

Page One of this document contains the synthesis of all notes taken at the two listening sessions the Parish held on Partners in the Gospel. Pages Two-14 contain all notes from the listening sessions combined into one document which was sent to the Archdiocese.

## **Facilitator's summary of main concerns and hopes of SJV parishioners**

Partners in the Gospel Listening Sessions, Sept 30, Oct 8, 2023

*Approximately 70 parishioners participated in the two listening sessions. The main concerns and hopes are listed in order of the number of times they were expressed by participants. The full notes on which the lists are based can be found under the "SJV Partners in the Gospel Responses" link on the SJV parish website.*

*John McCoy, facilitator*

### **Concerns and Challenges:**

- 1) *The overwhelming concern was that Vashon's geographic isolation, the ferries, and travel time make joining an off-island parish family very difficult.*** Vashon has no bridge to the mainland. Ferries are unreliable and expensive. Travel is time consuming, 5-6 hours roundtrip to attend Mass off island. A big burden, especially for families and the elderly. Regular off-island travel for Mass and church meetings is simply unrealistic. Kitsap residents are unlikely to come here.
- 2) *Loss of a unique, vibrant parish culture.*** For many of us, SJV is our community. Without Mass, sacraments, and parish activities (daily Mass, rosary, Bible study, youth group, St. Vincent de Paul, wood crew, Salmon Bake, etc.) we lose our faith and social life. Our Catholic culture is not like Kitsap's.
- 3) *No resident priest.*** Without one, fewer Masses, sacraments, funerals, functions. No regular Eucharistic presence.
- 4) *Finances.*** Subsidizing other parishes, especially their schools, when SJV is financially sound is risky.

### **Hopes and Opportunities:**

- 1) *The biggest hope is that listening session feedback will convince the archdiocese to let SJV continue as a stand-alone parish.*** We're unique.
- 2) *A larger parish family*** does present opportunity for different homilists, new activities, new faith and social relationships, more inclusion, and shared resources.
- 3) *Address the priest shortage:*** Revive the diaconate program for men and women. Ordain women and married men. Recruit second career lay people to be church leaders.
- 4) *Share SJV's uniqueness with the broader Vashon and archdiocesan community.*** Work with other island churches (our common ground is Christ). Emphasize lay-lead leadership. Demonstrate viability and growth. Initiate a *Welcome Back Catholics program* to renew membership and evangelize.

## **St. John Vianney Parish - Partners in the Gospel Listening Sessions**

### **Round One**

**What concerns do I have about the proposed family grouping?**

**What challenges might this pose?**

I have many questions. Finances—how will that affect us? It is good all four in the proposed parish family are stable.

Resident Priest is so important—we have a bad history.

Logistics are hard for a traveling priest! A parochial vicar is ok for SJV.

One Mass only on weekends???

Holy Days—will we celebrate?? With one Mass or two? (Two needed for working parishioners)

Ferries are a major concern

Means a one-hour wait for a Mass with more unknowns on ferry service

I love the Vigil Mass—don't want SJV to lose that

With a resident priest, we will be a cluster (family) in name only.

Standalone status should be considered strongly.

Finances—where does our money go? If another parish is more zealous about Annual Giving, will we suffer?

How will the parish family function? Especially with FF—we struggled to have one here.

The Salmon Bake and Italian Dinner—our parish traditions—will they continue?

### **COMMUTE**

Finances—we are stable. If we are joined with a parish with less stability, I don't like that.

Our closeness and camaraderie—so strong at SJV. I don't want to lose that.

I have the same concerns as stated above.

Ferries mean \$\$\$\$ & time & unreliable schedule.

For Seniors it is very hard to get off the island

For families, big costs! And a ferry commute.

Our staff and facilities are currently bare bones—can we keep even those?

Will we be financially able to maintain the facility

Our \$\$\$ going to an off-island school

Resident Priest great! Huge! How long will that last?

Next 3-5 years, probably no change, but then with the priest crunch, a resident priest will change.

If we MUST be put into a family, Family #53 with Gig Harbor, Port Orchard and Belfair makes sense! I lived in Kitsap County over 15 years and have commuted to and from Kitsap County and Seattle on the ferries for over 20 years. Southworth ferry is the quickest and most reliable ferry for Vashon. We are rural like the peninsula and have more in common with them than with West Seattle with their big churches both with big schools. We are not an urban community like Seattle or Tacoma.

