



General Minutes from Lake/Geauga District Meeting

November 08, 2021

St. Bede was hosting parish

Prayer/Lunch/Welcome from Gina Rensi, District Chair

We had 43 members attend. 13/20 parishes were represented

Thank you to St. Bede for hosting today and for the fabulous meal.

Lake/Geauga District Chair Update:

- No news at this time

Fr. Dave gives Presbyteral Council update:

1) Procedures for the Tribunal will be updated. In March 2022, the formation of Case Specialists will begin. There are 200 annulments that are processed in the diocese each year and they are going to limit the number of Case Specialist to 65-70. The Case Specialists will be going through some classroom work and training on how to handle a formal case. A list of Case Specialists will be posted on the Tribunal Website once their training is complete. A booklet will also be provided for the petitioners that lays out the process and the grounds for annulment. A parish minister will handle the case if it is in absence of canonical form. If not, the parish minister may:

- Assist the individual in getting trained as a Case Specialist
- Refer directly to a local Case Specialist
- Refer the individual to the Tribunal website to locate a Case Specialist
- Have the individual contact the Tribunal for assistance in locating a Case Specialist
- Case Specialist takes responsibility for submitting the case and assisting the individual with the process
- Parish minister continues in the role of accompanying in a Pastoral way as the case progresses and concludes. The Petitioner can authorize the Tribunal to share information with the Parish Minister. The Parish Minister continues with forming the Petitioner as a Disciple of Jesus Christ, separate and apart from the validity/invalidity of the marriage.
- Fr. Dave's experience over the past 3 years is that he has done about 12 annulments. There is a backlog down at the Tribunal right now of about 18 months.
- New System will begin after the trainings are complete at the end of March or beginning of April 2022. Idea is that each case specialist gets 1 or 2 cases per year to make the process easier for the priests in terms of pastoral work.
- Fr. Kevin Leibhardt asked: Is the process going to be the same or are there changes in respect to the efficiency of the process?
- A: Juris Prudence has changed a little bit and there is new canonical law. Fr. Eric Garris shared that there is a new canonical law that affects the questionnaire. The parish minister acts as a

trriage to ask some of the questions and then in turn recommends the next steps. Questionnaire shortened from 30 questions and narrows the focus of the grounds.

- Emily Currie-Manring also shared that Catholic Charities was approached by the Diocese of Cleveland to be involved in the Annulment process to some extent especially with respect to the Spanish speaking applicants.
- All training sessions will be held in person only beginning in March 2022.

2) Priest meeting at Divine Word will be held on Monday, Nov 22 at 4:45pm regarding the sacramental availability of priests. We plan to begin the discussion of are we offering too many Masses. We will share some information coming out of this meeting at the next District Meeting.

Gina Rensi introduced two speakers: Mike Hayes, Director of Young Adult Ministry from Diocese of Cleveland and Miquel Chavez, Director of Evangelization

Mike Hayes:

Has been with the district for about a year and before he arrived the Diocese did a wide range study of the Young Adults in Cleveland and found:

- Theology on Tap was the big diocesan effort to reach Young Adults and that initiative went really well but they wanted more than that and wanted something that provided more depth and more breadth.
- There were a lot of things going on in the diocese but almost none of it was organized and almost too much repeat work. We have worked to rectify that over the course of the year.

Young Adults = people in their 20's- 30's. Less about what age someone is and more about where they are in their life cycle. Includes: college students, HS graduates, new college graduates, graduate school students, singles, newly married or with starter families, semi-seasoned workers with new careers, those who are settled professionally, newly divorced, 2nd career workers.

Looking for leaders amongst these people and what you don't want to pick is "creepy folks." Your programs will only be as good as the leaders you pick. There are divides amongst the leader: Rad Trads (Radical Traditionalists) vs. Those who are barely hanging on to the Catholic Church but maybe they are really interested in Social Justice. Both types of people can give new life to a parish setting and can be valuable. Your job is to get the two types of people to talk with each other. Francine Constantini says on one side you have people who say "You're not Catholic enough" and other side "Look at all of the Catholic Freaks over there" and our job is to bring those people closer to the center (synodality).

Mike Hayes worked for the Paulus Fathers for about 10 years. He's the founder of BustedHalo.com. He learned that "any idiot can be online, including me."

