

Parish Listening Session for SYNOD 2020

St. Mary Star of the Sea Unionville, CT

Facilitator: Lynne Murphy
and the Rebuild Committee:
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Date of Session: August 8, 2018, 7 PM - 8:45 PM

Attendance at event: 67 Parishioners

Total Participation: 25 speakers + 34 written comment sheets submitted

Comments recorded here are submitted verbatim wherever possible but also summarized and consolidated where more than one commenter closely shared the opinion or idea. Comments are organized by a subject matter where possible. There is much cross-over between Questions #2 and #3. All comments either verbally presented at the session or in writing, were included even when similar views were cited but using different expressions of those views.

Question #1: What is the Archdiocese doing well?

Outreach:

- Reaching out to parishes with this Listening Session to solicit thoughts and ideas of parishioners as to how to make things better.
- Feeding the hungry.
- Showing compassion by providing financial support and outreach such as TV and radio communication and pastoral ministries. "You can't be outdone in generosity."
- Reaching out to minorities and pregnant teenagers.
- Good stance on immigration and caring for those in need.
- "Synod Listening Session is good but boy are there a lot of judgmental people attending."
- Merged churches are more effective.

Archbishop's Annual Appeal:

- The Appeal is where we become witnesses in faith, hope and love to all our brothers and sisters in need.
- Charitable contributions made to the Appeal are put to good use.
- Promoting the annual Appeal.
- The Archdiocese uses a good DVD to tell us how they spend the funds collected.

WWMJ:

- Archbishop Blair's regular appearances on the "Archbishop's Corner" show are greatly appreciated - he makes himself available to speak to us on matters of faith and he answers our questions on the show.
- WJMJ programming is very inspirational.

Financial Support of EWTN

It is good that the Archdiocese supports EWTN.

Mass on TV for shut-ins:

Mass on TV at 10:00 a.m. is a very good thing.

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA):

The active RCIA program is an excellent opportunity for bringing in new people to Catholicism.

CCD:

The active CCD program for our young people is something the Archdiocese does well.

Archdiocesan Bible Study Program:

The Hartford Catholic Biblical School Program and the St. Thomas Seminary Certificate in Biblical Studies program are commendable opportunities offered by the Archdiocese for comprehensive Bible study.

Merging Parishes:

- Closing and merging parishes necessitated by the shortage of priests, financial conditions and diminishing attendance. The process was complex and challenging and done well.
- Keeping at least one parish open in most towns.
- Keeping our parish St. Mary Star of the Sea open.

Traditions & Sacraments, Liturgy, & Music:

- Traditions are kept alive in our parishes - e.g. the rituals of sacraments; traditions of the Easter, Lent & Advent liturgical seasons, etc.
- Instituting additional Reconciliation opportunities during Lent.
- St. Mary's has a great music director in Rick Daddario and the choir sings great.
- Daily Mass at our parish St. Mary Star of the Sea.

Child Safety:

This program is excellent for all people working directly with children and also protects our youth.

Priests:

- We have many good and holy priests in our Archdiocese and our parishes.
- The archdiocese recognizes and is making an effort to address the shortage of priests by merging parishes and starting to plan for gaps in priestly coverage of parishes.
- "Keeping a good priest (*Monsignor Motta*) at St. Mary's - he is what a priest should be. Listen to what he has to say."

Growth in Faith Opportunities:

- Holy Family Monastery and Our Lady of Calvary have wonderful opportunities to dialog and grow in faith.
- "St. Thomas the Apostle church in West Hartford is a good model of faith in action."

Community:

- There is a genuine feeling of community at St. Mary's church; it is a warm and welcoming parish. Monsignor Motta always has an inspiring sermon each week, giving "me something to take away each week to help me with my life and challenges I face."
- It is good to reach out to address community needs by collecting items for the poor.
- "The only church in the area that has a constant approval rate is the Seminary at the 7:00 p.m. Mass in Farmington."

Catholic High Schools:

- Catholic High Schools students perform better on SATs than their public school peers.
- Connecticut taxpayers get some relief in towns that have a Catholic school present.

General Comment:

We have no idea what the Archdiocese is doing well because there is either poor or no communication of what it is that they do.

Question #2: What is the Archdiocese doing not so well?