The reliance on WSF makes it impossible for SJV parishioners to gain any of the promised improvements of a Partners in the Gospel Parish Family. We parishioners here on an island will never go to off island parish events as it is too expensive and time consuming with ferry waits in both directions, plus the absolute unreliability of the ferry schedule.

The impossibility of churches mixing via the ferry is even truer of the other churches in the parish family. They will NEVER come to Vashon. Same bad schedule and long waits as for us, plus their tickets are even more expensive.

There is no good match for one small bridge-less island church—our finances, administration, and Masses and pastor need to remain untied to the surrounding parishes that are so dissimilar to our Catholic life as a wonderful family at SJV.

As there are NO BENEFITS for SJV to join Parish Family 53, we should be Family 62 - we are asking that we be left as a standalone parish as was allowed for many other parishes that are not combinable, just as we are not. We as the other standalones are to be given a pastor.

I really don't see being put into a family as working for our parish because of our geography. We are already vibrant and very self-sufficient. We are involved with our ministry to the greater Vashon community – doing God's work through our ministries and our finances. We have operated in the black for decades and have no debt. Leave us alone and don't make things more complicated for us.

We need to be purposeful about where we go. Ferry wise it is hardest to go west: 1st choice is to join a Seattle Family, 2nd choice is to Tacoma, 3rd choice is the Kitsap Peninsula

Probably we will have to be in a Parish Family, but we hope that we could negotiate the 12% deanery/parish family tax so that we would not have to support Catholic schools.

No one will leave the island for Mass as long as we have a priest. Nor go off island for FF or Youth Group events—it means four hours of travel to go to an event.

No one can do off island social stuff.

A resident priest will not be forever. Why would the Archdiocese put a priest here when we are so tiny? We have to be realistic—we are too small to keep a priest.

A new rectory—should we take it on as it's a financial burden.

Catholic schools—should we have to prop up a Catholic school with so many non-Catholic students.

Have already experienced a traveling priest in another parish—one Mass a weekend, priest drove an hour.

Ultimately at SJV we will be w/o a priest.

We need a diaconate program, and need to encourage that pipeline—for emergency sacraments and Communion services. We have to push for this.

I think our small community is our strength! That will be lost if we have to combine with *multiple* large churches that we have to take an unreliable ferry ride to get to. We're small yet roll like a large family. I've never been a part of such a vibrant parish like ours. We are a leader in the Vashon community and are heavily involved in caring for the poor on the Island with our St. Vincent de Paul Society, our Firewood Ministry and Backpack Pantry. I don't see people from the other churches ever paying for a ferry ticket and taking hours out of their day to come chop and stack wood or stuff lunchbags for people on Vashon and I'm not going to pay to go help with their ministries when we have our own here.

Concerned about one priest for four parishes and one or two others – where are the priests stationed? – if off-island there is no availability for emergency needs

Concerned about the SJV grouping – 80% of islanders commute to Seattle and vicinity and the majority of SJV parishioners do not have conservative catholic views – the proposed parishes to partner with are in Pierce and Kitsap counties – they have conservative views, we see the church differently – the plan that SJV could become partners with conservative groups will not work – our (SJV) culture is too different and it will be too difficult to find common ground

Agree with the speaker just before me – the urban vs rural culture will not be successful and FERRIES! – Southworth service and schedule is deplorable - challenge to be, stay committed Catholics if the “king” parish in Gig Harbor becomes questionable – SJV is currently an aging parish – need access to the last rites when needed and the demand to travel off-island is not reasonable

What problem is the archdiocese trying to solve? Too few parishioners? Too few priests? – answer is both – it is likely parishioners and priests will continue to decrease – as this happens, if SJV is without a priest people will likely go to another church on-island or not go at all – cannot rely on a priest getting to the island in time, cannot rely on me getting off-island to a different church in time

