

SYNOD REPORT 2022

IN OUR OWN WORDS

FAITH-FILLED CATHOLICS
FROM THE UNITED STATES AND AROUND
THE WORLD
SHARE THEIR FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE
AS PART OF A SYNODAL CHURCH.



Input for the 2021-2023 Synod: Communion, Participation, Mission

FutureChurch
3909 Rocky River Dr.
Cleveland, OH USA 44111

The Feast of Pentecost

June 5, 2022

Dear Pope Francis,



Today, on the Feast of Pentecost, we celebrate the Holy Spirit coming upon the Apostles, Mary, and the first followers of Jesus by sending you and the bishops in the United States and beyond our report, "In Our Own Voices." The report is our response to your invitation to become a synodal, listening church. The report is the fruit of twelve synodal sessions offered by FutureChurch during Lent (March 2 – April 6, 2022) when nearly 600 faith-filled Catholics gathered to listen to each other, to share their faith stories, and to offer their discernment regarding the future of the Catholic Church.

As you will find in our attachments, we offer both a summary of the report, as well as, an appendix that holds the unedited stories -- the sorrows, hopes, and dreams -- shared by our participants. These are sacred stories, Good News stories offered by committed, faithful Catholics who celebrate the ways that, as the Body of Christ, we bring the Gospel to the world. But these Catholics also share the sacred stories of longing -- for a church that lives up to its Vatican II potential and its own Catholic Social Teachings, especially as it concerns our ecclesial structures for ministry, governance, and leadership.

Participants shared concrete ideas for change, but they also shared how profoundly meaningful the synodal process was.

This was an amazing experience! I'm so grateful for the opportunity. I really needed this emotionally and I feel so much more hopeful and heard and empowered knowing our voices will be taken to the synod and the people of God are in this together.

It was a wonderful experience. I felt heard and enjoyed hearing other's concerns. It was uplifting to find so many people who recognize that the laity voices, especially female voices are frequently not desired or heard. I am hearing that the laity have evolved and live in a real world as the too many clergy and the institutional church is stuck in a time that has not existed for a very long time. We all are the Body of Christ. Everyone has something to offer.

Please accept this offering as a sign of our hope, faith, and love for the Church that has so deeply shaped our lives.

In Christ,

Todd Ray
Chair

Sean Gargamelli-McCreight
Vice-Chair

Marie Graf
Secretary

James Connell
Treasurer

Joseph Miller
Membership Chair

Russ Petrus
Co-Director

Deborah Rose
Co-Director

EUCCHARISTIC
PARISH LIFE

PRIESTHOOD

WOMEN

LAITY

RACIAL JUSTICE

FAITH
PUBLIC LIFE

FUTURECHURCH SYNODAL SESSIONS I MARCH 2 - APRIL 6, 2022

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PAGES 1 - 117 CONTAINS A SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES SHARED BY PARTICIPANTS DURING OUR MARCH 2-APRIL 6, 2022 SYNODAL SESSIONS.

THE COMPLETE LIST OF ALL RESPONSES IS LOCATED IN THE CORRESPONDING APPENDIX, "OUR STORIES", BEGINNING ON PAGE 120.

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SHAPING THE FUTURE A SYNODAL CHURCH

Pope Francis has called for a new way of being church. Rooted in the principles of Vatican II, he is preparing Catholics all over the world to enter into a new paradigm of relating to one another and discerning the future. He is urging us to “walk together” as we shape our collective future by listening to and learning from one another.

Although the term “synodality” may be new, the Catholics who participated in this survey regularly shared that they have been “walking together” in solidarity with marginalized sisters and brothers for most of their Catholic lives. They have listened deeply to the suffering of those excluded and, as faith-filled Catholics, they invest their God-given life energies to bring about a richer, more just and inclusive Catholic community and world. They attest that their faith is rooted in the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching. And to the extent we can grow into an authentically synodal church, these Catholics say “Amen.”

I am certain the Spirit will guide us and give us the grace to move forward together, to listen to one another and to embark on a discernment of the times in which we are living, in solidarity with the struggles and aspirations of all humanity.

-Pope Francis, Address at Opening of Synod

FUTURECHURCH



IN OUR OWN VOICES

WHO WE ARE

NEARLY

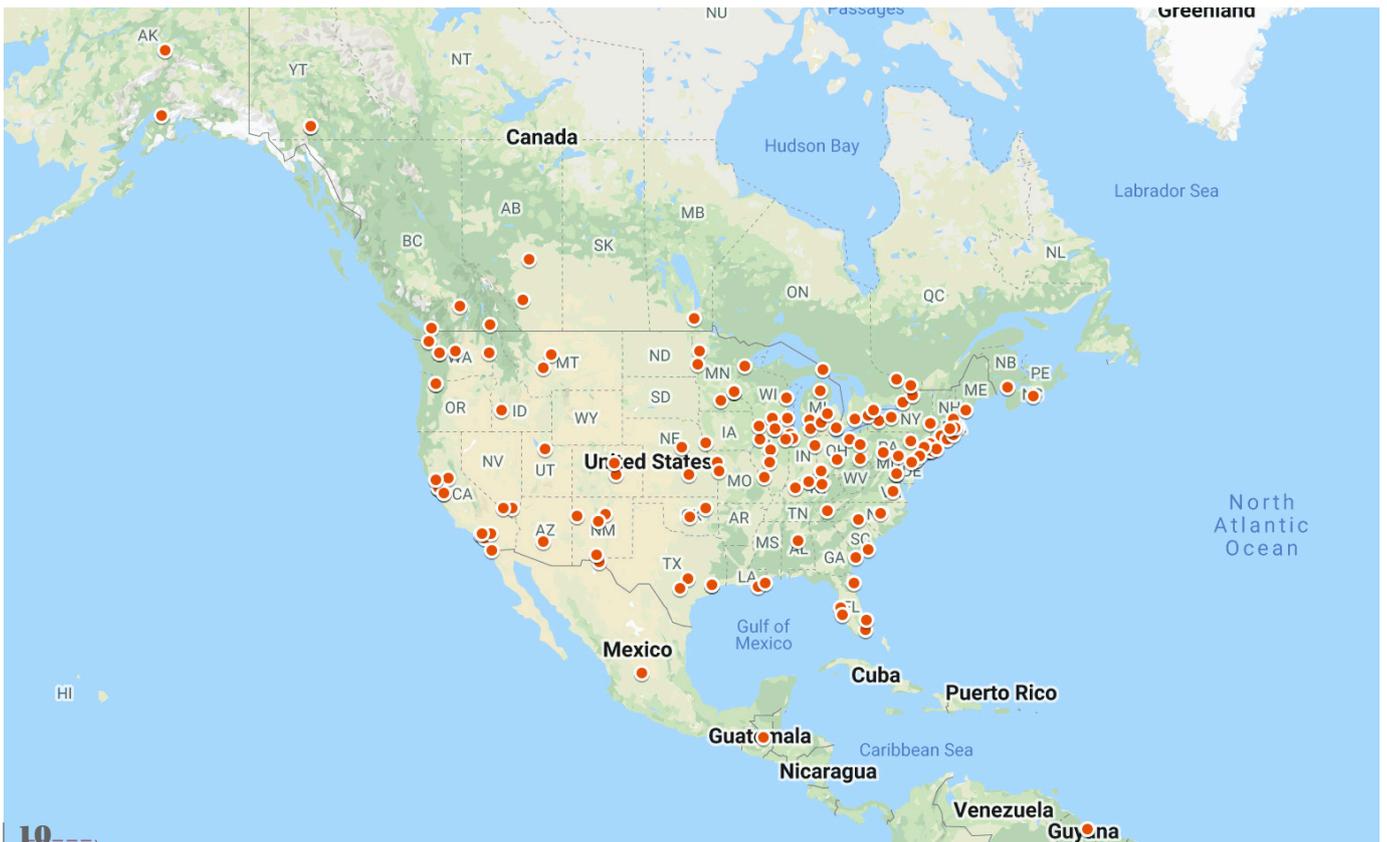
600 CATHOLICS
RERESENTING

170 DIOCESES
GATHERED OVER THE COURSE
OF SIX WEEKS TO PRAY, TO
LISTEN TO ONE ANOTHER,
AND TO SHARE THEIR LOVE,
DOUBTS, AND DREAMS FOR OUR
CHURCH.



OUR DIOCESES

UNITED STATES, CANADA, SOUTH AMERICA, EUROPE, OCEANIA, ASIA



“”

I wanted you to know how much this effort means to me and so many others. It is wonderful to gather together and know that our voices will be carried to the Vatican.

A participant in these synodal sessions



THE EUCHARIST & PARISH CLOSURES & MERGERS

SESSION I

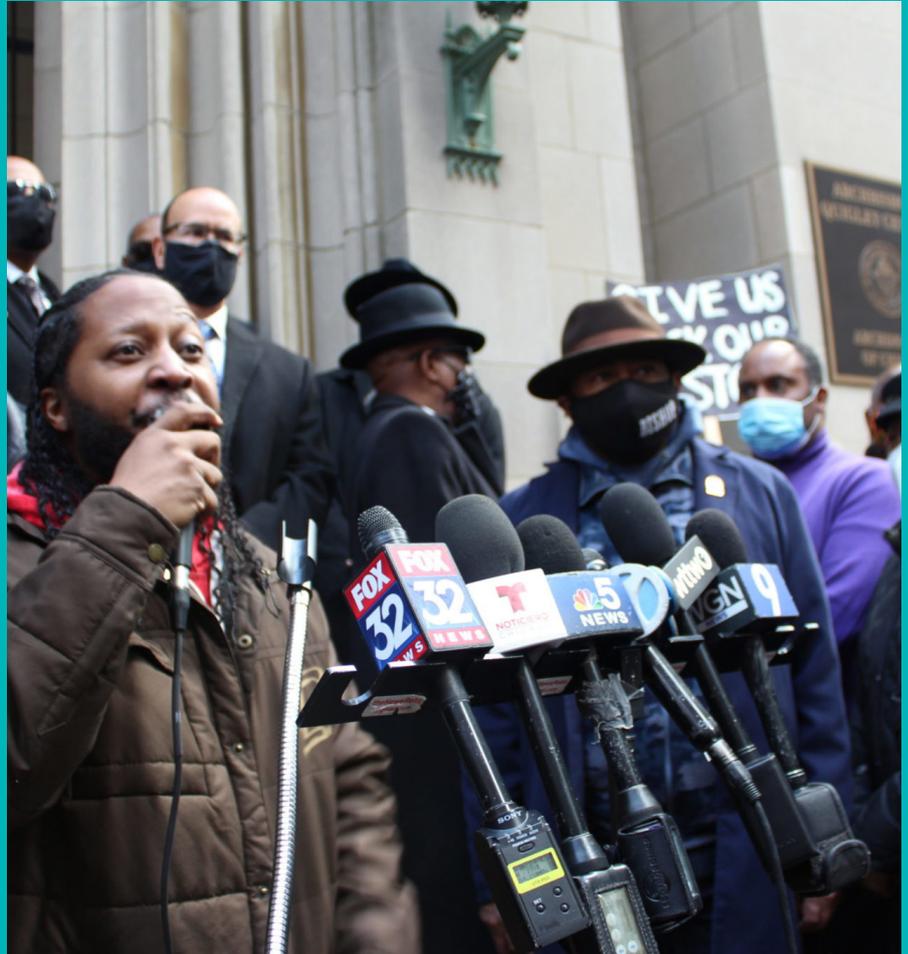
I feel very hurt and angry about the mergers and closings. I feel that our bishops do not care about the People of God or the work the Gospel. They do not follow Pope Francis when he says that even a small group should keep a parish together. The parish is the heartbeat of a community. When a parish closes in a poverty stricken area, it exacerbates poverty...the weeds grow up, stores close, gas stations close, etc. I am angry that those who call themselves pastor do not do more to keep parishes, especially vital inner city parishes open.

~participant

The context for our first synodal session is the reality of the changing workforce available to serve parishes in the United States and the subsequent closing of Catholic parishes, the traditional hub of community life.

Without doubt, we are witnessing a permanent shift. The mainstay of parish leadership, the local priest, is a fading entity as their numbers continue to drop significantly, with not only fewer numbers of priests, but fewer who are able to serve in an aging population.

Catholics understand well that this downward trend cannot be dismissed since it is affecting every facet of Catholic life – parish life, Catholic education, programs, and ministries. The places where Catholics gather to be nurtured, challenged, and work together to live the Gospel are steadily disappearing.