There is no longer 'Broadcasting' but now only 'Narrowcasting.' No one ever has to talk to someone who disagrees with them again. It's all specific audiences. People search on the internet for the answers they already want = Googling God. They aren't doing a wide search for answers. Our job is to become a resource for these folks (relational authority). Young people want trusted sources that they can depend on. Young folks have found out that you're never going to know everything that everyone else thinks you should know. A trusted source uses their digital presence to accentuate those trusted source

relationships. You can become a trusted source by sharing your digital presence and your digital presence is enhanced by being a trusted source. This relationship goes both ways.

He suggests taking a look at your parish website and see how easy it is for people to navigate. Primary reasons to visit parish website are to check Mass times and see the bulletin. What does the website say about your parish? Can we be a trusted source for people? Research from the pandemic showed that people did access livestreaming but there was no follow-up. People were just left "swaying in the wind." St. Christopher's in Rocky River downloaded the information of who was livestreaming and took those names and made calls to follow up and see if anything was needed. Is the livestream service working for you, etc.?

What are Young Adults Like?

- 1) Eclipsed-other things dominate their attention to their spirituality.
- 2) Private- please leave me alone; I just came here to pray
- 3) Sacramental-enjoy the sacraments: Adoration, Confession
- 4) Social-here to meet other people and become good friends vs. people I meet at a bar or at work
- 5) Evangelical-Rad Trad-really, really Catholic and don't care for people who are not.
- 6) Prophetical-Social Justice folks
- 7) Ecumenical- one religion is as good as another

Young people are one of these or a combination of these. You have these people in your parish and you can target your programs to meet the needs of this group of people.

The latest research shows that the primary thing people are looking for is around vocation and discernment- what should I do with my life? Life isn't turning out how I expected it to. Want to meet experienced people for guidance. These aren't 'When I was your age' talks but rather 'You are your age' talks and here's how you might be able to navigate things a little easier (finding meaningful work). Mike is a trained Spiritual Director and that's the primary reason they come to see him is to discern meaning in their lives.

Accompaniment- Pope Francis has been talking about this. You have to get to know people enough and listen to them so that you can become a trusted source. You must earn their trust and become relevant to them. Look outside the doors of your church.

Teach three things above all:

- 1) Lament- how to deal with grief, depression and anxiety
- 2) Discernment
- 3) Practices of a healthy Christian community- how are we to live with one another

Assume LITTLE and explain LOTS regarding theological explanations

What does the Diocese do?

- 1) Consultancy- I work for you. If you don't call me I get upset; if you do call me I don't get mad. Just call and ask "Hey, I'm thinking of doing this at my parish. What do you think?"
- 2) "Constructancy"- Pod collaborations, Hub parish

- 3) Large Scale Events-diocesan wide retreat program, leadership program, YA Gala possibly after Easter

Regionalizing Young Adult Ministry

Pod Model (Chagrin Falls came up with this idea)

- 4 parishes come together
- 1 parish holds a consistent monthly event and then other 3 parishes hold an event once a month on a rotation. That works out so one parish does the heavy lift and the other 3 parishes do a quarterly event.
- There are two events available each month
- Everyone advertises everything
- There is a less parochial outlook- young adults may go to different parish every weekend. Young adults don't have the same parochial outlook that we have.
- Three seasons of Events: Summer, Fall, Lent. Take January and May off.
- Types of Events:
 - Spiritual/Devotional-Adoration, Mass, Confession night
 - Social
 - Service
 - Topical (serious)-what's current at the moment. Grapevine on West-side meets regularly
- Assessment: A) What happened? B) What went well? C) What would you do differently?

Hub Model

- 1 parish is the Hub
- They offer something often and consistently.
For example, St. Peter's downtown just launched this model and they have events seven days a week for Young Adults.
 - Sunday: Mass
 - Monday: Weekday Mass + Direction
 - Tuesday: College Night
 - Wednesday: Scripture Study
 - Thursday: Adoration and Confession
 - Friday: Seasonal
 - Saturday: Community Service

Most important tool is connecting people. People are going to form their opinion of you on the first event. People you need most are healthy connectors. Leaders are important.

Gina asked: if a parish wanted to start a program what is the first step?