Concerned the archdiocese overlooked the transportation issue – it is not just an hour to each of these parishes – it will be at least 3 hours travel time if a ferry is running at a time needed to get to a mass - you have to be in a ferry line 1/2 hour early – it will be a 5 to 6 hours round trip to attend mass elsewhere – there's an additional financial burden – ferry fare is now \$24.50 for a couple roundtrip plus mileage – people are just not going to do it – it will eventually destroy our parish – the ONLY option is for SJV to remain a stand-alone parish – (presented statistics about the diocese) – and what about, faith formation? Christmas and Easter? Sacraments? – the ONLY thing to do, SJV must insist we stay a separate, stand-alone parish

It comes down to reducing the number of older parishioners who will not travel across the water – parishes are about families – the archdiocesan plan does not support family – this will lead to more leaving the church – inevitable decline – seem odd to have this listening session

I think SJV needs to be left on its own. We're an ISLAND! It's not feasible to come together with other churches on the mainland to form one new parish – too much time and money for everybody. But if we have to be in a family with other churches, I understand why we are grouped with the peninsula - they are rural like we are and it actually is the shortest ferry ride.

50% of those that could have become priests were eliminated by priests with the abuse scandal – also a significant number of younger people are leaving the church – it is an inevitable decline

Concern is TRAVEL – the amount of time and costs to go off-island is why this won't work

The archdiocese is treating a symptom with this plan and not fixing the CAUSE – all of you with life experience, especially work experience, know that treating a symptom does not resolve the issue/problem and can make it worse, that's why partners in the gospel will not work

I don't see parishioners from the mainland coming to Vashon for any events, meetings or Mass, or to participate in our ministries much, if at all; and I don't see our parishioners traveling off Island to attend or go to events at any other parishes. We are different because we are an island – it's a different culture!

We are an aging parish. A lot of our senior citizens are not going to be able to participate in any activities off Island. The Southworth ferry has fewer runs, large gaps and it's quite an effort in time and money to travel to the peninsula.

Time spent waiting in ferry line, and families with kids in sports won't travel. Individuals and families can choose where to go for Mass. They'll go to Seattle where their family is located or they'll go to Tacoma where they know people or do their shopping. If they can't go to church on Vashon they'll make their own choice about where to go and not necessarily choose to integrate with this new family group.

What is driving this, is it a priest shortage. That is only going to get worse over time. What's the sustainability of this plan to keep reducing parishes without a plan to increase priests? If our mission is to spread the Gospel, we can do a better job here in our own community.

We need data about the merging parishes: their economic situation for example. We need more information to decide or even to discuss this.

My age would stop all activity in the parish for me. I will not abandon my faith but I cannot commute, even if I carpool. There are just too many barriers. We've put a lot of sweat and tears into our own parish. I live alone and the church here is my main social experience. I see people I know. They check in with me and ask how I am doing. This is my life!

I agree with everything that has been said. The ferries are a huge barrier. The solution does not make sense. Loss of parishes is going to drive people to attend a parish of their own choice. I'm going to miss daily Mass, confession women's groups meetings. What about funerals?? Vashon Food Bank, Thanksgiving food baskets, backpack pantry, wood cutting, St Vincent De Paul? Who's going to do these things for Vashon except us? We can't get involved in other communities. There is a lot of need right here.

A lot of us are not going to follow the plan. We will go our own way. Activities here will just stop and we'll lose our connection with each other.

What priest is going to be here when I'm on my deathbed and want my last rites? Will I have to hold on and wait a few hours for somebody to make it over here from some other location on the other side of a ferry ride?

We are not very clear about the path. There's still a church, there's still a parish. We need more information so that we can even imagine what we're talking about.

Too much money; too much time. We are too far away to integrate with these other parishes. It is comparable to asking us to drive 100 miles for Mass when you factor in the value of our time we will spend.

This will diminish our vibrancy. We are a small yet strong parish - we all know each other and we work together to get things done. Becoming a part of a larger parish family is not necessarily better and it definitely won't help us to become more vibrant because we are already vibrant.

I have loyalty to my own parish family. This is breaking us up. I'm too old to do all day trips, add all kinds of time to wait in the ferry line super early so I don't miss Mass due to late or cancelled ferries. 60% of the ferries are late. I will never be able to stay behind for coffee hour with people or get involved in any of the activities (outside of Mass) that take place on the other side of a ferry ride.