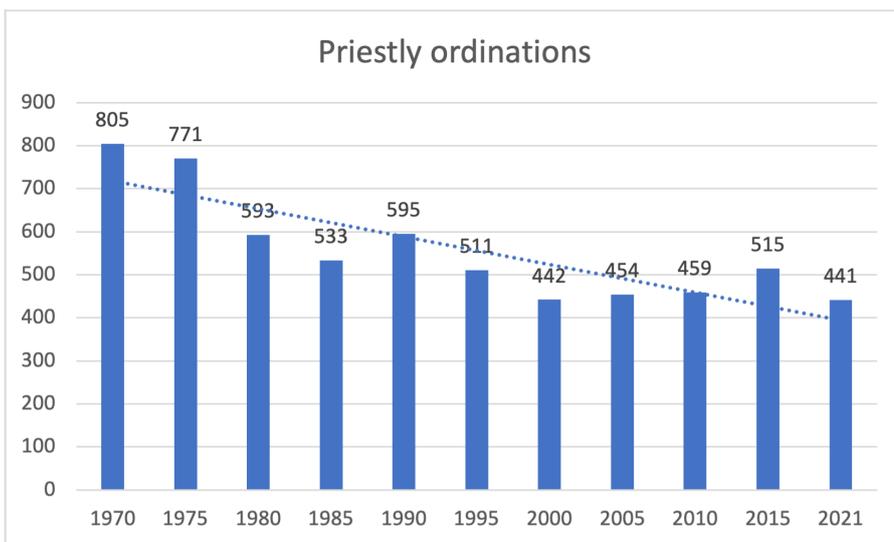
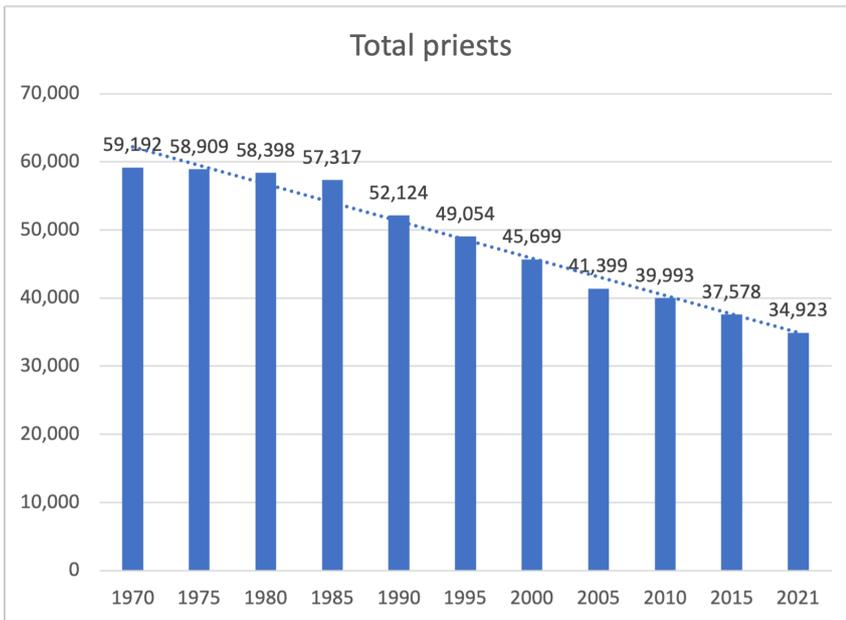


BLACK CATHOLICS WITNESSING IN CHICAGO



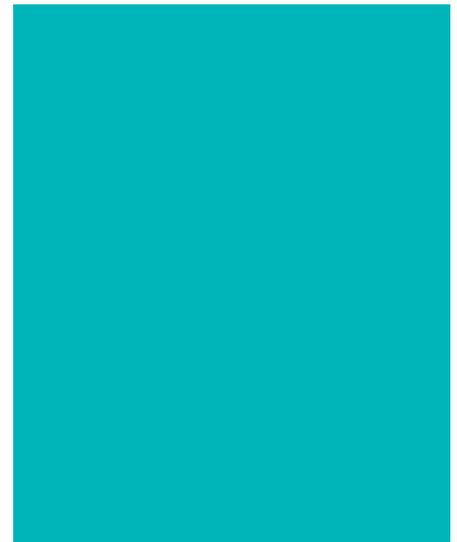
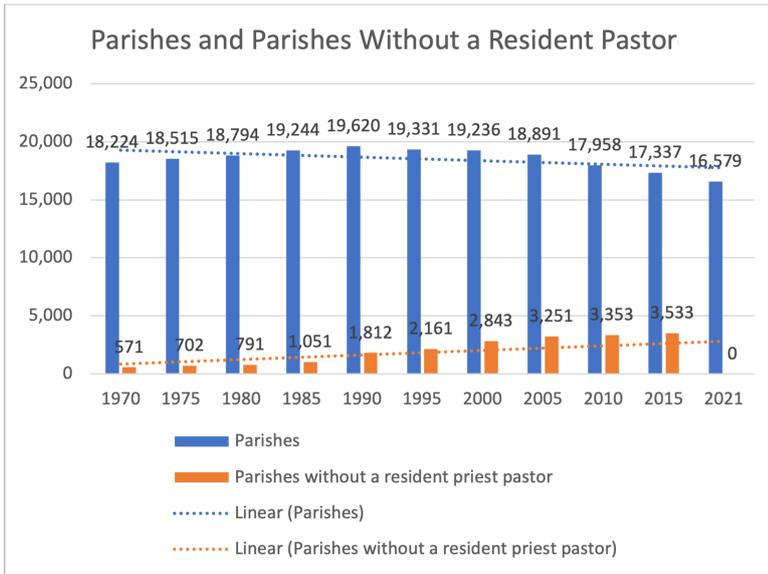


According to Georgetown’s Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), since 1970, the number of priests in the United States has decreased 41% . The diagram below illustrates this trend. Even more devastating to the numbers is the fact that many are approaching or at retirement age. The number of active priests in dioceses has dropped from 90% in 1970 to 66% in 2021. When applied to 2021 statistics, that means there are only about 23,049 active priests today to serve parishes in the United States. (<https://cara.georgetown.edu/frequently-requested-church-statistics/>)



This downward trend is also occurring in terms of new candidates being ordained to the priesthood. Although there was a slight uptick in 2015, the numbers continue to drop.



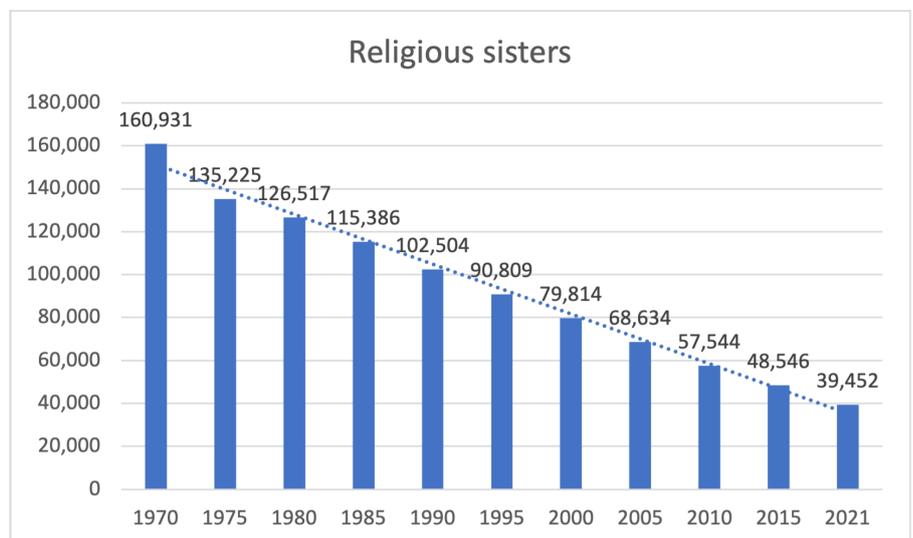


RETIRED PRIEST, REV. GERRY BECHARD

As the number of available priests has declined, the number of parishes where Catholics are nurtured in the faith and fed on the Word and the Eucharist are dwindling. While the number of parishes increased from 1970 to 1990, since the all-time high (n. 19,620), the number of parishes has decreased 15.5%.

Thus, as would be expected, the number of parishes without a resident pastor has risen by 13%.

Another consideration is the reality that the number of women religious has also dropped precipitously. Pioneers and prophets in their own right, they have built up a wide and diverse network of educational, healthcare, social service, and paradigm shifting ministries throughout the United States and beyond. The decline in their numbers also affects the pool of ministers and leaders who are available for service.



39,500

LAY ECCLESIAL
MINISTERS

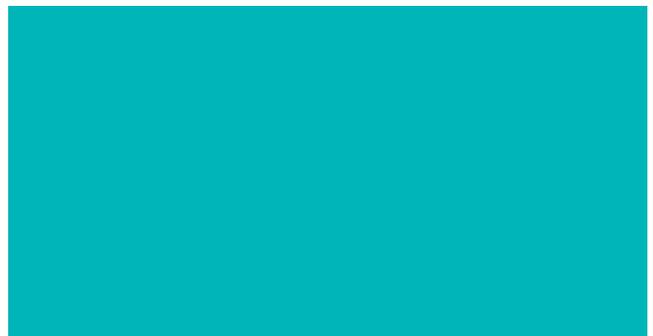
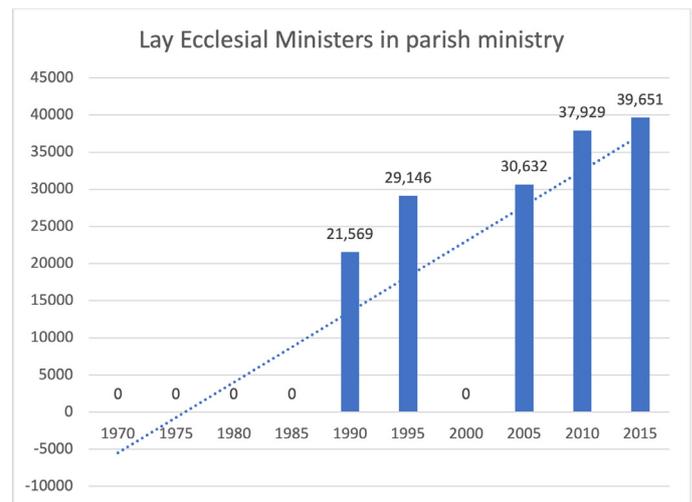
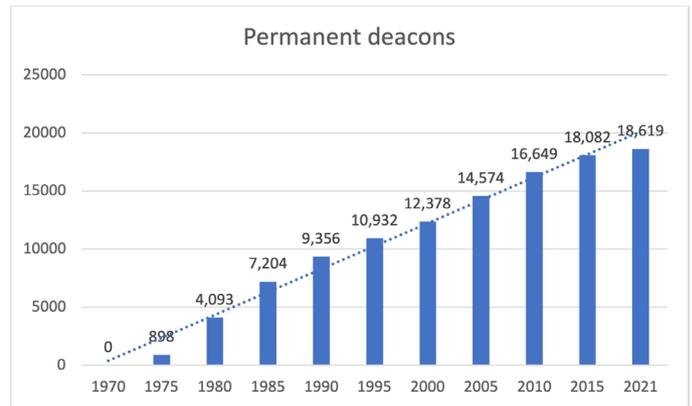
18,619 DEACONS

While there are fewer ordained and consecrated Catholics to serve our parishes, the number of male ordained deacons and lay ecclesial ministers (which includes women religious) is swelling.

Since the diaconate was restored after Vatican II, the number of men ordained deacons has increased 1973% to a total of 18,619 deacons today.

Along with the increase in male deacons, there are now over 39,500 lay ecclesial ministers in the United States. Of that number, 80% are women, a testament to the commitment of Catholic women everywhere.

Further, the number of lay associations of religious orders has increased significantly. A study released July 18, 2016 by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) shows that the number of associates in the United States has grown nearly 40 percent, from nearly 25,500 in 2000 to more than 35,000 today. Across the U.S. and Canada, there are 56,000 associates, 90% of whom are women.



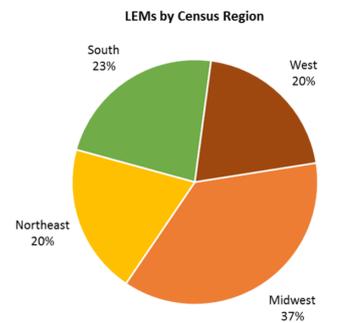
Race and Ethnicity of Groups within the Catholic Church in the United States					
	White	Hispanic	Black	Asian	Other
Clergy					
Catholic priests	92%	3%	2%	3%	<1%
Catholic priests born after 1960	75	15	2	8	<1
Permanent deacons (active)	76	16	4	3	1
Ordinands (2012)	71	15	3	9	1
Men & Women Religious					
Men and women in perpetual vows	94%	3%	1%	2%	<1%
Women professing perpetual vows (2011)	66	10	4	17	3
Men professing perpetual vows (2011)*	50	0	12	38	0
Lay Persons					
Lay ecclesial ministers	88%	9%	2%	1%	<1%
Adult Mass-attending Catholics (in-pew)	62	26	2	5	5
All adult Catholics	58	35	3	3	1

*Estimates for new religious brothers are based on a small sample. Sources: The CARA Catholic Poll (CCP), CARA Pastoral Assistance Surveys and Services (PASS) In-Pew Cumulative Statistics, *The Changing Face of U.S. Catholic Parishes* (2011), *New Sisters and Brothers in Perpetual Vows* (2011), *Recent Vocations to Religious Life* (2009), *The Class of 2012: Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood* (2012), *Same Call, Different Men: The Evolution of the Priesthood since Vatican II* (2012), *A Portrait of the Permanent Diaconate* (2012).