A: Determine how many Young Adults are in your parish- who got married this year? Get together a Steering Committee for one year to assist with the process and then call Mike to assist in constructing a program. Best to get together with 3 other parishes.

Miquel Chavez, Director for the Office of Missionary Discipleship

Reviewed history of Sr. Andre Bessette-the Patron Saint for all Missionary Disciples

Pope Francis says that every Christian is called to be a Missionary Disciple.

Missionary Disciple- a roving storyteller who captivates hearts to Christ by proclaiming in word and deed the greatest love story in the history of the world. A Missionary Disciple does not stay put but rather goes out. Missionary Disciples are madly in love with Jesus Christ.

The vision of the Missionary Discipleship Office is to form captivating disciples, animated by the Holy Spirit, who go out to accompany and serve as “porters of the faith;” courageously witness to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and be LEAVEN for people.

Goals of the Office:

- 1) Engender a culture of Missionary Discipleship that focuses outward
- 2) Empower faithful to nurture personal relationship with Jesus Christ especially through prayer and sacraments
- 3) Challenge faithful to discern their gifts and use those to build up the church
- 4) Fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ to make disciples by captivating people in the community with gospel message of hope/love

Strategic Initiatives:

LEAVEN- how a community of Missionary Disciples works

L- learn the narratives of the community

E- Encounter Christ—respond to become disciples

A-Awaken a child-like wonder and curiosity-Conversion

V- View the community differently as broken but blessed

E- Evangelize with great joy

N- Nourish those who hunger and are restless

Programs that are coming from Missionary Discipleship Office (trying to get all information on the webpage)

- 1) Called by the Spirit- Gifts Discernment Program [Called by the Spirit Discernment Program | Catholic Diocese of Cleveland | Cleveland, OH](#)
 - a. Gifts inventory that is accessible online and can be adapted based on the needs of the community
 - b. 75 prompts that you rate 1-4
 - c. Identify top 3-5 gifts
 - d. A spring board to begin a conversation with a Spiritual Director. How do we use this to engage people to build the church up and out
 - e. Includes an itinerary for a retreat day

- f. Will be organizing training sessions on this in the new year
- 2) Creating a Culture of Encounter- Discipleship/Accompaniment Process
 - a. A 5 POD process to engage those in the periphery
 - b. A way to talk to and listen to people
- 3) Porters of the Faith
 - a. Developed 4 session as a strategy to engage parishioners- to get a vision and mobilize people to evangelize. So now what? What can we do to mobilize our people as Missionary Disciples.
- 4) Developing a School (or Institute) of Missionary Discipleship
 - a. Developing a curriculum for parishioners (not just leaders) to nurture their relationship with Jesus Christ; to learn to accompany other people; to learn about the process of deciphering the way Jesus did; to bring others in and walk with Christ
- 5) Nine Nights of Night Prayer
 - a. Next session is at end of November (11/30 to 12/08)
 - b. Locations:
 - i. Holy Trinity Parish, Avon
 - ii. Immaculate Conception Parish, Willoughby
 - iii. Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Cleveland
 - iv. Nativity of the Lord Jesus Parish, Akron
 - v. Our Lady of Victory Parish, Tallmadge
 - vi. Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish South Euclid
 - vii. St. Clement Parish, Lakewood
 - viii. St. Peter Parish, Cleveland
 - ix. St. Vitus Parish, Cleveland
 - c. 3 times a year for 3 years
 - d. 8pm-9pm for 9 nights

Information on webpage and he will put trainings online

Synod on Synodality

Synod- listening to each other and journeying with each other. As we listen to each other we hear stories and get feedback. Walking with each other and we can listen to the voice and the spirit.

Key Convictions for a Synod Church

- 1) They listen to one another to hear the Spirit
- 2) Process of listening is always grounded in prayer, scripture, liturgy
- 3) Sharing our experiences with each other--being formed and allowing people to speak their voice and giving people a voice in church from the ground up

An act of discerning together in prayer and in listening. Not a one-time event, but listening over time.

There is a list of question to conduct diocesan reflections, but we can do this in a number of ways

Short term goal: Conduct successful diocesan consultations in a spirit of reflection on the state of the church and on journeying together.

Long term goal: Reorient the local church toward an inherent synodal attitude in decision making processes.

After really listening, how do we now move forward and what does that look like?