Comments in General:

- "I feel that this is the Archdiocese just pretending to listen."
- "They ask our opinions - but don't listen."
- They should have these sessions where we participate in giving feedback way more often.
- We do not get any feedback from the Archdiocese about the effect of the church closings and mergers.
- "The Archdiocese is a White Tower that does not communicate with the people so we have no idea what the Archdiocese does at all, does well or does not do well."
- "Shouldn't the Archdiocese be aware already of what it is doing well or not doing well?"
- "We thought there would be a representative from the Archdiocese at this Listening Session and that they would tell us what is going on regarding the priest shortage crisis, the finances of the Archdiocese and the health of vocations."

Church Attendance:

- Too many people have left Catholic churches.
- Today's world is full of violence, anger, hatred, & consumerism, yet people still seek spirituality, community, love and acceptance — but they are not finding it at their local church.
- We need programs to reach out to lapsed Catholics and to those who have left the Catholic church for whatever reason, to return.
- The average age of Americans is 41, the average age of our church-goers is in their 60s — the church cannot survive without young people - how do we get young people back to the church?
- Too many attend out of a sense of obligation as opposed to making church a real priority.
- *For one raised under Communism in Poland who came to America in her teen years: We could not practice our faith under communist rule in Poland, so it's difficult to understand why people here in America don't seem to want to protect and practice their Catholic faith — and fall in love with God and their faith, which are such a great gift. The Archdiocese should use every means necessary to impress this gift upon our youth - make learning about the faith a lifelong habit and fostering ways for youth to participate in the Mass, e.g. offering children's choirs, bringing children to reconciliation and bringing children to receive communion.*

Vocations:

- The shortage of priests makes it nearly impossible for a single parish priest to fully serve the needs of their congregation. Lay persons should be helping out more.
- The Archdiocese is not projecting a good image for priests.
- Priests, especially the younger ones, need to be taught to be more “pastoral”; generally they are great on the “rubrics” but lack compassion and an understanding of the human condition.
- The talents of lay persons in parishes should be used by the Archdiocese on the recommendation of parish priests, e.g. persons with expertise in various subjects useful to the church.
- Ask priests why they chose religious life and share that with young seekers.
- We need to emphasize a connection to one’s ancestors and community of faith and belief and make vocations attractive.
- Priests that come from foreign countries have accents that make it difficult to understand them.
- Talk to your children and family about vocations - ask them if they feel any nudge from the Holy Spirit to answer a call to service as a priest or a nun or a deacon; encourage vocations in your own families. Take your children to visit retired clergy, and to ask the clergy questions about what made them want to become a priest.

Archdiocesan Finances:

- Not communicating well (or at all) with parishes about how the money paid by parishes (**Cathedraticum**) is used by the Archdiocese. Legitimate expenses such as maintaining St. Joseph Cathedral and St. Thomas Seminary are obvious, but how else are the **non-Archbishops Annual Appeal** funds used?
- The financial dealings of the Archdiocese are “hidden” and “not transparent” at all.
- The capital campaign “Forward with Faith” to raise \$12 million has apparently been expanded to set a goal of \$100 million from our parishes but:
 - there is no information available on the internet to further our understanding of this expanded campaign other than this link to the original FAQs <http://archdioceseofhartford.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/hbffaqs.pdf>
 - there is no justification given to us of the need for such funds other than for necessary cathedral repairs —
 - e.g. why would we ever need a “Cathedral Park” when there is **no Cathedral parking lot or garage** sufficient for all who would want to attend cathedral events? Many would attend Cathedral Masses or other events but for the lack of parking that is safe and very near the Cathedral.
 - “I understand the need for vibrancy but a pedestrian mall? Not so sure if this will enhance the image of Christian giving.”
 - Won’t this additional campaign for such large sums cause those donating to the Archbishop’s Annual Appeal to have to choose to which campaign they will donate? We know how the monies donated to the Appeal are spent (directly assisting the needy) but asking for another \$100 million in addition to the Appeal will cause many to reduce their donations to the Appeal. Most Catholics have only so much “extra” money to donate.
- Why does the Archdiocese have such control of our parish’s money?
- “Hartford scored 17 points out of 60 points on a 10-question survey regarding where parishioners’ donations go” - which appears to indicate a lack of financial transparency.
- “The Archdiocese is great at asking for money but not very good at all about telling us why they need the \$100 million or how it will be used. Will this be like when they closed churches and pulled the wool over our eyes?”
- If the Archbishop wants to ask us for money, he should come here and explain the need for funds.

Confirmation Requirements:

CCD policies are tough; confirmation requirements are too strict.