CARA data shows that around 50% of LEMs have a professional or graduate degrees and are a somewhat more diverse group than clergy or religious.. The largest number of LEMs (37%) live in the Midwest where parish mergers and closing rates are high.

As CARA data indicates, we recognize the substantial shift from clergy and religious women to lay ministers will require a new openness lay ministers and leaders to lead, teach, guide, and minister in our church.

Given these trends, on a practical level, it would be logical for bishops to rely more heavily on lay ministers and deacons, appointing them in ever greater numbers to oversee the pastoral and administrative needs of parishes without resident priests. Canon Law 517.2 states that a bishop may entrust the pastoral care of a parish to a lay person or deacon.

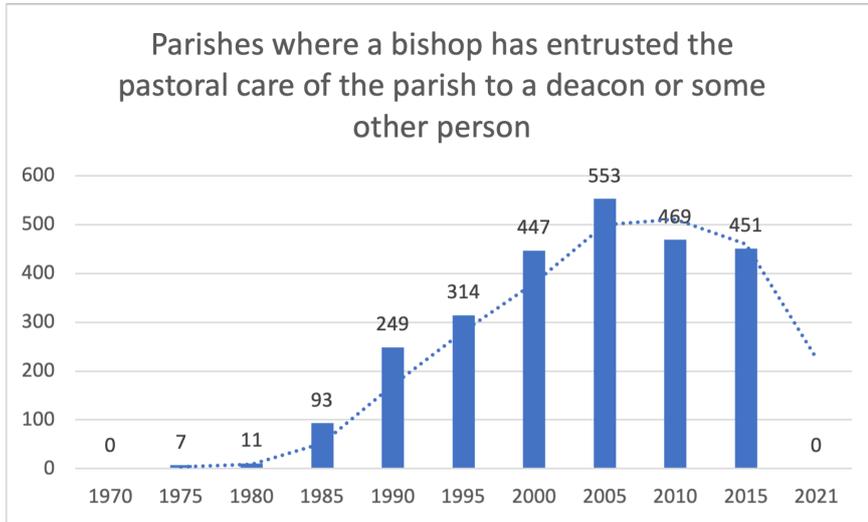


Sources: The Official Catholic Directory, *Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership*

Canon 517.1 & 517.2

When circumstances require it, the pastoral care of a parish or of different parishes together can be entrusted to several priests in solidum, with the requirement, however, that in exercising pastoral care one of them must be the moderator, namely, the one who is to direct the joint action and to answer for it to the bishop.

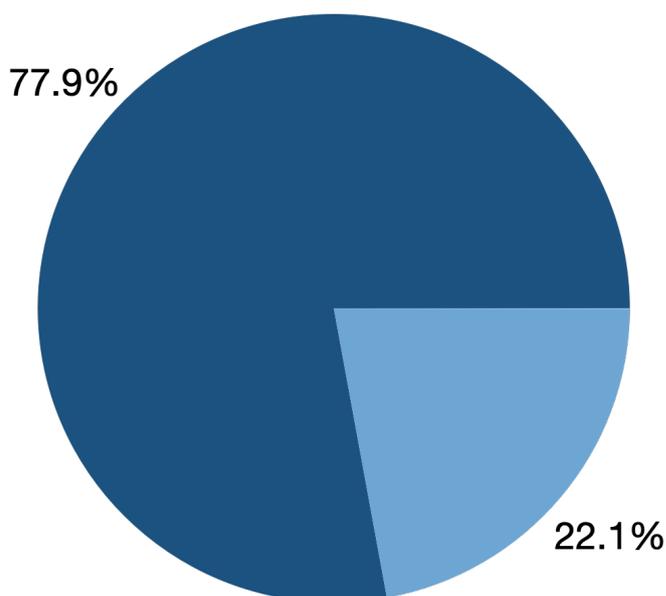
§2. If, because of a lack of priests, the diocesan bishop has decided that participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish is to be entrusted to a deacon, to another person who is not a priest, or to a community of persons, he is to appoint some priest who, provided with the powers and faculties of a pastor, is to direct the pastoral care.



Given the ongoing threats to parish life, an expanded use of Canon 517.2 to oversee parish life seems logical, but, in fact, its use in decline after reaching a high of 553 appointees in 2005.

It seems that bishops are choosing to underutilize that option, especially in the face of hard hit dioceses such as Boston, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland. etc. And recently, the Archbishop of Cincinnati conducted the largest reorganization and merger of parishes to date combining the diocese’s 208 parishes into 57 groupings.

Given those statistics, it is not surprising that participants had personally experienced the effects of the priest shortage and the subsequent merging and closing of parishes.



Nearly 78% of respondents indicated that they have experienced parish mergers and closures in their diocese.

THE EFFECTS OF PARISH MERGERS & CLOSURES

Many of the respondents shared their stories and experiences (see Appendix 1) of parish mergers and closures.

Sadly, many shared their sense that the bishops simply do not care and certainly don't make a genuine effort to consult the parishioners being affected.



A WITNESS

My own childhood parish has closed and like so many, was situated in the poorest area of our town... many elderly have been left with no transportation to the merged parish church and suffer greatly from lack of frequent Eucharists. As a lay associate of a religious community that served many parishes throughout New England (I was part of that community for 7 years/ a lay associate for 32)...we have seen the majority of our schools first, and then the parish churches as well either close or experience a merger. (Numerous/countless stories of heartbreak here...)Also, I recently was asked to facilitate a 3 week-end retreat to try to bring together members from 4 different parishes who were experiencing merging; the disillusionment, sadness and frustration was palpable making community so difficult to achieve, largely due to the way the Bishop had handled this issue in the first place...so needless.



A WITNESS

Our merger combined two smaller churches (one definitely operating at a loss) with our large vibrant church. We were an inclusive church with close to a thousand volunteers in countless ministries. It truly felt like there was a place for anyone who wished to serve.

Clearly COVID had a devastating effect but with new administration and the shift to tighter controls over our programs, we have lost many parishioners. Most notably we lost our thriving youth ministry. Resources being pulled away possibly to assist the elementary school which became a part of our grouping. I am particularly saddened by this as I believe our church has no future without our young people. Teenagers are now a rare sight at our masses. I have been a member of my church for 23 years and have been involved in many different ministries over the years. I have backed away from all but a few...



A WITNESS

During the closures in New York and Hartford, I listened to stories of family, friends, and other community members about the ways in which they felt deeply disempowered by the leadership.

We never felt consulted or considered in the decision even though our families were often the ones who actually built the church with time and treasure.

Bishops and Cardinals have all the power but didn't suffer any of the pain or consequences we as parishioners felt.

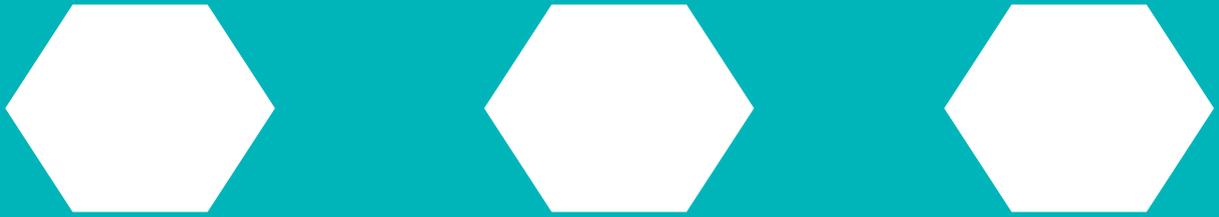
We can always creatively imagine ways to keep these smaller church communities open if given the chance to be included in the conversation. People before profit! They should not just be seen as ways for the diocese to expand its financial assets or cover debts. These spaces belong to the people not the hierarchy.

CATHOLICS SHARE THEIR
**HEART
ACHE**

AT THE CLOSING OR MERGER
OF THEIR PARISH

I am feeling very discouraged; sad to see parishes close and merge when there are other people in our Church who could serve as leaders and ministers of the sacraments. In addition to covid interruptions I have not seen many of my fellow parishioners in several years and wonder who will come back. We need new leadership, new energy and calling back those who have left. Friends are hurt that the Church is failing them, as am I.

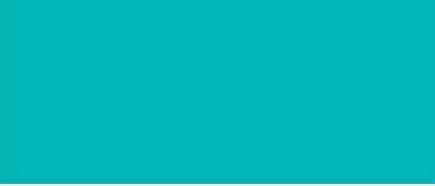
A PARTICIPANT



MANY PARTICIPANTS SHARED A SENSE OF SADNESS, HEARTACHE, ANGER, AND DISCOURAGEMENT AS THEIR PARISHES -- THEIR FAITH COMMUNITIES -- ARE BEING MERGED AND CLOSED. THEY FEEL FRUSTRATED AND BETRAYED BY BISHOPS WHO DID NOT ENTER INTO MEANINGFUL CONSULTATION AND WHO COULD APPOINT LAY MINISTERS AND DEACONS TO PROVIDE PASTORAL CARE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TO KEEP PARISHES OPEN, STRONG, AND VIBRANT.

WITNESS

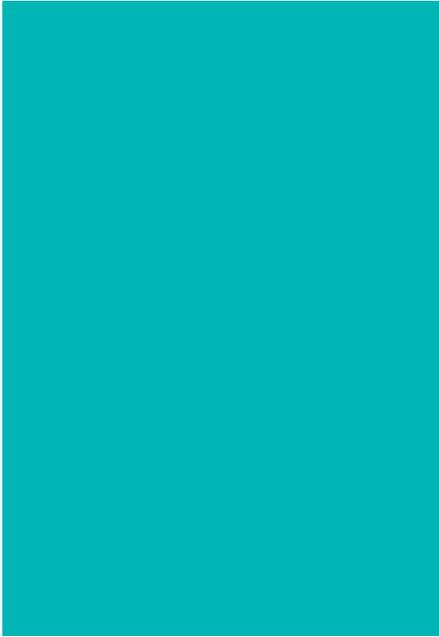
It has caused division between people and communities. There wasn't any attempts at healing the hurt feelings. It was a top to bottom decision even though people tried to in good faith make recommendations. The institutional church was not being very Eucharistic to the people they were supposed to serve and minister to.



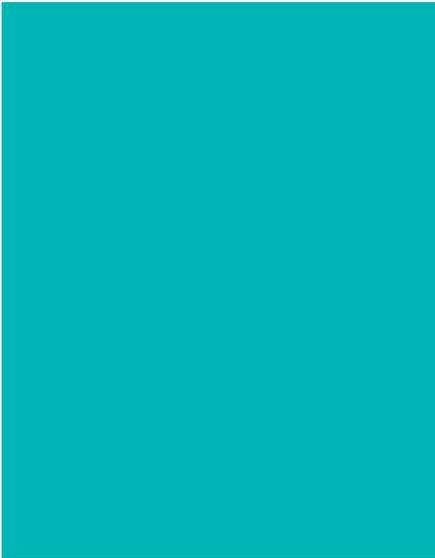
The sense of grief participants shared was palpable. Many shared a sense of sadness, anger, or discouragement that parishes are being closed when there are faith filled Catholics who could serve as leaders and ministers.

We had a major re-organization in our deanery in 2005. At that time, three parishes merged into one, and two parishes merged into one. It was very traumatic for our community – and it still is. I regularly take communion to homebound parishioners who are impacted by a closure of their parish nearly 20 years ago, and the emotions are still palpable. It is extremely haunting. A diocese next to ours actually has, or at least had, a staff person who helped parishes that were being closed or merged to deal with the grief. We cannot underestimate how great it is.

It truly is like losing our family.

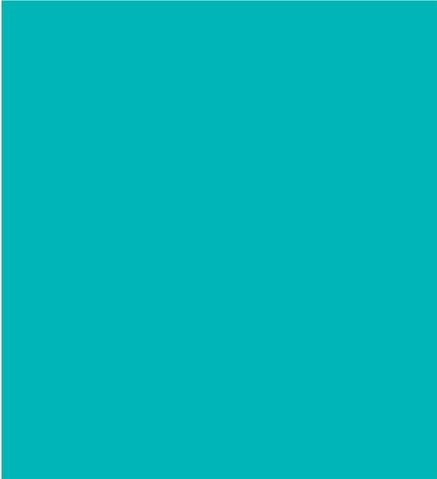


Some expressed gratitude when the very difficult process of merging and closing parishes fell under the leadership of very competent ministers. When that happened, communities were not only able to adjust, but they grew stronger.



I worked twelve years in a parish that formed from four small rural churches in Wisconsin. There was initially much hurt and grieving about the closing of those churches, but due to sensitive leadership on the part of the new pastor who had been in two of the four, a united community resulted with the faithful who stayed with the newly formed community. I had the privilege of being the lay leader for the past twelve yrs, and the community thrives due to the cream of the crop from four staying active and bringing life and spirit to the new.