I saw a recent survey about the Vashon schools and the kids who come from off Island to come to Vashon schools. It's not working out very well now because the ferries are so unreliable. They're rethinking all of this and the Vashon schools could lose a lot of revenue if they lose these kids because people are deciding not to send their children to Vashon for school.

There are a lot of challenges – the ferries! But we are looking at it from the wrong angle. If there are not enough people coming to Mass, look at why they aren't coming. The Cathedral has a Welcome Back program. My 12 year old niece wrote an essay about wanting more people who look like her at Mass – there needs to be more women running things.

Geographical problems – we are an island – going off island is a major expense and time consuming.

Geography is a problem. The ferry system. Not a lot of parishioners will go off island. The logistics don't work. Other churches may offer things that would benefit our church but the ferry precludes it.

The ferry system. Runs to Southworth are limited. I would go to South Seattle first then Tacoma. Last would be Southworth. Online Mass will go up as people won't commute off.

The ferries are my biggest concern. Traveling to Southworth is the quickest and you never have to wait in a long line for a boat unlike the ferries to Seattle and Tacoma – they can take HOURS and the Tacoma one is sometimes just cancelled for part of the day. But even though it's the quickest, it's still unreliable and expensive. We are used to ferries and people overtown might not be – I think they would think we should always be going to them and I just won't.

The ferry system. Dispersal of community. People might go to other churches not necessarily in our family. Deacons should have a fast track and a way for lay people to address the problem more creatively.

It's unreasonable to get to any off-island event – concerned for the Finance Council & Pastoral Council. Southworth is the least useful. Wrong grouping – the best marriages are complimentary. Holy Family is connected to the world and we are connected to the earth. What happens to our unique real estate if control goes elsewhere? Our parishioners might disperse.

There's a better grouping. We need creative answers – we are here because of priest abuse – we need women leaders and priests. A parish family is great. Empty nesters could have a greater role.

What makes SJV great is our small parish family. On paper it may make sense to put Vashon into a parish family. But in reality, putting Vashon into a family with other parishes is not practical, nor would it help us become more engaged with other Catholics who live on the mainland.

I have been listening for 30 years. There were past predictions of this. We need more priests – does this just continue on with the patriarchy? This will be watered down as we will be doing too much.

Our Catholic community on Vashon is so strong and it's going to be destroyed by this action.

What does this actually mean? There are not enough details. In Seattle more than in Vashon. Imagine the problems - not enough detail. Opinionated people. Problem what can be done, more concern –How to help the global Church? We have to combine somehow - not just say no! Look for solutions - willingness to participate in something. Zoom meeting will allow people to meet on necessary councils. Pastors moving around with ferry could be difficult. Challenge for youth groups - weekends may be necessary for activities.

Biggest concern - priest shortage - change Canon Law – that can be altered.

As an island we need the Blessed Sacrament and a priest here! Feels like we were just thrown into a group - not by choice or opportunity to build a connection.

Ferry concerns are huge!!

Not enough detail to really see what changes would take place. Can't expect a whole Parish to commute - loss of parishioners.

Hard to know what feedback to give - the process is very large - need more details. Concern for priest - lack of numbers. Help to support others. Ferry is a huge concern! Isolation of movement - would not be a central parish.

Collective youth gathering. Zoom meetings are ok. Spiritually - lacking a priest would hurt. Ferry is a concern! Whole Vision - need more detail. Efficiency of going off Island. There will be a loss of parishioners.

How will each church be represented in the parish and finance councils? What becomes of the various ministries at SJV, like the music ministry, St. Vincent de Paul, the wood ministry and backpack pantry?

Financial concerns. Is our church able to support parish schools? What becomes of the ministries like St. Vincent de Paul? Will our church members be able to send children to the parish schools? What provisions will be made given the state of the ferries?

How will money be distributed among the churches in the parish? Also concern on behalf of the priests regarding logistics of serving multiple churches.

Attendance is already down. What will happen in that regard when we have to cross the sound to attend Mass? Concern especially for the spiritual needs of the elderly. The time element makes it very difficult.

Concern that priests will be worn down by having to go on and off the island. Could we ensure our survival by selling property since we have 60 acres? Could that decision be taken away by the new parish structure?

Concern over representation - #5 illustrates that point. Going off-island to attend Mass is a “non-starter.”