Catholic Schools:

- Keep more Catholic schools open by directing more Archdiocesan monies to fund them.
- Catholic schools keep young people going to church by providing a solid Catholic foundation.
- Tuition at Catholic schools is too high, especially for families with more than one school-age child.
- If Catholic schools are not fully supported financially, the option to attend such schools will no longer be available. Catholic education is a very important choice.
- Taxpayers should have the option to use tax dollars allocated to public school education to go to Catholic education for their children if they so choose.

Immigrants:

The Archdiocese is not supporting the rule of law as it should be doing as it relates to illegal immigration.

Political Candidates:

- The Archdiocese should be “calling out politicians who are supporting Planned Parenthood and abortions.”

Priests and Abuses by Priests:

- “Playing politics with parishes and priests.”
- “Covering up the abuse by priests. You’d have a lot more money if you didn’t cover it up.”
- Not doing enough to draw young men into the priesthood.
- “Who would want to be a Catholic priest under these conditions of sexual abuse by bishops and priests? They hide everything. When will the church be honest about this problem?” This is affecting support for Catholic schools because of all the payments made by the Church to settle sexual abuse lawsuits.
- We need more transparency regarding pedophile behavior - it is being swept under the rug.
- The pedophile priest scandal keeps young people away from the church - we need to tell young people why we still attend church despite the scandal.

Parish Cemeteries:

Parishes should get back some of the “Endowed Care Fund” money to support parish cemeteries.

e.g. St. Mary’s pays a fee of \$250 to the Archdiocese “Endowed Care Fund” per each St. Mary’s cemetery grave sold. The Fund is supposed to support the cemeteries after the cemeteries are full and no more plots are available, but the \$250,000 in the Fund is not made available to the parish for cemetery maintenance projects that become necessary over time.

Right to Life:

- The closing of St. Agnes Home in West Hartford is a blow to the right-to-life beliefs of the Catholic church - parishes could be asked to provide funding for the care & support that was delivered there or Archdiocesan funds could be used that way.
- The Archdiocese takes too hard a stand **OR** does not take a hard enough stand (*both views were submitted*) on difficult issues such as abortion.

Emphasis on Families:

- The Archdiocese needs to speak more about the importance of family.
- Taking too hard a stand **OR** not taking a hard enough stand (*both views were submitted*) on difficult issues such as divorce and denying communion to divorced couples.
- Families do not talk enough to their youth about faith and church. Families need to talk without cell phones on and have family meals together.
- Families need to bring their children to church, teach children how to behave at Mass (e.g. not snacking on food just before reception of communion), being attentive, singing, participating, going to regular confession & reconciliation, etc.

Care of Retired Priests & Religious:

The Archdiocese is not caring for retired priests and religious:

- The Archdiocesan Center at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield is apparently not required to be ADA-compliant with accessibility for retired priests who have mobility issues and need to use walkers and/or need an elevator.
- If this cannot be rectified to allow our priests who have served so diligently and who deserve to retire with their friends at the Seminary, couldn't some of the rectories and/or schools which were closed or abandoned (due to the closure of parishes) be renovated to fill this need?
- Allow better long-term care for retired clergy - they deserve it.
- Priests should be allowed to live in housing provided by the Archdiocese regardless of their mobility or physical restrictions or limitations.
- Are the financial resources of the Archdiocese inadequate to fully support the current and future needs of our retired clergy and if so what are the plans to fix the problem? Is this Archdiocese the only one to have this problem or is it present elsewhere?

Communication / Publicity:

- The Archdiocese has either poor or no communication of what it is that it actually does.
- The former format of *The Catholic Transcript* was full of information - there used to be advertisements by Catholic or Catholic-friendly vendors, news of many parishes' activities weight want to emulate or replicate, letters to the editor, ordination anniversaries & deaths of priest and religious, news of future Catholic-sponsored events we might want to attend or trips we could take, TV show schedules, movie reviews, etc. The new format of the Transcript appears carefully (and narrowly) scripted as to what warrants a printed story and has very few articles and no ads whatsoever. Didn't ads in the old Transcript pay for most if not all of its publication? How many people were laid off when the old format was discontinued?
- There is no publication or communication of resources of the Archdiocese or its parishes to or with parishioners.
- The Archdiocesan webpage can be difficult to navigate - e.g.:
 - we could find no link to any information regarding the upcoming Synod 2020 for which this Listening Session was held, and
 - there is no "Search" button to form our own inquiries.
- Communication by the Archdiocese should be in every possible available format: social media, websites, printed items, billboards, etc. all using clear language for lay persons. The Archdiocese should have an office to assist parishes to set up Facebook pages, share information, communicate Archdiocesan and intra-parish news and events, etc.
- The Archdiocese should be reaching out as Fr. Nadolny does by using billboards on our highways.
- The Archdiocese needs to be much more transparent and communicate with us by disseminating more information to us via our parish priests on a regular basis.
- The only regular information we hear from the Archdiocese is about the annual Appeal and the request for money to fund it. More spiritual communication would be helpful.