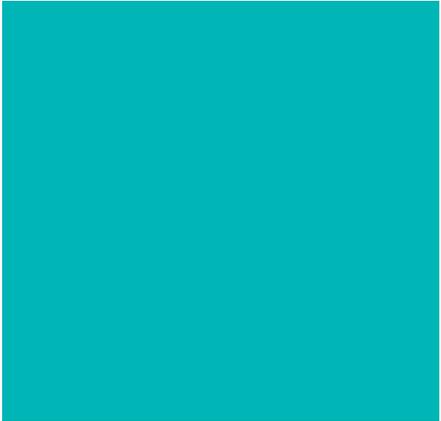
I think God is calling God’s people to wake up. The two parishes that were closed in my city served in the inner city and addressed many of the issues that plague the larger urban community. Who is there to do that now? God has given the church all she needs in terms of leadership but the church refuses to recognize the gifts God has bestowed on the people of God. There are many lay men and women who of their own volition responded to God’s call and sought and obtained education, formation, and advanced degrees. These very people would be absolutely qualified to lead a parish community. I think there is a “failure of imagination” at all levels in an institution stuck in patriarchy (even toxic patriarchy) to let the Holy Spirit breathe life into Gods church to imagine a new way of being church - A new way of being church that more closely reflects the values of Jesus and the Kingdom Jesus preached rather than the spirit-slaying hierarchy and patriarchy of the present institution.



Participants understood when parishes that serve the inner city were closed the work of the Gospel was thwarted. They faulted bishops for a lack of courage, leadership, and imagination.

Many expressed their frustration when the process was made more difficult by a bishop who lacked pastoral skills or washed his hands of the difficult work.

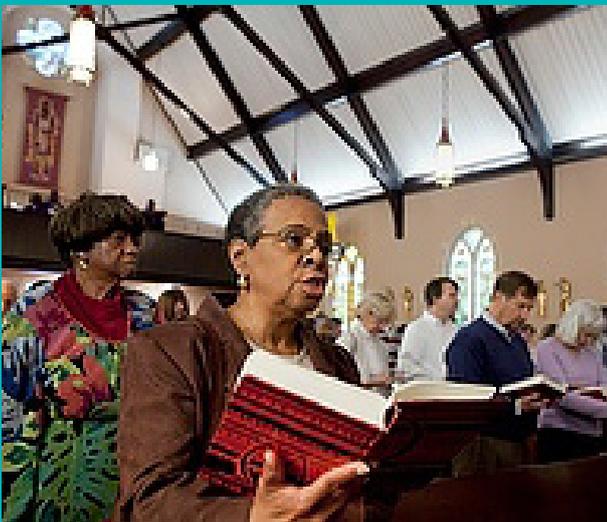
Two of three parishes had to close. The bishop required them to decide which would remain open. The other two are so angry that neither of them now attend the remaining one. Poor execution.



THE TRAVESTY OF CLOSING INNER CITY PARISHES

According to a study developed several years ago in the Cleveland diocese, it was clear from the data that a large number of parishes had been closed in areas of the city where people of color lived and where exposure to higher poverty rates and food deserts were the norm. Cliff Barber, Chief Strategic Officer for the Archdiocese of Chicago confirms the same. Black parishes are being closed in disproportionate numbers. Along that line, a number of respondents shared their concern about parishes being closed in impoverished, inner city areas. They believe Catholic dioceses should commit to keeping parishes serving the inner city open.

“There have been disproportionate numbers of closings in the Black Catholic community...”



WITNESS

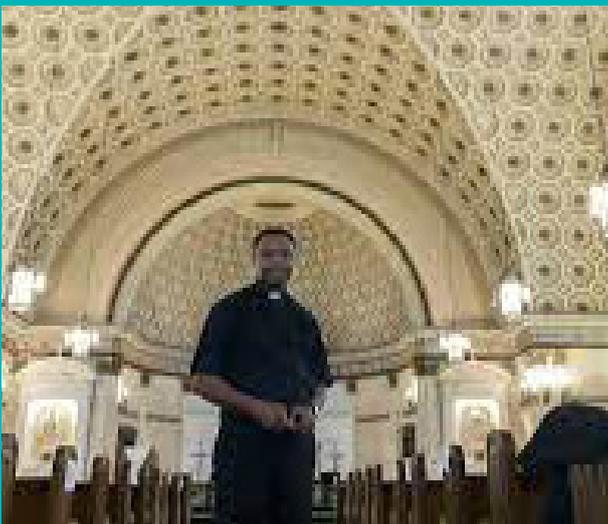
I've seen parishes with deep connections in the inner city close and one reopen as independent Eucharistic communities. This gives me hope that the gospel will continue to be lived out even if a parish is closed.

Yet, I would prefer to see dioceses commit to keeping parishes in these fragile communities OPEN as a sign that we understand and live the preferential option for the poor.



WITNESS

In Cleveland the bishop closed over 50 parishes --many in low income areas. Another blow to struggling communities, they lost their spiritual community, their center for organizing and solving problems, and their ministries. Also true is the fact that when parish closed in a poverty stricken area, that act exacerbated the problem. One more stable, caring community was gone. The weeds grew up, stores closes, gas stations closes, and people felt abandoned.. Yet, some were able to reverse the decision and their victories were celebrated..



WITNESS

I recently went by my first church in the south side of Chicago, and it is dirty and run down. It is now mostly Black as is the grammar school. Even sadder is the convent--only 4 nuns and they have to raze the building because it is in such disrepair! The principal wants to build a clinic in its place, but needs \$1M. There is a financial disparity between whites and Blacks because they do not have the money to repair the school or raze and build a new clinic in their neighborhood! It was sad... most decisions are made because of money. It's not the church of the poor.



WITNESS

Many parishes are hurting.

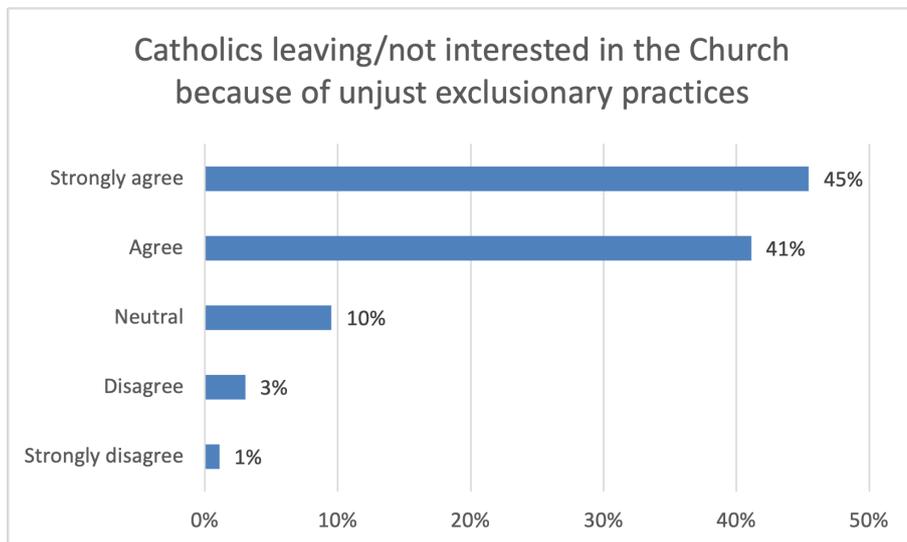
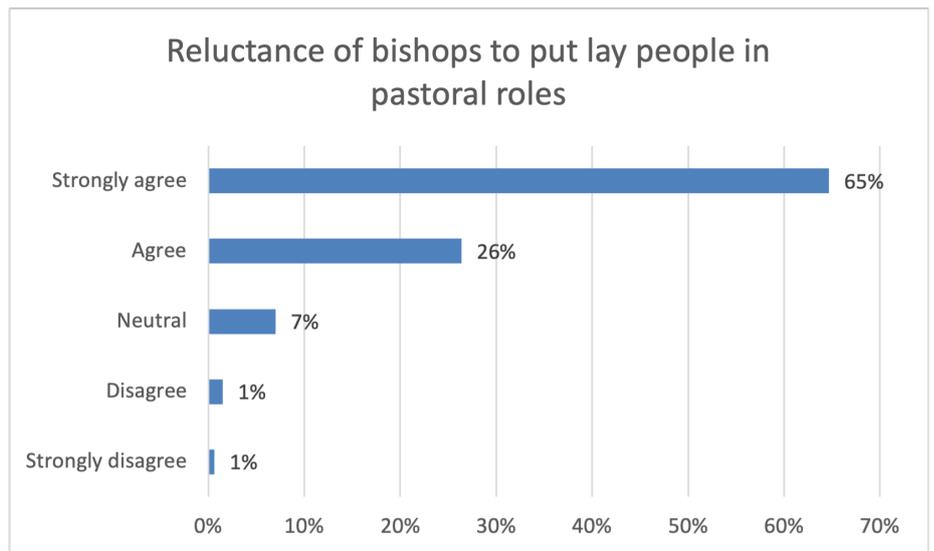
And even worse, there have been major closures in inner city and communities that serve majority immigrant parishioners.

Catholics from Vietnam and Latin and South American countries are suffering as a result..

THE CAUSES

When asked what they understand to be the reason for the ever increasing merger and closure of parishes, there was strong agreement that it is a failure on the bishops' part to install lay persons (Canon 517.2) in key roles such as parish and pastoral administrators. Ninety-one percent (91%) strongly agreed or agreed that mergers and closures are the result of bishops' reluctance to install lay people to keep parishes vibrant and open.

RELUCTANCE

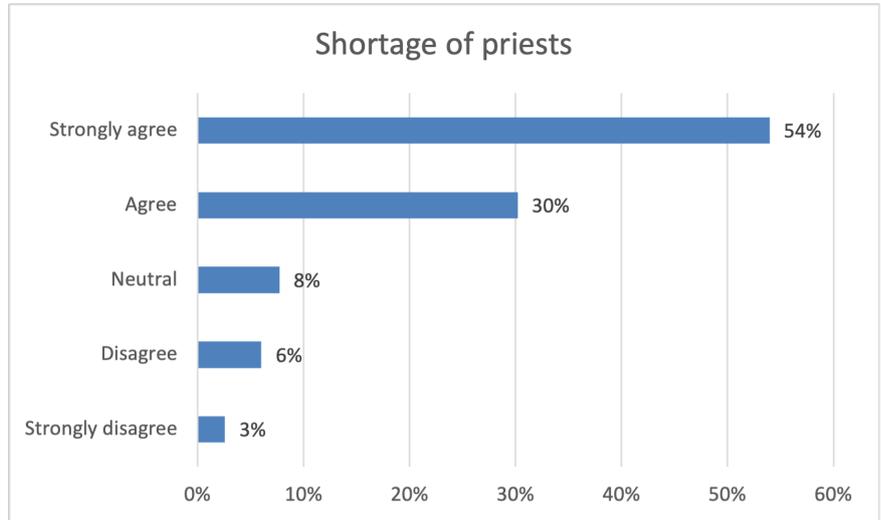


INJUSTICES

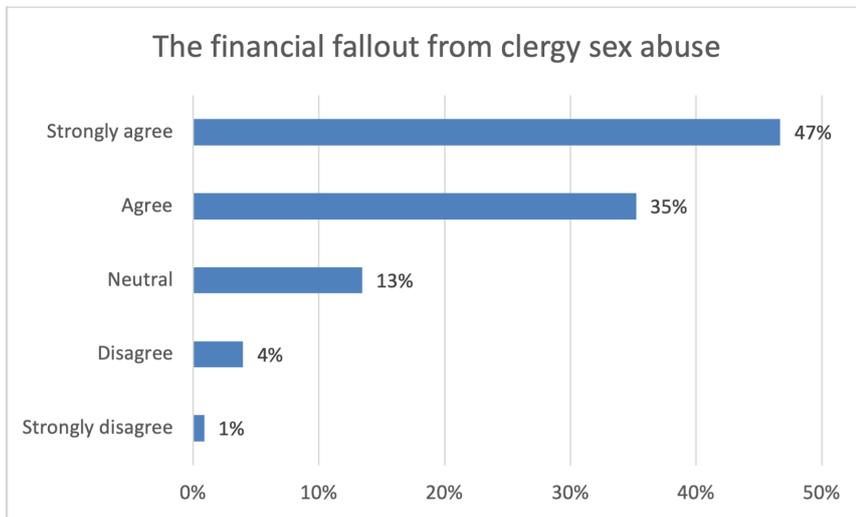
Eighty-six percent (86%) agreed or strongly agreed that Catholics are leaving because of the unjust exclusionary practices of the hierarchy.

PRIEST SHORTAGE

Eighty-four percent (84%) recognized the fact that the shortage of priests is a factor prompting parish mergers and closures.



Eighty-two percent (82%) believe churches are closing because of the financial fallout from the clergy sex abuse crisis.