Ferry system is becoming less reliable. There is no guarantee of being able to get to Mass on time if it is off-island - applies to parishioners and priests. It is a long time spent getting back and forth. Can't see off-islanders coming here at all for Mass, so it doesn't feel like an even deal. SJV has long and unique traditions. How will our traditions be sustained? With regard for our grouping, it seems easier to walk on the ferry and get to Mass in West Seattle than the car-ride required to get to Port Orchard.

This parishioner spoke about our history, and how decades ago St. Patrick's on Maury was served by Jesuits who traveled onto the island to celebrate Mass there. Will SJV be given priority to have Mass celebrated by our resident priest? Will Fr. David be here or do we lose him?

Time constraint. Mass schedule at SJV needs to remain the same!

Having an admin team off Island - what benefit does that provide?

Stop attending Mass. Catholicism fading from Vashon. Wear and tear on priest. Ferry concern!

Leave SJV alone-remain as efficient as possible

We should not be joined with another Parish family

We need to be a stand-alone Parish

Geographical issues are huge being on an island

Financial concerns - Supporting School costly

Our parish is more accessible -especially with ferry schedule

Who runs the overall Parish family? Mission and vision - cultural differences. Children's education should stay at SJV - choice should be available to families

The ferry system, cost of ferry travel

Greater financial burden for people without a 10 ride ferry ticket, i.e. off Islanders

Isolation - Geographic and Financial

How do we benefit from consolidation of resources if travel poses greater financial burden?

Are we really going to have a priest?

Are we going to have to financially support other churches?

Are we going to be odd community out due to geographic isolation? Will we have a voice on the finance council?

The ferry system is not going to improve anytime soon

This is a Band-Aid solution to a larger systemic issue. We should be empowering women and lay people to serve and minister to our parishes as they are.

Greater burden on families with children and older people with mobility issues

This process is insufficient and there is still confusion among parishioners

How can we remain cohesive as a parish if we are burdened with travel, etc.

How long will we have a resident priest?

Worried the fabric of our unique Community will be gutted by the challenges

This will diminish our Parish Community

How could we conceivably be grouped with these other parishes? This will result in great spiritual cost to our Island

This grouping will make it more difficult for us to bring in new people and act out our Great Commission if there is no Mass to attend on a weekly basis

This will diminish our Parish

I am concerned people will join other churches and support them and not support the Catholic church.

Our outsized presence will diminish the good we do in the community

Unilateral decision being made without our consent and we won't be able to serve our community

What about the Island community suffering

It's not possible that our community will thrive

It will diminish our mission as servants

People will organize on their own outside of Partners in the Gospel

Paying twice to get fractured

Wish this came with a growth plan

We want to receive our sacraments at St. John Vianney – most important!

We need to be a stand-alone parish. Travel with children & elders is difficult mentally, financially, & physically.

Concerned that we will lose more parishioners and not be financially stable.

We need at least one weekday Mass per week and what happens on Holy Days?

Sending children to Catholic schools would be easier in Seattle or Tacoma rather than the peninsula.

What about second career men and women becoming priests and deacons? Or men & women who have lost their spouses?

What have we adults and Church done or not done for our children to further their faith in God?

What is the financial status of the Archdiocese?

Why do children stop going to church after Confirmation or the start of High School?

How would we do fundraisers? Where? Would other churches help? How would the monies be divided?

St. Gabriel's in Port Orchard is a great community. I've been to Mass there before, but I don't really see other parishioners ever going there or interacting with them or others in any parish family.

## **Summaries**

Ferries!!

Finances

Priest shortage

Did you know that Canon Law will be changed to allow priests to celebrate three Sunday masses?

It's clear the Archdiocese didn't consider Vashon's unique situation, being an island parish. Combining resources with other parishes on the mainland is simply impractical, with the ferry and cost to travel

Predicted outcomes for SJV from the partners in the gospel plan and why it won't work

- Travel costs and time

- Resulting decrease in attendance and financial support

- Negative effects upon parishioners and clergy

- Anger is building especially among those that have built the SJV parish

I know where my ferry fare is coming from – right out of the collection plate

I heard a lot of comments about the ferries. The shortest ferry run is 10 minutes to Southworth; 15 minutes to Tacoma and 20 minutes to West Seattle. The ferry line to West Seattle can be atrocious. There is never a line going to Southworth. People who live in Seattle and Tacoma don't really understand what commuting by ferry is like. But some people in Kitsap and everyone on Vashon understand.