- More Catholic programming daily on WJMJ would be a good way to evangelize.
- The Archdiocese should be advertising the Catholic church a lot more, especially to target youth - the very future of the church is at stake.
- The Archdiocese could communicate with us more regularly with email blasts, daily Facebook posts, weekly church news highlights.
- We only hear about the negative things that happen in the church - the Archdiocese should counter the bad news with all the good things that Catholics do.

Gala Dinners:

The “Gala Dinners” that are held for big donors to the Archbishops Annual Appeal are contrary to the church’s mission to assist the poor. Generous donors do not need or want a “gala” dinner or “glitzy” event. A simple acknowledgement of the donation is enough. The entire money allocated to be spent on these dinners should instead be donated to the helping the poor or used to support retired priests and religious.

Veterans:

The Archdiocese appears to have no programs or office to assist veterans returning from active service.

Social Justice:

The Archdiocese is not addressing Social Justice and needs to place more emphasis on the tenants of Catholic Social Justice teaching and preach responsibility to our people so they know how to avoid “social sin”.

Mass at St. Mary Star of the Sea:

- “Mass is too fast, too much “rote” and very little from the sermons to take home.”

Accessibility of Properties:

There should be “handicapped” access at all churches, schools and parking lots of parishes in the Archdiocese.

Church closures:

- The Archdiocese is not doing enough to keep churches open.
- Consolidating churches leads to increasing the pastor’s responsibility for a greater number of parishioners, making the situation unmanageable.
- What is happening to the assets left behind after churches were closed? Were properties sold and what was done with the funds? Can’t unsold properties be renovated to be used as ADA-accessible apartments for retired clergy?

Single People:

- “It would be nice if single people were included in family events - just to be included would be nice.”
- “Too much focus on children & family - what if you don’t have a family through no fault of your own?”

Planning:

- “The Stewards of Tomorrow program appears to have set strategic priorities but there is no plan available to actually read.”
- We need a call to renew the health and spiritual well-being of our clergy.
- We need to shake up the church for change.
- The Archbishop should be more visible to the people - visiting parishes, hospitals, participating in Masses at local parishes.

- The Archdiocese should include the laity in all planning sessions - “we are priestly people who live in the world and are not as sheltered as the clergy.”

Question #3: What is the Archdiocese not doing that it should be doing?

Welcoming and Diversity:

- The Archdiocese has not established or emphasized a policy that “All Are Welcome” in our churches and schools.
- We must find a way to warmly welcome, accept, love and forgive all people, not just the ones who look like us.
- We need opportunities to experience inter-faith dialog and work on projects with other churches, religious groups and faiths to build unity rather than separateness.
- We need an emphasis on the experience of God’s love and acceptance so we can see His love for all, in how we see one another — music, meditation, nature, yoga, etc. can all help.
- The Archdiocese should be “shifting the paradigm” by “eliminating abuse to all.”
- Should be “preaching love and compassion and inclusivity. St. Patrick / St. Anthony parish in Hartford is an accepting, loving parish; they have an uplifting liturgy and the homily was centered on love and very inspiring.”
- We need more hospitality to create reasons for parishioners to linger longer after Mass.
- We need to reach out to “20-somethings”, LGBTQT persons and anyone who feels unwelcome.
- All types of families should be welcome - we need to reach out. “People are afraid to come to church, thinking that they will be judged.”
- New pastors should be urged to meet with parishioners and ask parishioners what we want so we can give the pastors some direction, especially if the church or the pastor is in a transition period.

Laity / Evangelization / Community Outreach:

- The Archdiocese should be training lay persons to evangelize and reach out to those who are not Catholic.
- Should be strengthening communities through non-religious events such as social events.
- Should be using lay persons more effectively to be hired as parish administrators or pastoral associates, to help with the effects of the shortage of priests.
- “Evangelical outreach should be done for an in poor countries - we do fund projects in Haiti but doing out to show poor countries how to do something is better: raising animals for food, growing vegetables, personal hygiene, etc.”