Even though many bishops have cited “secularization” as the reason Catholics are leaving and churches are closing, these participants did not agree. Only 42% strongly agreed or agreed that secularization of values is to blame. That stands in contrast to bishops who are predicating their campaign revive the Eucharist on this notion.

FINANCIAL CORRUPTION FALLOUT



PARTICIPANTS SHARE THEIR FAITH IN THE FUTURE

WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT CALLING US TO DO?

In response to the question of what the Holy Spirit is calling us to do right now in the face of an ever-worsening priest shortage, the continued merging and closing of parishes, and the narrowing opportunity to participate in the Eucharist, respondents shared what they believe the Holy Spirit is asking of us today.

Although respondents offered a number of suggestions, statistically, the prevailing sentiments focused on women, lay leadership/ministry, married men, small or intentional communities of faith, and being creative, welcoming, and open to the Spirit as we move forward together.

I believe God is calling lay people to take up roles of leadership within the Church. Lay people can keep parishes open and vibrant. If the church refuses to open ordination beyond male celibates, then we must find a way to empower lay people to carry out those roles. We need the Eucharist to feed each other so that we can carry out the work of the Gospel everywhere.

Please prayerfully consider women and married men, who feel called to the priesthood, and who are highly trained to serve God's people rather than to close churches

WOMEN IN MINISTRY LAY LEADERSHIP

Use our baptismal credentials to go forth and do what Christ taught us. We can become living Eucharist to others. Perhaps this is what God is asking. Also push for women, married men and others to become ordained. Also lay community Liturgy of the Word can become the standard as I've seen in some parishes - for over 20 years now. Let the lay baptised take their place and let us do it without the input of the clergy if necessary. We must find a way to empower lay people to carry out those roles. We need the Eucharist to feed each other so that we can carry out the work of the Gospel everywhere.

Ordain women, recruit, train & empower ministers of the sacraments. We need women in priestly roles, especially since enough men are not coming forward. Our Church is not living Christ's message of love and all being created in God's image. His image is not a physical one, don't need male parts to carry on God's love and ministry.

Open the priesthood to women; ask more people to prayerfully consider whether God is calling them.

Pope Francis and the Curia have got to listen to the needs of people (as happened in Latin America) and get with the ideas of married priests, female priest, allow married priests to return.

Open priesthood to women and married men. This would increase the pool of candidates by five- fold at least. We could be more selective about which ones get ordained. Having clergy that “look like them” and they can relate to would attract more people to the church and they would be better served by the church.

Listen to the people of God and make use of their talents. Allow priests who have left to lead services even if married.

MARRIED PRIESTS

SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

I think the Spirit is moving in Small Christian Communities, Intentional Eucharistic Communities, etc. All of the ways that the Pandemic created a new open space for online faith communities and worship, similar to what FutureChurch is doing. I do not want the parishes to die out and I would love to find a parish that my family feels deeply connected to and spiritually fed by and that becomes a key site for our life as Christian disciples, but it's not the case now. We go for mass to various places. I have taught in Catholic elementary and secondary settings and sometimes I think these places fill in the gaps where parishes are failing -- families can connect to worship, community service, etc. and many other things that parishes offer. We need married priests, women priests, sanctioned gay marriage and gay married clergy. Open the whole thing up and let the Church be totally turned upside down and transformed. The all-male celibate clergy is suffocating the life out of the Church and the parishes; it's like they have a stranglehold on the whole thing and refuse to let go of their power. Change is deeply needed.

I believe we owe it to people who leave our parishes to contact them and to listen to why they are leaving. I have talked to dozens of people who've walked away from the Catholic Church and I understand their concerns. I know that many women walk away because of the difficulty in getting an annulment. As one told me, "it's bad enough to be dumped by your spouse and left with hurt children, but then, to have to assume the brunt of responsibility for getting an annulment as well by a church that really should be supporting you, it's just too much." As Pope Francis has said, many people are leaving for reasons that we are capable of understanding and addressing if only we take the time to ask. Second, I believe our church needs to recognize and honor, even to the point of ordination, women and our desire to serve God. Many of us have been gifted in ways that could help the church if only we were allowed to help our church. It's not a lack of people so much as it is a lack of people who are allowed to follow God the way we are called. Third, I think our church needs to seriously look at how it is handling such things as annulments, care to the homebound, and outreach to the most vulnerable among us. We are losing many devout members who feel abandoned by the church when they most need its support. Fourth, I think our church needs to begin making a concerted effort through its preaching to form missionary disciples. I doubt whether most Catholics have ever had the opportunity to think about what it really needs to be the body of Christ, literally and ontologically joined in reception of the Eucharist. We don't understand how to love each other let alone how to be beacons of light in our very dark world. Thank you for asking.

Look at the ways to subsidize low income churches if they are filling an important role in the community. Allow women to be deacons and be ordained.

Continue to try to be the church. Reach out to youth and have meaningful Catechetical programs, for all. Open church involvement for laypeople along with formation to carry out tasks. Living the truth that Liturgy means the work of the Whole People of God, not reserved for the priest alone.

ATTEND TO THE
NEEDS OF PEOPLE

I believe that a new and revived organization for parishes within a diocese is needed and should be tried.

If a parish is financially viable and seems to be so for the next few years, if it seems to be a vibrant community of believers, worshipers, and witnesses, then I believe that the diocesan leadership and the local bishop should do all possible to avoid the parish's suppression, despite a forecast of fewer priests.

The priests may have to travel between parishes, but I think that is preferable to closing or merging viable parishes. Lay permanent deacons, pastoral associates, and parish lay leadership can assist a peripatetic priest in sustaining and growing parish life and worship. It won't be an easy life for priests under this schema, but perhaps the format might serve as a bridge to the time when the Roman Catholic Church wakes up to the possibility of married priests and women deacons and priests.

~participant



Finally, given the experience of many who were already part of merged parishes, some respondents offered their own dose of wisdom suggesting that parishioners who are being asked to form new and expanded parish communities be generous, creative, imaginative, and prophetic so that the newly formed parish would be able to engage in the work of the Gospel going into the future.

Respond to the sign of the times. Aggiornamento! Open discussion with church leaders, lay, women, theologians, Christian leaders, young and old, guided by the grace of the Holy Spirit to find common ground to be alive and working in the world today, so the gospel is relevant and central to all of us who so desperately want to live as Jesus lived. We need a church that looks like the people in the world. Not other worldly robed hierarchy on pedestals. But living messengers and ministers (male and female) of the gospel as it applies to the modern world.

Recognize the church of the future will be led by young people. Ask and listen to their needs, wants, questions.... how can they be served spiritually emotionally. What is their vision?

Reach out to people in the margins where they are. LISTEN. Listen to EVERYONE. Perhaps God is calling us to re-imagine church - to open a window... maybe to leave the building and discover the true essence of Eucharist and Community. Find others who are socially aware and working for change.

Be more welcoming and nonjudgmental. We need to be an inclusive church not an elitist, exclusionary one. The laity needs to be taking much more of a leadership role. Listening rather than condemnation and polarization is called for at this time. Also, much more engagement in Catholic social teaching needs to occur.

IN OUR OWN VOICES

THE FUTURE OF THE PRIESTHOOD

SESSION II



After Vatican II, bishops and priests across the United States led the way in reshaping parish and diocesan life to better reflect the principles of *Gaudium Et Spes*, *Lumen Gentium*, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, and more. Lay people and women took up new roles in ministry and governance.

The Mass moved from a private individual affair with people praying rosaries while the priest uttered prayers in Latin, to a celebratory table where community was built and people were nourished by both the Eucharist and the Word to take on the mission of the Gospel in the world.

Ecumenism and inter-faith engagement helped rid the Catholic Church of its long anti-Semitic biases with new alliances being built with people of other faith traditions. If the windows were opening to let in

the fresh air as Pope John XXIII had declared, priests and bishops were there leading some of the heaviest lifting.

In that era, many bishops and priests -- Gustavo Gutiérrez, OP, Daniel Berrigan, SJ, Robert Nugent, +Thomas Gumbleton, +Raymond Hunthausen, became legendary for

their work opposing war, militarism, the buildup of nuclear weapons, unfettered capitalism, as well as building new bridges for inclusion of LGBTQI people, women, Catholic of color, divorced and remarried Catholics and more. Liberation theology with its preferential option for the poor became a way of life for Catholics in Latin America and



BISHOP THOMAS GUMBLETON BEING ARRESTED AT PROTEST
PHOTO: DAN ROLL

1958

Pope John XXIII

1963

Pope Paul VI

1978

Pope John Paul II

2005

Pope Benedict XVI

2013

Pope Francis

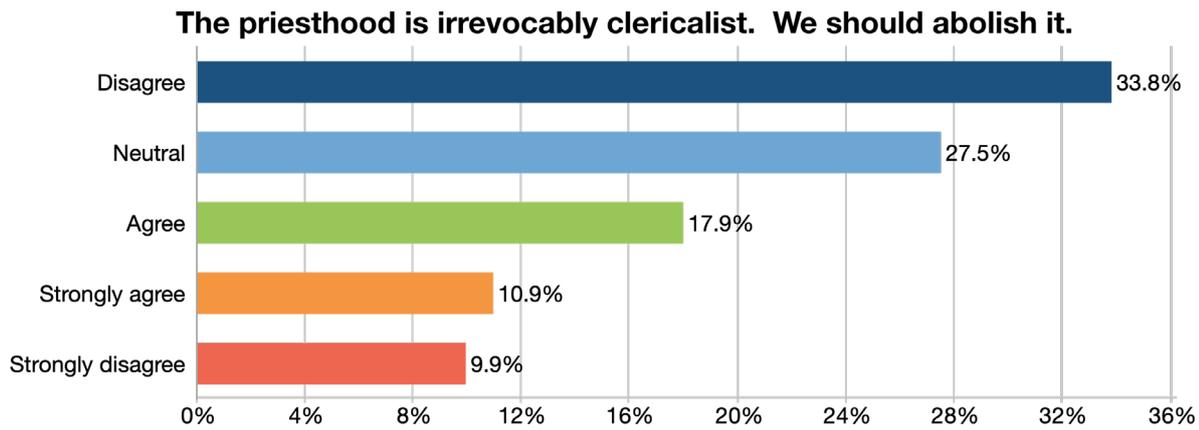
beyond. Episcopal documents such as “The Challenge of Peace (1983),” “Economic Justice for All (1986),” “Brothers and Sisters to Us (1979),” The “Declaration on Conscientious Objection (1971),” “When I call for Help: A Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence Against Women (1992),” and more helped raise new awareness of social issues and offered guidance.

With the pontificate of John Paul II, liberation theology was suppressed as bishops who supported it were silenced and replaced by bishops who opposed what was considered by John Paul II to be communist ideology, a political and economic system that was devastating in his country of Poland. A similar phenomenon occurred in the United States where a similar crop of bishops appointed by John Paul II, made it their mission to temper Vatican II reforms and reinforcing the authority of the clergy.

Of the nearly 600 who gathered during our six weeks of synodal gatherings, a large majority grew up during Vatican II. And they were proud to be part of a church where social justice and new structures for being community were unfolding.

When Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict the XVI entered their respective papacies, these same Catholics were disappointed with their policies on women and laity, as well as the reinforcement of clerical authority that fostered clericalism, corruption, and clergy sex abuse.

Still, a sizeable group of our respondents did not want to see the priesthood abolished but wanted, instead, to see a renewed, inclusive, and servant priesthood. Only 29% agreed or strongly agreed that the priesthood should be abolished.



Even though respondents did not want to see the priesthood abolished, they did call for a renewed priesthood that is rooted in service and open to women and married men.

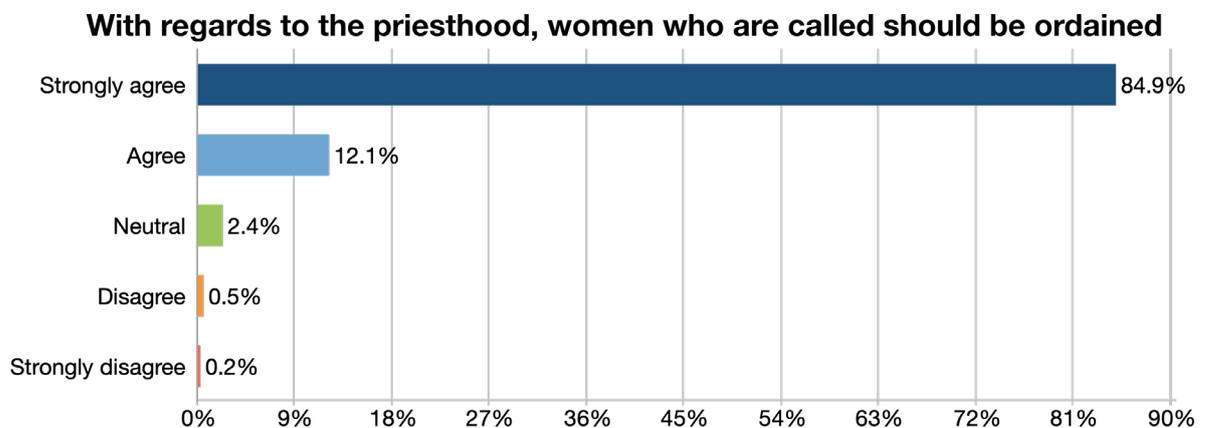
Ninety-seven percent (97%) of respondents strongly agree or agree that they want to see women ordained to the ministerial priesthood.