The logistics of interfacing with parishes on the other side of a ferry ride are complicated and a huge barrier.

The loss of the desire to be part of the new community, to give to that community, such as corporal works of Mercy, helping at funerals getting involved in charitable activities in a new community.



Our continued relationship with God will survive but we won't be able to connect in any meaningful way, with new people and we'd lose opportunities to connect with the people in our own community.

We are an Island parish accessible only by ferry, we should be left as a stand-alone parish. The ferries are too expensive and unpredictable!

Representation and concerns over allocation of finances.

Being made part of a new cluster won't work because of the ferries.

Ferry system will be a particular burden for the elderly in time and cost.

Representation issues, concern for older parishioners and approval of comparison to Friday Harbor church.

Ferries. Other parishioners won't come here but we will have to go to them.

If the other churches in the new parish have a Mass on Sunday, SJV should as well.

Division of resources: choir, faith formation, the burden of transportation. Large classes may be hard on children as there are more distractions.

I don't see being a part of a parish family will create new opportunities or possibilities for our parish.

Women should be deacons

Women should be ordained because of the sexual assault by priests

Difficulty seeing how this could possibly work, patriarchy has the money and decision-making power

Geography – we aren't going to mix because of it

Ferry logistics

End of participating

Driven by fewer priests. Approaching the problem in the wrong way.

We will lose people and money.

Ferry System

Wrong grouping

Going off island will reduce our vibrancy & participation

Geographically impossible for seniors.

What happens in an emergency?

Huge ferry concerns!

Geographical problems and concerns

Keep Blessed Sacrament on the island

Lack of community connection with other selected parishes - SJV should remain stand alone

Zoom meeting for Council is possible

Children need to be physically connected with each other for classes or sacrament prep

Fellowship would change if things are changed

Fracturing of our Parish community, impact on our larger community and disenfranchisement

Ferry will disperse our Parish family and we will lose financial support of our community members.

Fracturing of our community

Naive to think we will have long-term investment from Archdiocese

Decreased engagement

The parish will disband on its not own, not the designated ones and people will stop giving all together.

The Archdiocese will lose this church!

Ferries, ferries, ferries

Easier to get to Seattle than to Gig Harbor

We should be focusing on evangelization - mission of local help and support to grow the church, seminarian/Youth—boys

What will happen to our relationships with one another on this wonderful island?

## **Round Two**

**What hopes do I see in the proposed family grouping?**

**What opportunities or possibilities might this offer?**

My hopes are for the Archdiocese to understand what this will do to us as an island and let us remain stand-alone.

I don't see much hope in our parish coming together with any parishes on the mainland to form a new parish.

If this happens I hope we could do the Welcome Back program so people come back and stop leaving. We need outreach to bring us all together. Make sure women are involved – especially with young children

I have no hope – I see nothing coming from this.

I don't see any hope in this grouping. I don't think it will work – it will move online. I can understand the Archdiocese wanting to do this – it could work in other areas but we are an island.

I don't see any possibility of success. Maybe with city kids to mix them with ours kids. I don't see people coming here. Married priests – it's been done before. Do what you have done before that has worked.

Our land is a strength – not sure if the family would take advantage of it – afraid it will be sold off rather than used.

Hope to see a Pastor assign a Parochial Vicar to Vashon to be freed of admin responsibilities to focus on local outreach. St. Nicholas is a fabulous community of young families – they have capacity to draw out ideas and the scale of leadership. Prince of Peace has worship in Spanish – run by lay people – good model. It would be nice to hear from different priests in rotation.

I hope we would gain more people – we could have great things and share more – especially with urban parishes. Get all our gifts together to problem solve – hopefully regarding outreach, leadership and bringing community in.

It's an opportunity to be engaged in how church will look, inclusivity. An opportunity to grow spiritually. I hope for a maturing. Get rid of the patriarchy.

My preference is that we be a standalone parish.

We are not hopeful.

We could help others be financially solvent.

We could show how to teach community—bring our special SJVness to share with others.

