

FALL 2018 *PULSE OF THE PARISH* NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

SUMMARY – *INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS*

St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, Cincinnati Ohio – Sunday, March 24, 2019

First, let me again express sincere and heartfelt gratitude to all parish households who hosted one of our fall 2018 *Pulse of the Parish* neighborhood meetings. I am equally thankful to the 400+ parishioners who attended these meetings. It was a great blessing for me to meet so many of you and hear your thoughts about our parish.

Second, let me apologize for the delay in publishing a summary of these meetings. There were more than 3500 comments to go through. First I grouped the comments thematically and then combined similar ones – it was a bit time-consuming to say the least! All the comments were divided into these six categories –

- *Worship & Sacraments*
- *Evangelization & Catechesis*
- *Communications*
- *Parish Life & Stewardship*
- *Outreach*
- *Facilities*

Overall the vast majority of comments were very, very positive!

For those who were not in attendance, the meetings were generally structured around the following questions –

- *What does St. Ignatius Loyola Parish do very well?*
- *What are you most grateful for at St. Ignatius Loyola Parish?*
- *How has St. Ignatius Loyola Parish “touched your life, made you feel most connected?” (If you don’t feel connected, why not?)*
- *What is your favorite memory of St. Ignatius Loyola Parish?*
- *What do you miss about one of your past parishes? Could that be brought to St. Ignatius Loyola Parish?*
- *I could make a difference at St. Ignatius Loyola if I...*
- *In the future, St. Ignatius Loyola Parish would be an even better place if...*
- *If I was the new pastor of St. Ignatius Loyola Parish, I would build on all the past good by first (doing what)?*

Some issues raised were already being addressed before I arrived. Since I have arrived, we have also had the opportunity to begin to take action on others. As we continue to act on these, some may feel they were not listened to since we cannot act on every single comment. This is especially true in cases where certain comments were made at one meeting and the exact opposite comment was made at another meeting! (This is not surprising since a few hundred people were given the opportunity to share their individual opinions.) So how do we proceed and address issues when opposite viewpoints were expressed? Logically, in such cases, as a Roman Catholic parish which is part of a universal and hierarchical Church, we turn to Church teaching – both specific directives as well as general objectives and visions. All the customs and practices of a parish must be faithful to and consistent with Church teaching. Church teaching strives for unity and stability throughout the Body of Christ. And, contrary to what some would assume, following Church teaching is neither synonymous with unproductive stagnation nor rigid uniformity. As I wrote to you in the *Insight* when I first arrived, I often analogize the work of parish ministries, activities and organizations with a coloring book – let’s use every color in the crayon box (i.e. let’s be creative and unique) but let’s also “color in the lines” (i.e. be faithful to Church teaching.)

The summary being made available with this introductory letter concerns “Worship & Sacraments.” The other categories will be posted online over the next few weeks. Publication dates will be in the Sunday bulletin. If anyone would like a hard-copy of any of the summaries, please contact the church office.

To bring our *Pulse of the Parish* neighborhood meetings to a “formal conclusion,” I will hold a town hall meeting on Tuesday, May 28, 2019 at 7:00 PM in church. We will start with prayer and then parishioners will have the opportunity to make comments and ask questions. You need not have attended one of the neighborhood meetings to attend the town hall meeting.

Let us always pray for each other so that everything we say, think and do is, as our patron saint teaches us, “for the greater glory of God.”



Rev. Geoffrey D. Drew
Pastor