“

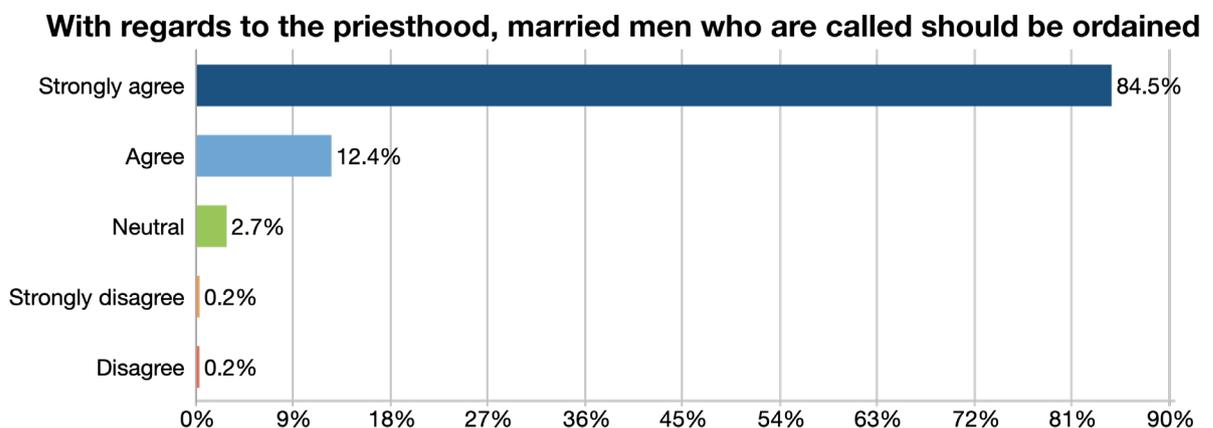
I think allowing the community to choose leaders and ministers, no matter what their ordination status would help. We need leaders...

~Participant

Ninety-seven percent (97%) of respondents strongly agree or agree that they want to see women ordained to the ministerial priesthood.



Ninety-seven percent (97%) strongly agree or agree that married men should be ordained



Which qualities are important in a priest?

Overwhelmingly, the qualities respondents wanted in their priests were the ability to work collaboratively, collegially, and respectfully with the laity and women.

One respondent said it succinctly when writing, “priests need openness, collaboration in ideas, programs, allowing lay people with some training to preach.” Another wrote that the priest should be, “pastoral, non-judgmental, supportive of the laity in their leadership in parishes.”

Respondents also appreciate it when their priests are flexible, courageousness, extend a welcoming attitude toward LGBTQI and other excluded people, listening, compassionate, and empathetic.

They want servant priests who are people of prayer, service, and humility.

On the following page, participants shared the people and communities where their Vatican II formation flourished and their experience of lay and ordained working together was life-giving.

I am connected with St. Vincent DePaul church in Baltimore where there is a long (40+) year history of the clergy ministering with the laity in service to the community. St. Vincent DePaul is a model and a standard that I use whenever I have searched for an active parish in the many cities I have lived. There are very few that measure up. St Nicholas parish in Evanston, IL is another such parish. The priest cannot be all things to all people. the laity have many gifts to offer and should be empowered to step up and fill in the gaps. This is especially important now with the priest shortage.

INSPIRING MODELS

Our experience with the Franciscans was totally one of ministering together. They welcomed all to our parish, which is very multicultural and multi ethnic and they are open to women participating in all ways. They are also welcoming of LGBTQ parishioners. When they say “All are welcome” they mean it.

My parish is a Newman Center and has Paulist priests. Many lay persons are involved in many ministries with strong support from the priests. At one time in the past, we had women “breaking open the Gospel...aka....preaching” and our priests found a way to do that.

I have experienced lay and ordained working together and I have grown spiritually because of those experiences.

This only happens when a priest or deacon is open to sharing. More and more I see this disappearing in my parish and others.

I think the Association of US Catholic Priests are a good example of how ordained and lay people might work together. I also think the International Catholic Reform Network with both priests and lay people is an excellent example of what a model of co-leadership looks like. Still, as long as there is a mythology that priests are ontologically different and better than lay persons, we will find it difficult to be true co-equals.

The best priestly experience I experienced was a humble priest in a very small parish, who embraced Vatican II and welcomed lay pastoral support and contributions. The worst priestly experience I have experienced was in a large parish with a young pastor who was “The Man” scorned Vatican II and used lay contributors like servants. My adult children, growing up in the parish and raised in the hierarchical clerical model, have abandoned it, with fervor.

NURTURING COMMUNITIES

“When my parish had a woman pastoral assistant helping the pastor, it seemed as close to co-equal as I’ve ever experienced. However, in 2 years, he retired, then died, and she also retired. New priest is younger and I think could be open, but is under the thumb of a very conservative Bishop Vasa. So the present pastor is going along to get along, i.e. not terribly effective. He’s trying to please everyone, especially the bishop. Who can blame him? The bishop is his boss and he wants the job.”

COLLABORATIVE MINISTRY

Unfortunately, there were also examples of pastors and bishops who dismissed lay persons or decimated effective lay programs. Those actions and attitudes caused considerable pain and heartache.

My pastor has removed all women from leadership roles (Pastoral Assoc, DRE, music ministry). All of these roles were filled with highly qualified, formed women. The Bishop also discontinued the lay ecclesial institute. This program was subsequently picked up by other dioceses and is a national model-but not here.

I used to be on a church counsel. I resigned because of the way my church's pastor treated me as a woman. He would treat men on the counsel as equals, but when women would speak, the clericalism would rear its ugly head.

The archbishop of Cincinnati has a closed mind when it comes to women. Women who have lay positions in parishes were not invited to Beacon of Light meetings where parishes were grouped into families.

Respondents appreciate good preaching and solid education from their priests, but most recognize that seminary formation is failing in helping priests become good pastors. Instead the formation they receive instills a sense of superiority rather than collegiality with lay persons and women.

The men coming out of the seminaries... they come across very rigid. We can't connect with them, especially the youth of our parishes. That needs to change and be restructured. Open the priesthood to woman...it's time and been too long in discussion. good pastors. Instead the formation they receive instills a sense of superiority rather than collegiality with lay persons and women.

The training in some of the seminaries is pre-Vatican II, We need for women in seminaries to create a balance. Often priest training depends on the bishop - where he sends seminarians. Married clergy has benefits and eventually women's ordination, but more women in leadership is needed.

EXPERIENCES OF CLERICALISM



The stories shared by respondents about their experiences of clericalism are unique, but are also shared by many Catholics around the world.

Catholics who have been abused by priests and bishops have been forever changed, along with the wider community. All have witnessed the harm, crimes, and corruption that is perpetrated under the cloak of clerical privilege. The path forward will be built on justice and a dismantling of the structures by which injustice has been perpetrated over and over again in our church.

Our bishop stated that he did not feel that I was credible as a victim of abuse and would not allow me to address the diocesan abuse board even though I was a member of that board. ~participant

I was verbally put down by a pastor who didn't know, and didn't care to know, my involvement in children's liturgy. I had been chairperson of a community building committee for over 10 years, and a member of the parish council. I shortly after resigned my position. My son was also removed from his lector duties because of a shirt collar not straightened in a lector training session. At this point, he was a senior in high school and had been lectoring for three years. He also lectored at the daily mass at his high school. Subsequently, he stopped going to church because he cried every time. He is also gay, and I don't know if this had anything to do with it, but he was devastated. He is such a good person and did not deserve this treatment. We now have a pastor who insists on being called Father. I haven't called a pastor Father in the 50 years of my parish.

A friend who was depressed and confused went to a priest for spiritual direction and ended up being abused mentally and physically by him. When she was in recovery from a serious crisis she approached this priest's diocese to report the situation. She needed healing. She was interviewed at length, told they were going to deal with him and would get her help. Months went by and she continued to try to get help from them, She was told the Bishop knew the whole story but they didn't recommend that she meet with him directly. Basically it seemed that they just hoped she would go away, It is still unsettled as is her mental health. This is a very simplified version of what has gone on now for more than 3 years.

I experienced being shut out by Diocesan officials when I questioned spending priorities. I felt shaken. Yet I drew strength from those who supported my stance--including the ordained.

Two and one half years ago a new pastor came in and shut down every ministry in a vibrant parish. Over 500 of us are left without a home.

TOWARDS JUSTICE

Pope Francis has spoken clearly and passionately about the need to end clericalism. He wants his priests and bishops to “know the smell of the sheep,” but he knows they resist. Too often, they opt for privilege over the Gospel.

Many Catholics work for justice within the Catholic Church. They struggle against injustice where ever it exists. Crimes committed by priests and bishops who abuse children and vulnerable adults have mobilized Catholics as never before.

FAITH HOPE



LOVE

WHAT IS THE
HOLY SPIRIT
ASKING OF US?

HOW DO YOU
ENVISION LAY &
CLERGY
WORKING
TOGETHER?

I think allowing the community to choose leaders and ministers, no matter what their ordination status would help. We need leaders, but this system has created a disempowered laity and an overzealous group of clerics.

A Committee of lay people could easily administer a parish. Increased emphasis on lay participation as Eucharistic Ministers, servers, distributing ashes, etc. Education is needed however - there are still many people who won't receive from a lay Eucharistic Minister. The ordained need to see lay people as central to the Church

Respondents were both practical and creative when envisioning new ways for lay and ordained Catholics to work together.

Many offered new ways of structuring parish life so that lay and ordained Catholics could better function more effectively as colleagues and co-equals. Some suggestions involved substantial re-organization while others looked to improve current models.

The lay should be organized to "run" the parish - building ongoing organization of the group. Priests should be able to devote their time to the religious needs of the community - Sacraments, Mass, the sick, the dying and their families.

As a person in our breakout group said, "Untie the Priesthood from the Parish." Let the parish be handled by the laity. Let the leadership be chosen from the group. Let there be small house churches that are connect with one another.



WOMEN'S EQUALITY IN THE CHURCH

SESSION III

The priesthood & diaconate and all other ministries should be equally open to women & men. In particular, not being able to preach ensures that women are, in essence, silenced and sidelined.

~participant

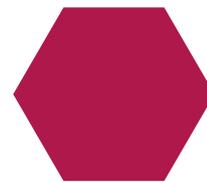
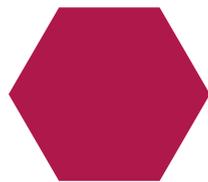
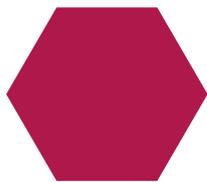




CATHOLICS SEEK FULL EQUALITY FOR WOMEN IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH



WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?



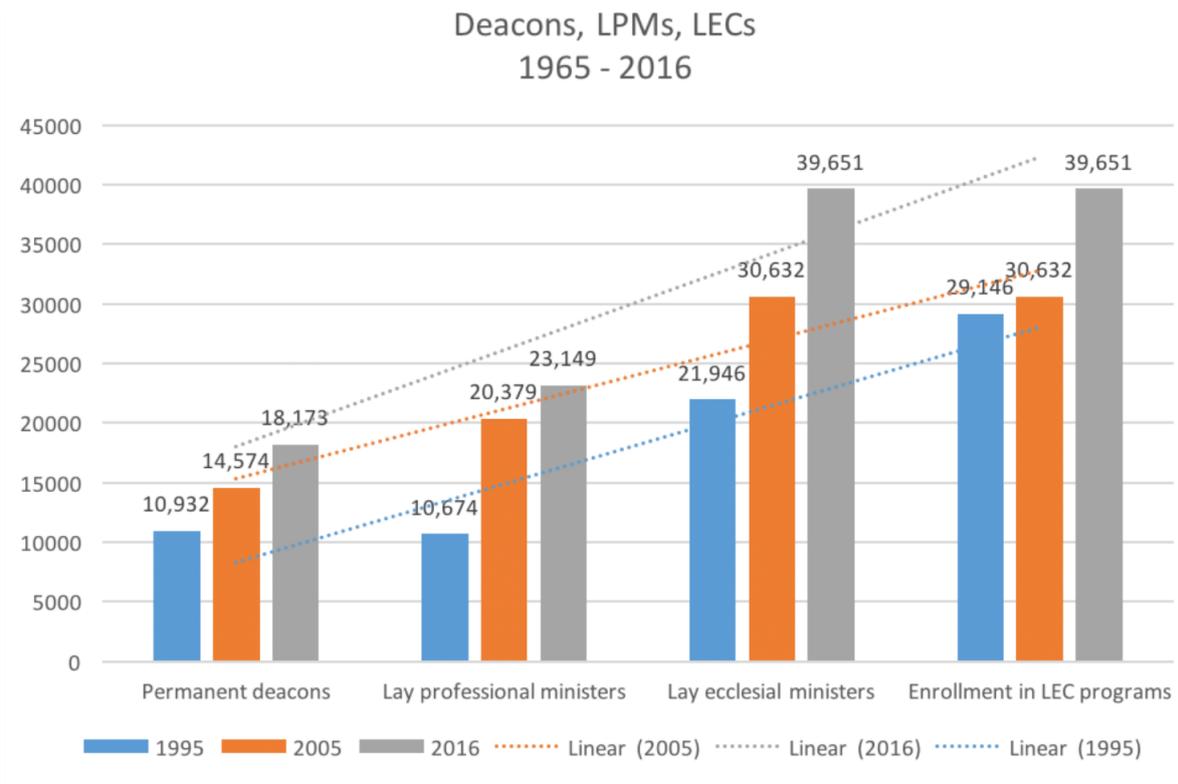
The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) estimates that there are 37.3 million Catholic females in the United States (2017). Of that population, 28.8 million are adults.