It will be a bunch of Catholics—positive things will happen.

Resident priest—our local group will stay together.

Other churches come to SJV—show off our community (also show how the WSF works!)

It could work—if positive all around. Something could click.

Diaconate program

Encountering then benefit of spiritual renewal by attending other churches.

I like the idea of a family, that we are being pulled into one-ness and awareness of world-wide Catholicism.

Faith that all will work out to the benefit of SJV parishioners.

The school at St. Nicholas is K-8. Car-pooling could probably make it accessible to our kids.

Other churches are interesting (but this leads back to concern over our special needs and interests). Growth into a larger family is both an opportunity and a challenge.

New social relationships are good. The chance to experience a different priest/vicar and their presentation/method/approach to Mass, theology etc. is good.

No hope for the future of SJV with the new parish grouping.

Likes the idea of new cultures/diversity. Sometimes we can have blinders on. Different priests and messages can be invigorating. Expansion of our self-awareness as Catholics.

I like the comparison with the process Pope Francis is going through regarding synods; the church of Western Washington (and SJV) is carrying a similar cross.

We can be inspired and called to do new things because we are in a cluster.

New Catholic friends for all of us. It's a chance to visit other churches and have a connection to them, not just visitors. Perhaps more robust and exciting youth groups and fun for young Catholics.

Matched with a parish family that fits us—Seattle better.

Deacon from SJV - Drive for vocations in the parish

Large youth group/retreat/rally a possibility

More friends/more Catholics/special events

We could be joined with a family but be allowed to be insular.

Peninsula is not a good fit. W. Seattle a better fit—people never go west.

Island is much more connected to Seattle, a second choice parish family direction is south to Tacoma. The Peninsula is the third choice.

We could have a walk on priest—parishioners to pick up. Easier to arrive from Seattle or Tacoma.

Statistics are so negative about the numbers receiving the Sacraments; we need to be putting money into our youth. That is what we need to do as a parish.

The *hope* is that SJV will be a stand-alone parish because it is geographically remote, ferry dependent with ferry service UNRELIABLE, Vashon parishioners are more like Seattle people not those on the peninsula – the plan is bad for SJV

*Opportunities* are none, diocese needs to avoid treating the symptom and treat the disease – *possibilities* are this plan will lead to a steady decline

Reflecting on the word FAMILY in the question, I see this plan and the changes as a breaking-up of the FAMILY

The *hope* is the archdiocese sees/finds more viable solutions

The *opportunity* is small for success, this plan will lead to failure

The *opportunity* is nothing positive, SJV can only lose – SJV is a viable, well supported parish family, the plan will fragment us – transitioning into other parishes will kill this church – people will not travel, it will be the end, ruin of SJV, I feel VIOLATED

I remember experiences with mergers while working – for years after a merger it was a nightmare, if this is forced on SJV it will lead to years of nightmares for us - the management/archdiocese needs to take an OBJECTIVE look at what we are saying – the archdiocese needs to LISTEN

The *hope* is that partners in the gospel will generate this listening, allow priests to be married, women to become priests if called

It was once an honor to become a catholic priest, but not now – people have become skeptical of institutions, medicine and science – the church is the last island of faith and hope for mankind – I have seen much – have life experiences – the common ground is Jesus Christ, I *hope* that partners in the gospel will work, but it won't work for us here

Parishioners will not participate in this plan, there are too many barriers: travel, costs, time, declining health

I have no *hope* that the archdiocese will be open and listen to us – no *hope* that the authoritarian leadership of the church that values OBEDIENCE over any other will do anything other than what it wants to do then tell us that we will go to hell if we do not obey

I see no *opportunities nor positive possibilities* for SJV in this plan

(Note from Notetaker: I have to preface the responses with a comment about the group attitude. There was silence for a time and then there was the general opinion voiced by many people, that they couldn't think of any positives. And then someone said, "Well, we could make up some. In an ideal world there might be positive." But they still contended the positives weren't viable positive outcomes for our Island which relies on the ferry.)

With a larger pool of priests and deacons to share, possibly we could lure our Hispanic community back to "our" church. The majority go to Seattle for a Spanish Mass.

With a larger pool of priests perhaps we could actually have daily Mass, Monday through Friday, but we'd have to travel for that.

