility, and openness in the areas of:
 - liturgy, lay leadership, stewardship, discipleship, evangelization, pastoral support
 - By extension, our contributions also demonstrate a commitment to Archdiocesan mission and goals, yet we have received no explanation of specific deficiencies that would warrant closure.
 - we have shared some of the impacts that closure would have on the faithful in our parish as well as for the Archdiocese and have no tangible idea of what benefits would accrue to either of us.
 - we have also reviewed how Canon Law figures into our options
-
- We cannot explain how after one year there are so many unanswered questions. If the strategic planning process is intended to create faith-filled parish communities, we would have hoped that it would have opened new doors for engagement. That is why we are so grateful to have this opportunity to share our story with you in person.

Our strong belief is that St Patrick has the resources, the will, and the charism to sustain our parish and support the Archdiocese

We are confident that if we can work together with flexibility and missionary creativity we will discover practical solutions for our parish and provide a beacon of hope for other parishes in the Archdiocese as well

Slide 18

Summary:

- we have been inspired by your recent article and identify our aspirations with your intentions
- we have a history of working as a community to build the mission of our church
 - our synods are clear examples of how we have surmounted significant obstacles through leadership, ownership, and creativity
 - working more closely together we can surely amplify the rewards
- Is it too much to imagine St Patrick as a partner parish in its design and implementation?

This concludes our formal presentation.

Slide 19

Personal reflections from Advocates on what the church closure means for them and the community

Slide 20

“Shine On Us” video created by the St Patrick Church choir with gratitude to the

- L’Arche Community
- Coffee Hour Community
- Encountering God Community
- Deaf Community & ASL Interpreters
- St Patrick parishioners near and far!