Local vs. World

The Archdiocese should be helping local communities first before moving on to a “world” view.

Continuity / Retirements:

- Priests should be able to retire after age 75 if they so choose and continue as pastor at their parish. They should be able to continue as long as they are in good health.
- In the past, churches had Administrators which were named a year or so prior to a new pastor came - is that no longer done? If not, why not?

Women’s Roles in the Church:

- Women should be allowed to become Deacons and be ordained as Priests.
- Women should be hired to manage parish finances because in the private sector, many women are capable and effective CEOs of major corporations.
- Churches in the Southwest USA utilize women in more leadership roles than here in Connecticut.
- “As a woman, I do not feel valued or looked up to.”

- More women should be involved in parish needs.
- Women should be considered for a greater role in the church - as priests, ministers, etc.
- Other churches in our area have women in leadership positions — but Catholics do not.

Priests & Nuns:

- “Should be allowed to marry - many young men would enter the priesthood if they could marry.”
- Allow nuns to marry.
- The Archdiocese is not doing a good job recruiting new priests for the priesthood.
- The Archdiocese should be “fighting harder with Cardinals & being persistent with the Vatican to reach out to the Pope to have women as deacons and married men as priests, (the failure of which is) causing Catholics to leave and join Episcopal churches.”
- “Jesus never said that his priests could not marry so it should be rather an easy transition to allow priests to marry which would greatly solve the shortage.”
- No one wants to age into later life alone, so let priests marry & have a family.
- Parishioners need to know what happens if priests were allowed to marry, for instance:
 - Who pays for the family’s costs such as housing, food, health insurance, etc. and how much do those things cost?
 - Priests who marry in other faiths sometimes struggle with divided loyalties between their own family and the parishioners they serve.

Parish Liturgy:

- “Homilies need to be easily understood and explained on Sundays; they are hard to understand for us adults.”
- We need a 7:00 PM Sunday evening Mass, as is done at Catholic colleges.

Catholic Education for Children & Adults:

- We need to be taught and preached the truth of the Gospel and church teachings — all of the time.
- There should be a much more aggressive outreach to adults to educate them about the faith and their need to actively participate in living the faith, what it means to be a Catholic and live as a Catholic, including that weekly worship of God is mandatory, not optional.
- Not doing a good job teaching the Bible.
- We need more adult education.
- “The ‘graying’ of the church makes young people think that ‘older’ people are all the same - we need more dialog regarding how the Bible speaks to us today.”
- A lot of misinformation is out there about the Bible and how metaphors are used and mis-used.
- The CCD program is “broken and too ‘bare bones’.”
- Parents need to be involved and be assigned a set of requirements for parents to achieve in order for their kids to be confirmed.
- History is being ignored - church is really important.
- Emphasize Bible study for Catholics of all ages.

Youth:

- Not doing enough for our young people. “The future is not looking good.”
- “The Archdiocese needs to figure out how to get teenagers and young adults back to the church. It is not an inviting or relevant environment for them and they stop participating in church as soon as they can.”
- “I stay a Catholic in spite of the church. The church has lost most of my close friends & family, my adult children and grandchildren. The biggest focus needs to be how to retain young people and get the lost one back, (using) messages of love and joy rather than rubrics and fund-raising.”

- Teenagers need to experience more fun with trained youth leaders.
- Get more youth involved.
- The children of the parish (St. Mary's) are not really participating and are not being included. "Other denominations bring the children up to the altar to be included or sing a song (Baptist/Congregational) and Baptists have summer day camps where children learn about the Bible and are taught how Jesus should be in their lives." Children are the future adult parishioners in our churches and need to feel they are a part of the church community. Our country is increasingly secular so we need to impress upon children from an early age how important church and attending Mass should be to them.
- Reach out to young adults with activities, recognition, etc.
- We should reach out to teens by way of "teen nites" with music and snacks, and through sports.
- What is being done to determine why young people are not coming to church, why they aren't interested in church?
- We need to let young people know the full extent of expectations for Confirmation and after Confirmation as adult members of the church, especially marriage.
- Parents of millennial are very concerned about the future of the church.
- Youth should be recruited and trained to be altar servers, as well as be junior lectors, ushers, & greeters.