CARA research also tracks the number of women religious (as detailed in Session I).

There are approximately 39,500 women religious today. Another CARA study indicates that as the number of consecrated women drops, the number of associates is

rising sharply. Ninety percent of 56,000 associates are women. Their numbers have risen in a similar pattern to Lay Ecclesial Ministers.

Today, there are 39,600 lay associates. Eighty percent are women. There has also been substantial growth in Lay Pastoral Coordinators, and since 1995, the number of Lay professional ministers has more than doubled to 23,149 in 2016.



While there is steep growth in women serving in a variety of capacities in our parishes and dioceses, there is also an exodus underway.

EXODUS

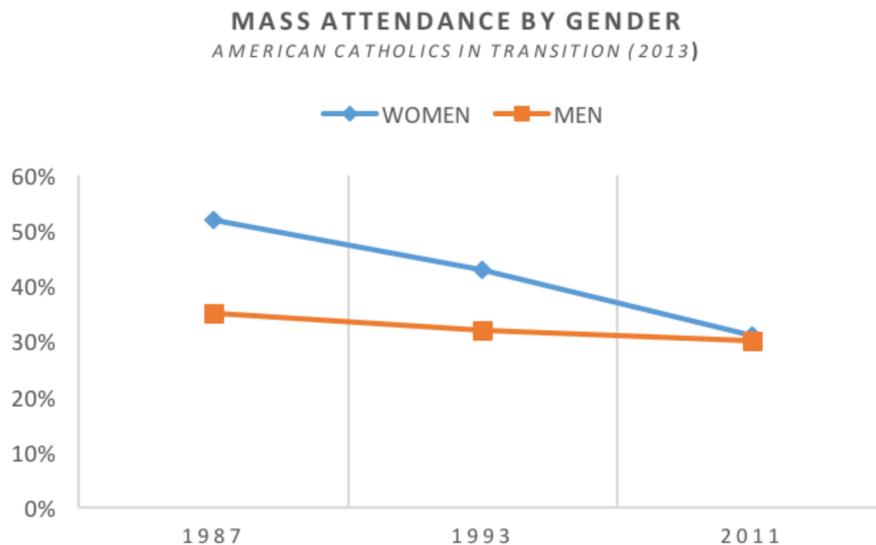
Many younger Catholics are so disillusioned by the clergy sex abuse crisis, the treatment of women and LGBTQ people, and other institutional injustices, they are walking away.

While this is more true of white Catholics, it is also clear that young Catholics of color are also disaffiliating in greater numbers.

CARA and Pew research (2015) indicates that nearly 30% identify as “former” Catholics.

Many more are considering leaving. A March 2019 Gallup poll found that since 2002 the percentage of U.S. Catholics who say the clergy sex abuse crisis has them questioning whether to leave the faith has jumped from 22% to 37%, a serious indicator when tracking disaffiliation.

Further, women, the historical mainstay of the Church, are leaving at unparalleled rates. Sociologist Patricia Wittberg, S.C., Ph.D. finds that “An analysis of the General Social Surveys (GSS) from 2002 - 2012 shows that the likelihood of exiting Catholicism altogether is now greater among young adult Catholic women than it is among Catholic men of that age with Mass attendance by women falling dramatically from 52% in 1987 to 31% in 2011.”



While non-Hispanic millennial women are clearly disengaged from Catholicism at an alarming rate never before experienced in the history of the Church, Wittberg cautions that the Church should not remain complacent with the assumption that Hispanic women will fill the gap.

“Millennial Hispanics are also assimilating to the larger American culture... Relying on Hispanic Catholics to replace non-Hispanic Catholic defections would seem to be a temporary reprieve at best for American Catholicism,” writes Wittberg.

Recent PEW data confirms Wittberg’s observations. In CARA’s Winter 2021 report, they sum up PEW data noting, “Hispanic teenagers (ages 13 to 17) look a lot like their [white] peers when it comes to religion, even though they are more likely than U.S. teens overall to identify as Catholic.”

MORE THAN EVER, DISHEARTENED CATHOLIC WOMEN ARE LOOKING FOR AUTHENTICITY, INTEGRITY, & CREDIBILITY IN THOSE THAT LEAD AND PASTOR IN OUR CHURCH.

In 2015, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) estimated that 25 million adults in the United States who were raised Catholic have ceased to identify themselves as a member of the Church. This number has risen dramatically since 1979 and now closely matches the number of Catholic adults who attend Mass regularly at least once a month (28.8m). Pew Research data from 2015 finds similar results. Twenty-eight percent of adults who were raised in Catholic households now consider themselves ex-Catholics and 89 percent of that group say they cannot imagine returning to the Church.

These studies offer important predictors for the future vibrancy of the Catholic Church. Further, when the data is differentiated by gender an additional vulnerability is revealed. The Church is losing young women at a rate unparalleled in our 2000-year-old history.

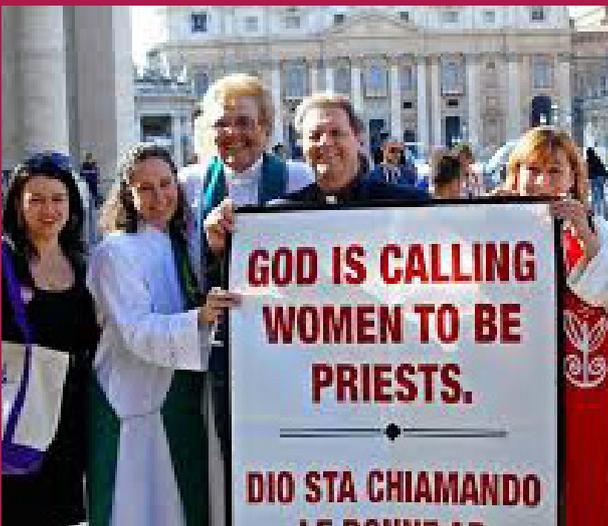
Historically, women have been the mainstay of the Catholic Church. The Church has relied on women who have engaged in the mission of the Gospel in their parishes, entered religious life at more than double the rate of their male counterparts, and today make up 80 percent of the Church's non-ordained workforce.



The Church is losing young women at a rate unparalleled in our 2000-year-old history.



Yet, that is changing. Emerging research shows that women's centuries-long loyalty to the Church can no longer be taken for granted. According to William D'Antonio, Mary Gautier and Michele Dillon of *American Catholics in Transition* (2013), "Unlike their grandmothers and mothers, Catholic women born after Vatican II seem less willing to give the institutional church the benefit of the doubt and to stay loyal to the Church and Catholicism while hoping for change" (pp. 96-97).



Sociologist Patricia Wittberg, S.C., Ph.D. finds, "An analysis of the General Social Surveys (GSS) from 2002 - 2012 shows that the likelihood of exiting Catholicism altogether is now greater among young adult Catholic women than it is among Catholic men of that age.

Three key indicators measuring commitment over time show that compared to Catholic men there is a dramatic shift in engagement in the Church by Catholic women (D'Antonio, 90-92).

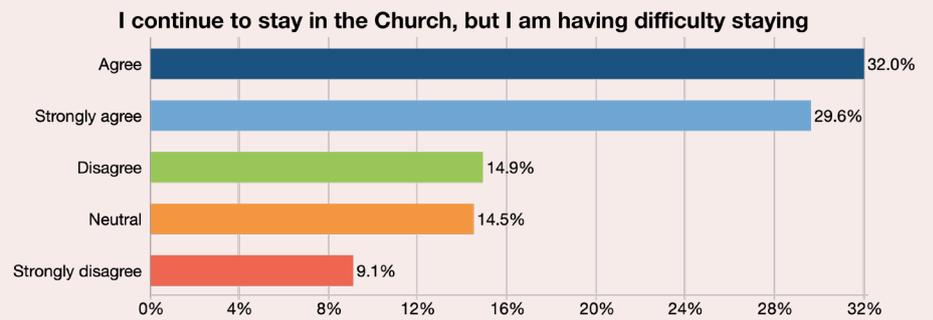
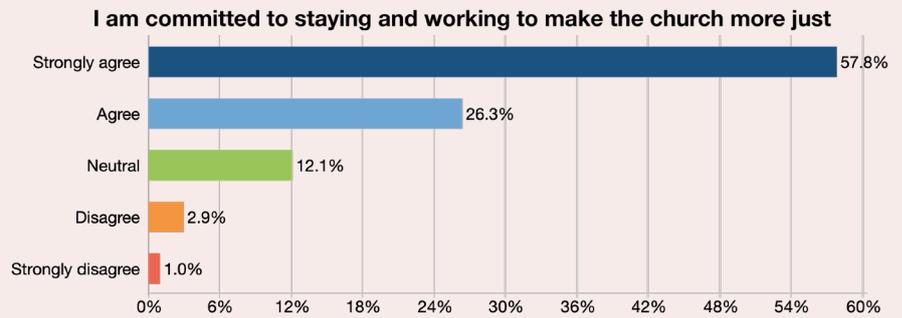


1) Mass attendance by women has fallen dramatically over the past 25 years, from 52 percent in 1987 to 31 percent in 2011.

2) The rate of women responding that the Church is among the most important part of their lives has fallen dramatically, from 58 percent to 38 percent.

3) The number of women agreeing that they would never leave the Catholic Church dropped from 61 percent in 1987 to 56% in 2011.

COMMITMENT



As we entered into our synodal sessions with a focus on women in the church, we were reminded of all the ways women have built up the church, from our earliest foremothers to today’s women of faith.

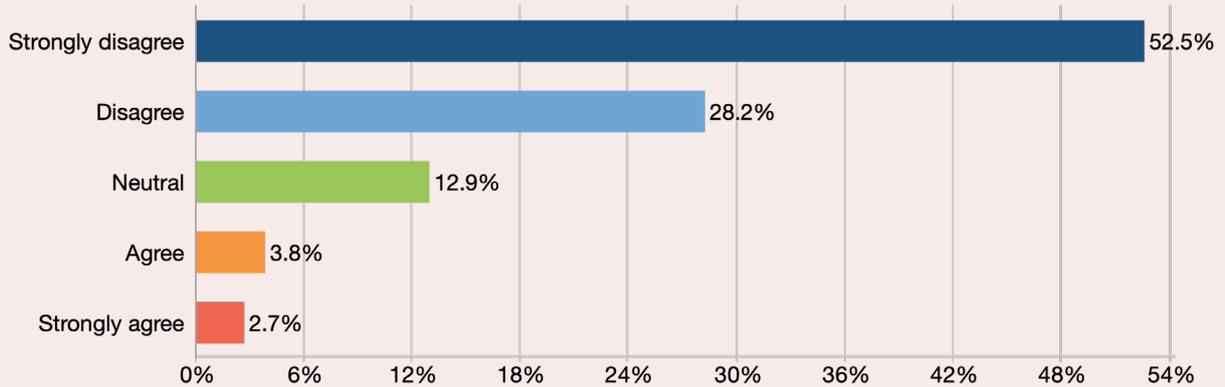
Most of the participants that joined the twelve FutureChurch synodal sessions shared their interest, investment, and commitment to seeing the Church remain vibrant. A majority were women.

In contrast to the data on the exodus of younger Catholic women, when asked about about their commitment to the Catholic Church, eighty-four percent strongly agree or agree that they are committed to staying and working to reform and revitalize the church.