We could enjoy varieties of celebrations. Maybe guitar masses, maybe children's masses, different perspectives and homily styles.

Synergy. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Sharing administrations, sharing clerical, sharing best practices, sharing clergy, speakers, Faith formation. BUT

When businesses merge, they investigate very, very carefully because the outcome of a merger is much more than these discrete elements. It's got to be the right fit for the people merging.

I don't see any positives. I'm too old to change.

I won't go along with this.

Sounds like adult CYO; bring more people together and you can do more things.

This may work very perfectly for Gig Harbor for Belfair and for Port Orchard but they're all geographically within a reasonable drive of each other.

Grouping - benefits: More pastoral minds, more resources and ideas, input. Priests need to have other priests to discuss and serve together - help each other.

Helping pastors grow and share because we need them. Share resources - financial - youth speakers, retreats

Three priests helping each other - at least one Mass at SJV offered

Opportunity to incorporate more Hispanic families

See how other parishes handle issues. Combine choirs occasionally to celebrate. Teen music day?

Advantage can be achieved without combining us into another parish

STAND-ALONE PARISH WORKS THE BEST FOR SJV

Could be awesome for the priest - think about what's good for others - join us with universal church, part of a bigger picture

We are not alone - potential for wonderful change

Youth need to be cultivated - opening up to other parishes and other youth programs

The only positive I see is exposing our kids to community beyond our own

The only positive I see is more relationships for teens if they will use the ferry

There could be benefits for teens and young kids seeing more kids in Sacramental prep.

I prefer to go east or south on ferries than west

Perhaps some benefit to going to the desert to find rebirth-perhaps we need to die as a parish in order to live

We might have family faith time on the ferry

There are no positives I see in this

I hope that the Archdiocese will see what a grave mistake they have made should they follow through on grouping us with these other parishes.

We would feel compelled to go to go parish shopping in Seattle and Tacoma.

## Summaries

It really doesn't work. I'd love it if it would, but it's not viable. If the parish were larger, we could do even more – do the Welcome Back program.

What she said.

It's just not going to work.

It's not going to work – I'm willing to try. It took me 20 minutes to get here from my house. I commute enough.

It has intriguing potential but the barriers make it daunting.

I hope we reach out to others. I hope we remain a vibrant parish here. I hope the grouping has gifts to listen and get opportunities for voices to be heard.

I have hope and feel strongly about the parish family increasing outreach, inclusion, priest coverage. Bring on change. I feel hopeful.

There's lots of unknowing. Leaving a lot up to the Archdiocese – making a decision already been made?

Church will survive.

Hope

Times of trial - Resilience

Vocations

Spiritual renewal.

Opportunity for parochial education, different messages and interactions.

We have the opportunity to give others the benefit of what we know.

A married couple (2 voices) agreed that we have the opportunity to create social and spiritual relationships.

This parishioner looks forward to hearing what becomes of our ideas at the Archdiocesan level and whether they make it to Rome.

Education opportunities for children, expansion of our social/spiritual opportunities.

Each parish has a talent - ours is music. The other churches will have talents to share with us.

Do you know that it is 58.5 miles, without considering ferry travel, to travel the loop from SJV to the other parishes and mission?

I think that maybe it will be the council members, administrators, and priest that will do the travelling

It is a burden for us, for other parishes in the partners in the gospel plan and a burden for priests

I hope that a way is found for off-island travel – WSF service is abysmal and the cost of ferry travel is an unbearable burden

This process could be a catalyst for real change and it could be a benefit and opportunity to build an exciting community. We would all have to break out of our habits.

Vashon Island could declare itself a test tube of sorts. See what we can do to make our Parish work, as an individual community, to solve specific issues, rather than merge with other parishes.

I see opportunities for big changes, long-term changes, like women deacons, married priests and women priests.

It just occurred to me, how is this going to impact our summer people (because we have quite a few) and how much support would we have from them?

Priest will have Priestly connection

Change could be good - More resources - Stronger visions

Increase in Hispanic participation

Physical geography is a concern - not just for church/Mass.

Youth need to have greater exposure to other youth groups so they can grow in their faith. Not alone, especially in school.

We see some potential hope in teens for exposure to other teens/increased family time during travel time.