Conduct at Mass and Attending Church:

- Parishioners of all ages (young and old) need to be reminded to show reverence when entering church to show due respect for the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle, as Christ is truly present on the altar — very few even genuflect or bow or pray before Mass — the youth and altar servers need to be properly taught (and reminded) how to show this respect.
- Parishioners — especially youth — need guidance and reminders as to the proper, modest attire when attending church Mass or events: beach wear, showing midriffs and tattoos, wearing clothing that shows too much skin or cleavage e.g. very short shorts or spaghetti strap tops, etc. are a sign of disrespect for the Blessed Sacrament and also a distraction to other parishioners. Saying "at least they attend" is not the proper attitude.

Divorced Catholics:

- We need programs to welcome divorced Catholics back to church.
- Allow divorced Catholics to receive communion.
- We are "forgetting that divorced Catholics wish to be a part of all the church's traditions - many have suffered at the hands of another through no fault of their own (e.g. alcoholism, mental illness, adultery, abuse, violence, etc.) Jesus would include them in his flock!"
- Have singles functions for divorced Catholics, including support groups.

Single People:

- The Archdiocese should "cater to single adults" more - those who are divorced, widowed, or never married - and provide support groups for them.
- Provide fun outings such as singles group activities to help singles form networks.

LGQBT & Abortion; Political Candidates

- The Archdiocese is not speaking out against homosexuality or abortion as it should.
- We need to hear from the Archdiocese about the importance of voting for political candidates who most closely act in accord with God's will and God's word in the Bible.
- Be more welcoming to LGQBT; be welcoming to all.

Cemeteries

- It costs too much to bury someone in a Catholic cemetery especially when “people cannot afford all the fees, e.g. \$485 to dig a small hole for an urn?”
- The Archdiocese should reach out to ask parishes for our ideas:
 - combining parishes for financial and other concerns over cemetery maintenance, etc.

Providing Resources for Those in Need:

- Need increased parishioner involvement with other parishes to provide support for those in need, e.g. “I called the Franciscan Center in Meriden before Christmas when my daughter lost her husband, to see if a dinner could be sent to family (with mother and 2 children on state aid) and no one returned my call or showed any consideration.”
- Why is the weekly collection at our parish St. Mary Star of the Sea still approximately \$10k when we have more registered parishioners than 10 to 15 years ago? “Parishioners need to be educated as to their need & obligation to support the church financially to the best of their ability.”
- Grief support groups should be formed and publicized.
- “It is difficult to get assistance to church members, mostly to community.”
- Parents need more guidance and assistance from the church to counter modern culture’s affects on our young people.
- We should be praying for and visiting our retired, ill, elderly clergy and religious, celebrating their birthdays and anniversaries of ordination.
- The church needs to be the visible presence of Christ in the world and lead by example — visiting and helping out at soup kitchens, Habitat for Humanity — and clergy and church and Archdiocesan staff should be shoulder-to-shoulder working beside the people.
- There should be a support program for couples in marriage.
- We need parish programs that gather us together in community with one another.

Parish Committees; Resources for Committees:

- Why doesn’t the Archdiocese have resources available to parishes’ Buildings and Grounds Committees to help parishes write bids and contracts for work done at the parish? Volunteers at the parish level do not have this expertise.
- The Archdiocese should consider helping parishes that struggle with funding for repairs and maintenance of church properties by having resources, equipment, and funding shared among several local parishes.
- The real action and work of a parish at the parish level happens in the parish committees.
- What happened to the Archdiocesan lay leadership training program? Hard to locate on the Archdiocese’s website, and when we called to inquire, no one called us back.

On-Line Donations and Contributions:

- Our parish desires to be allowed to collect monies and donations on-line to make it easier to publicize funding events (Haiti Committee, Food Packing Event, etc.) which is currently not allowed — the only allowed on-line donations are the regular collections on weekends. If committees have fund-raisers, allowing on-line donations to a separate church account would help increase giving and monies raised by making it easier to donate.

Targeted Contributions:

- We should be able to donate to the component of the Archbishop’s Annual Appeal (or any other fund-raising conducted by the church) that means the most to us, and not donate to the aggregate fund.
-

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA):

- The RCIA program must be used and publicized to encourage seekers to become Catholic and to make our religion attractive so others will join us.

Pope Francis as an example:

- We need to follow the example of Pope Francis who has been open and honest and transparent. The world's news is often awful yet Pope Francis stands with the immigrants and their plight but we don't see much about this crisis of humanity coming from the Archdiocese.
- The Pope has spoken out a lot about the effects of global warming but not the Archdiocese and young people have a great concern about this issue. The Archdiocese should be leading on this topic.