Consult-Inspire-Renew-listening, dreaming and responding to the current signs of the times

Avoid these pitfalls

- 1) It's not about us
- 2) It's not just about seeing the problems and the structures that exist-- we want to hear about the people's reactions as a whole
- 3) Avoid listening to only those who are already involved

Last week, Mike and Miquel practiced this method. They sat with three women who were tangentially related to the church and asked them to list three words that described the Catholic Church and their response was "behind the times." As facilitators they just sat there and took notes without a reaction.

In October, they started the process of consultation and developed methods that could be used in parishes.

There are a number of recommended methods to use. Mike put together a meditation and reflection using the Examen. There is another method using Missionary Actions. Process of Lectio Divina. Overall listen to people and take in their views.

Focus on "this what they said" not "this is what I think about what they said." Give them a chance to reflect on their experiences with the church, both the good and the bad. Help people to stay focused so it is not just a complaining session.

Over the next few weeks there will be both virtual and in person workshops about how to be a facilitator for the Synod. Information will be posted on the website.

By April hope to have our diocesan synthesis completed and sent to the Bishops Conference. The pope asked the local churches (the diocese) to have a synod to talk about these issues. The Vatican is looking at the data from all over the world.

Timeline of the Synod is provided in this link. Webpage will also have resources and different ideas for methodology for gathering intentional data.

Fundamental Questions of the Synod: How is journeying together happening today in your local church? What steps is the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow together? Other questions may develop as we set the stage.

Q: Anthony Camino asks: What are we supposed to be doing?

A: Each parish has 1 leader that is supposed to report data from small groups. Supposed to have parish listening sessions (30 or more people) where we gather people and listen. You can take facilitator training or look on the website where all the information will be. The training is optional. Presenters acknowledged that there has not been a lot of information out yet and they understand the frustration.

Q: Allison Capella asks: How does this dovetail with DMI?

A: DMI was a survey and this is more open-ended data collection.

On Friday (11/06) website information went live to make it simple for the average parishioners to understand. Dioceseofcleveland.org/synod. Training will be offered soon both in person and virtual

Announcements from the Diocese:

- 1) There is a Young Adult Mass at the Cathedral on Sunday 11/21 at 5:30pm
- 2) CLE 216 Youth Conference will be Sat. 01/08 at JCU. Ticket sales close on Monday 11/15/2021
- 3) Grandparent Event (Anna and Joachim Workshops)- How can grandparents share their faith with their young adult grandchildren. Stay tuned for more information.
- 4) ProLife Mass is January 21, 2022 at 10:00a at the Cathedral
- 5) World Youth Day 2023 will be in Portugal. Planning has begun and there is an option to walk the Portuguese Camino. www.godincleveland.org

Announcements from District:

- 1) Taylor Long, YM from Divine Word announced that there is a meeting to talk about collaboration regarding Youth Ministry in the District. Meeting will be Wed. 11/17 at 7pm at Divine Word. Want to have a Youth Retreat in Spring 2022 at St. Helen that all Youth Groups are invited to.
- 2) Fr. Greg Schaut will be collecting Xmas cards again this year for Health Care Workers at Lake Health Hospital System. Last year they collected 1800 cards. Collection boxes will be in the lobbies of the hospitals until Dec 10th. Cards should be made out to general health care workers not just nurses and/or docs.
- 3) Rhonda Abrams from Cleveland Cemetery Association-
 - a. Continue to offer Grief Support-people are still grieving through the pandemic and lots of issues
 - i. Groups are 3rd Sunday of every month at 6 locations at 3pm. Also have virtual support groups at 5pm that Sunday.
 - b. Having a Retreat for Grief Workers on Dec 10th at the Jesuit Retreat Center.
- 4) Allison Capella- Lake/Geauga District Divorce/Separated Ministry
 - a. Next session begins 01/08/22 on Saturday mornings for the first time. Please register on the website.
 - b. Holiday Helps for the Divorce/Separated- mini 4-week session begins on 12/02 on Thursday nights at St. John Vianney.
- 5) Maureen Dowd-requests prayers for Fr. Fred Pausche from St. Gabes who will be having open heart surgery on Tuesday, Nov 16th

Fr. Tim Plavac led closing prayer.

Next Lake/Geauga District Meeting is Monday, January 10th, 2022 11:45 am – St. Gabriel