

FALL 2018 PULSE OF THE PARISH NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS
SUMMARY – *PARISH LIFE*
St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, Cincinnati Ohio – Sunday, May 5, 2019

The community of believers was of one heart and mind (Acts 4:32a) ... in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, [may] all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose (I Corinthians 1:10). Becoming a strong, enduring, inclusive Christian community is very hard work – not only for the leaders of communities but also for the members of communities. In our contemporary society, we all know that busy schedules and worthwhile demands are part of most, if not all, lifestyles. And, in recent years, familial structures have changed drastically. Unfortunately, these and other aspects of modern living have contributed to a decline in the centrality of the Catholic parish in the lives of its families. Everyone needs to do all they can to be engaged in the life of the parish not only for themselves but because such witness encourages others to be engaged as well. Personal invitations to get involved in parish ministries, activities and organizations are also indispensable. For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another (Romans 12:4-5).

COMMUNITY

The overwhelming majority of comments about our community is that it is very friendly and very welcoming with a strong sense of belonging and togetherness. But a very prevalent minority opinion is that our parish can be cliquish and exclusive in some areas.

- Feeling connected to St. I's has been easy for some and more difficult for others – seemingly easier when a family has children in our grade school and seemingly more difficult for those without children in our grade school.
- Feeling connected is often difficult because of the size of the parish, especially for newer members.
- We need more social activities (including family-oriented and children-focused, e.g. a Movie Night) which bring us together for no other reason than to just be together.
- Could we have regular, more frequent fellowships after weekend Masses?
- Church and school need to be better connected, these are not separate entities – we are one parish.
- College aged parishioners, young adults and singles of all ages seem more likely to feel isolated.
- Newer members need to be welcomed more actively and more personally.
- We need to learn how to connect people like Crossroads and The Vineyard connect their members.
- We need a central “information center.” Could the church office be open on Sundays?
- Bring back the “old” Spirit Sunday with all its various, community-building and “fun-raising” activities.
- What happened to the “nursery” and babysitting during Mass (and other parish events)?
- Could minutes from meetings of parish groups be online for the sake of information-sharing and transparency?
- Protecting our children is necessary and important, but is there a better way to do this other than VIRTUS?

ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

The overwhelming majority of comments about our athletic association were positive. But, the Athletic Association needs to be consistently vigilant in witnessing Christian sportsmanship (athletes, coaches, families and fans) and be persistently deliberate in maintaining a strong Catholic identity in all of its endeavors.

- Athletics brings people together.
- Shorter practices might help alleviate scheduling issues.
- No practices should be scheduled during dinner time – family should come first.
- Some practices get awful late for students on school nights.
- NB Regarding these last three comments, scheduling practices is very difficult due to the number of teams, limited practice facilities and coaches' schedules.*
- The coaches are great overall!
- Winning isn't everything – this attitude has driven some people away.
- Would it be possible to be more instructional and recreational and less competitive?
- Team Masses on Sundays are awesome!

SCOUTING PROGRAMS

The overwhelming majority of comments about our scouting programs (Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts and American Heritage Girls) were exceptionally positive.

- Scout Masses are very well done.
- We should be very proud of all our Eagle Scouts – almost 100 of them!

VOLUNTEERS

The overwhelming majority of comments about volunteers were that we need more volunteers in most all our parish ministries, activities and organizations since our long-time, dedicated volunteers are getting older and/or experiencing burn-out.

- St. I's has something for everyone!
- A list of all volunteer opportunities should be more accessible.
- Term limits for volunteer parish group leadership positions might encourage others to “step up to the plate” knowing they are only making a limited commitment in a leadership position.
- Families are already so overextended - hard to have time to be involved.
- School families seem to only volunteer for the school activities and not for the parish in general.
- People mistakenly think there are plenty of others volunteering when actually there are not.
- We volunteered to do things and never heard back – we don't sign-up for anything anymore.
- Could there be an online “gifts inventory” to help people know how and where to get involved?

PARISH FESTIVAL

The overwhelming majority of comments about our parish festival were very, very positive.

- Online sign-ups are great but perhaps not senior citizen friendly.
- Online "job descriptions" were very good so volunteers know what they are signing-up for.
- Really don't like the name “IggyFest.”
- Welcome Booth was awesome!
- Book Sale in Hilvert is great!

OTHERS

- Neighborhood meetings with an openness to listen to parishioners are very good!
- We have a stage - why not produce some good Catholic shows?
- We need a suggestion box.
- Re-work our commissions/parish infrastructure – laity needs to be involved in leadership roles and decision-making.
NB Our Pastoral Council and Pastoral Team are working to revitalize and repopulate the three commissions which are currently not meeting. We have a functioning Pastoral Council, Finance Council and Worship Commission.
- Past youth plays (including the ongoing passion re-enactment) and “Show Biz” were wonderful opportunities and great community-builders.
- Parish Health Ministry (taking blood pressures once a month) is great!
- Very glad the Lenten Fish Fry has started up again.
- Deputies on Sunday mornings are good presence not only for traffic flow but perhaps discouraging people from being here for the wrong reason.
- Parish picnic is great!
- The ladies in the church office are always helpful and friendly.
- All of our parish groups need to be advertised better.
- We used to have a Ministry Fair which showcased all parish ministries, activities and organizations.
- In some ways, but not all, we are good at making a large parish feel small.
- Our senior citizens group is wonderful!
- The Friday morning men's group is awesome!