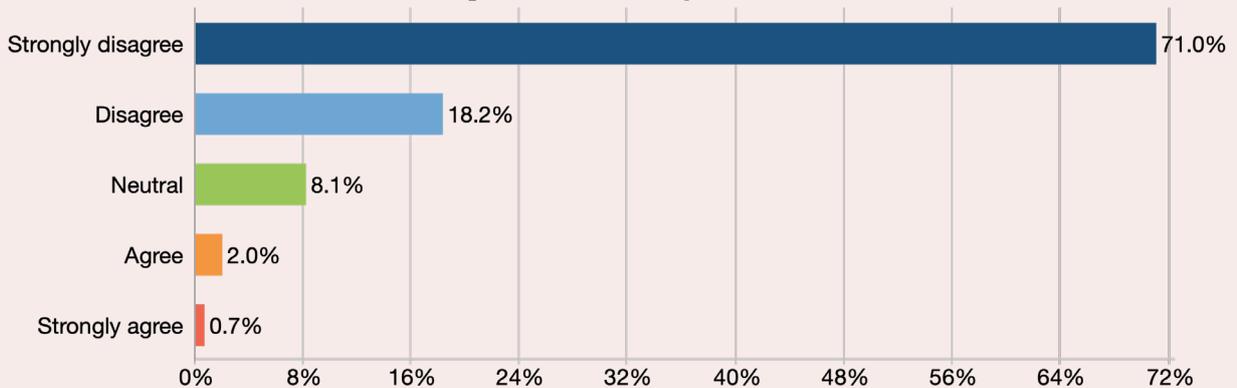
More than half of respondents indicated that there are times when they have difficulty staying in the Church, but overall this group of participants shared their strong commitment to remaining in the Church with 89% stating so.

Only a small portion of respondents have left the Catholic Church to practice their faith elsewhere and most still identify themselves as Catholic.

I have left the Church and now practice my faith elsewhere.



I no longer consider myself Catholic.



OUR HOPES & DREAMS

The full scope of our stories is in Appendix III.

The heartfelt words of one
respondent were bittersweet.

[I hope] we will find a home there.

WITNESS OF LOVE

I dream of many communities of love and justice known for their deep commitment to the gospel, and full inclusion of ALL in the vibrant Catholic Tradition. I see a church whose processes reflect respect, commitment to dialog and welcoming different ways of expressing that Tradition. I see couples in ministry including, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Non-binary and Trans members of the Mystical Body.

I see decisions-makers for collections of assemblies having no power except to affirm the movement of the Spirit among all members. (Very similar to this Synod process) If there buildings, I see property holding of Catholic communities that can be used for all in need, addicts, the homeless, kids aging out of foster care, immigrants, those without families, those in need of sanctuary due to conscientious dissent, activists, as well as a quiet space for contemplation and a space for worship. Otherwise I see all these ministries and more flowing out of a local community into organizations/ movements that address these needs. Women would be presumed to be as gifted as men, and equally affirmed and/or challenged.

SYNODAL PARTICIPANTS SHARED THEIR HOPE FOR WOMEN IN CHURCH.

OUR VOICES

99% want all ministries opened to women.

98% want preaching opened to women, including the Mass.

100% want all governance opened to women.

98% want the diaconate opened to women.

95% want to see the priesthood opened to women.

97% want more women of color in authority.

93% want women appointed as cardinals.

97% want to see “Ordinatio Sacerdotalis” reversed

100% want women to vote at synods.

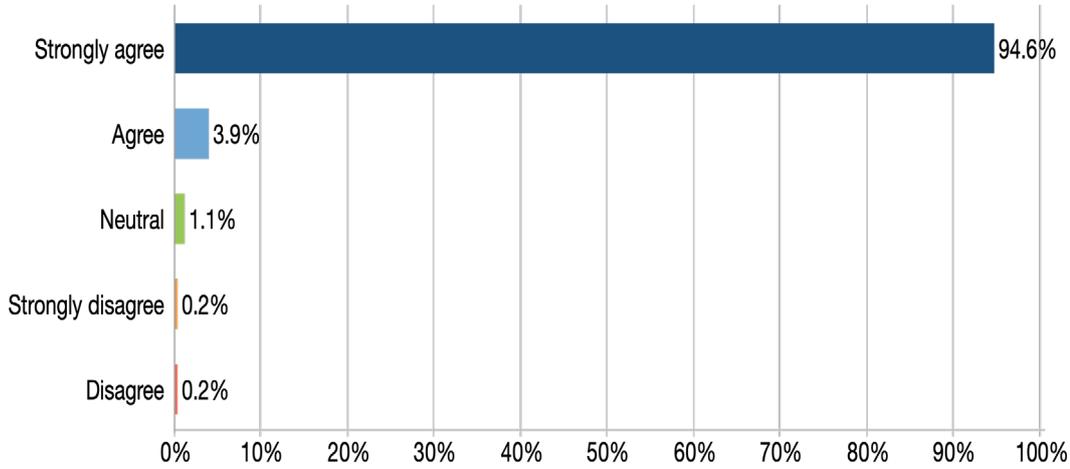
VOTES FOR CATHOLIC WOMEN



Virtually 100% of respondents want women to vote at synods.

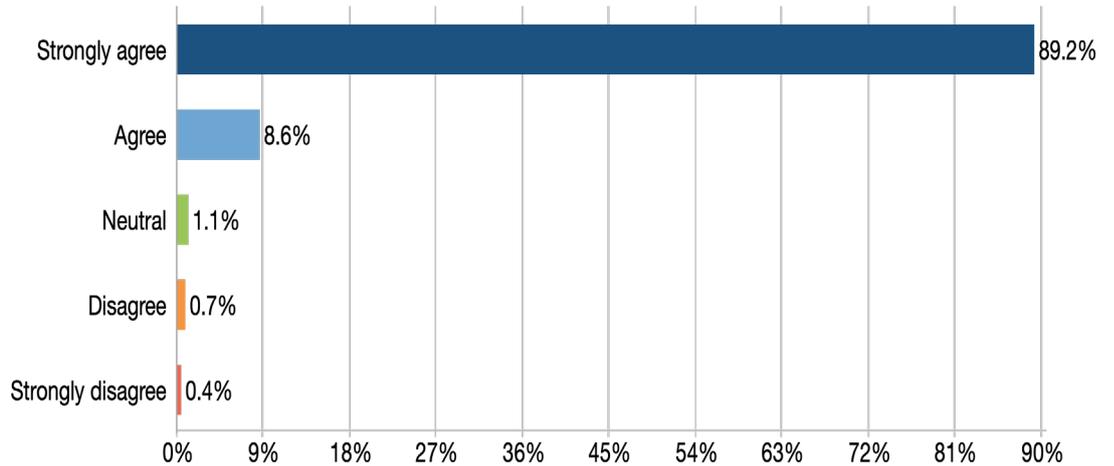


Open all ministries to women's full participation



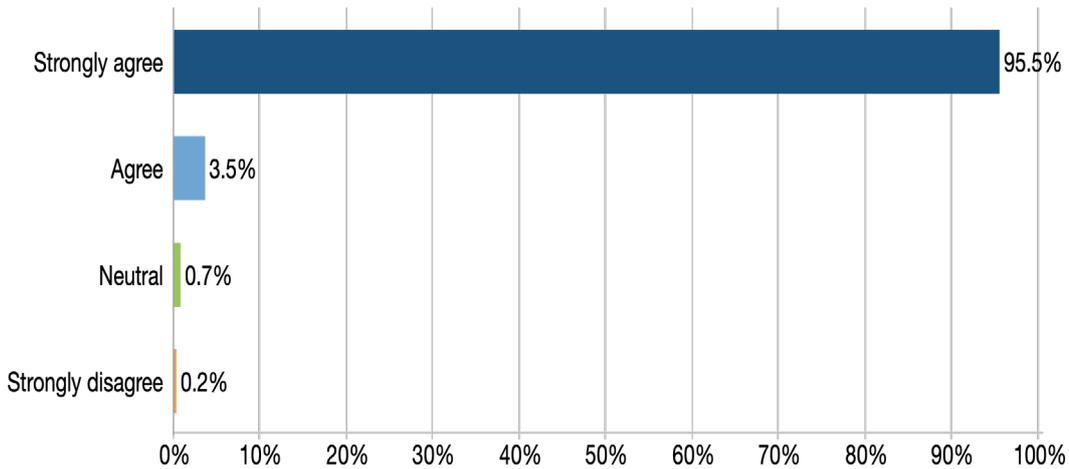
A SYNODAL CALL

Open all preaching, including preaching at the Mass to women



A SYNODAL CALL

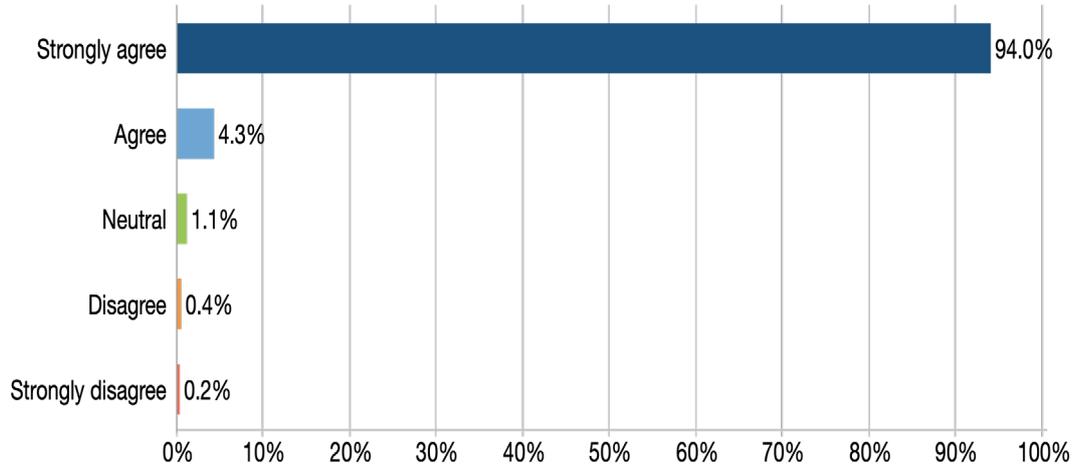
Open governance, leadership, and teaching offices to women



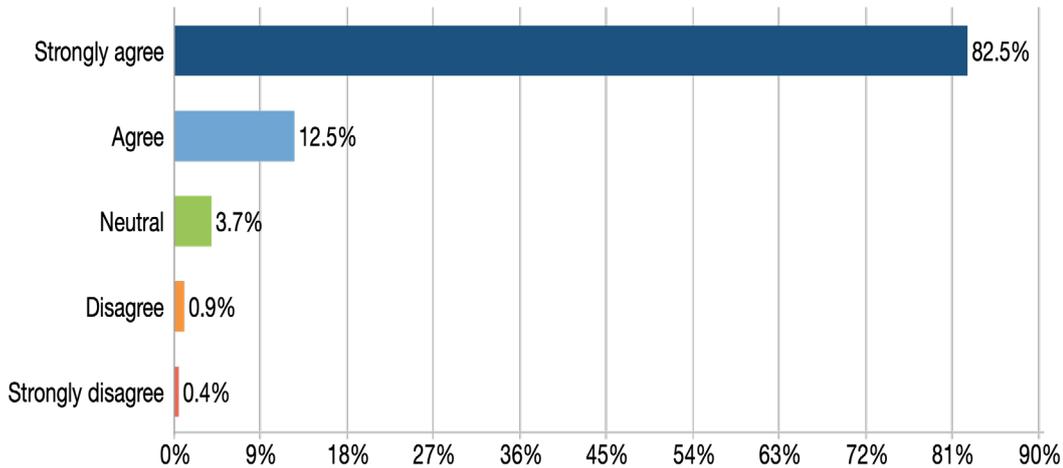
A SYNODAL CALL

A SYNODAL CALL

Open the diaconate to women



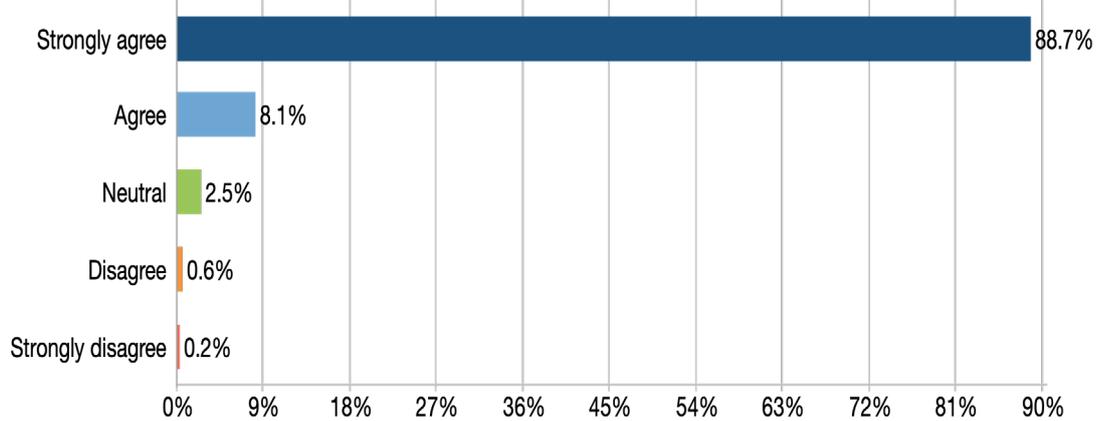
Open priestly ordination to women



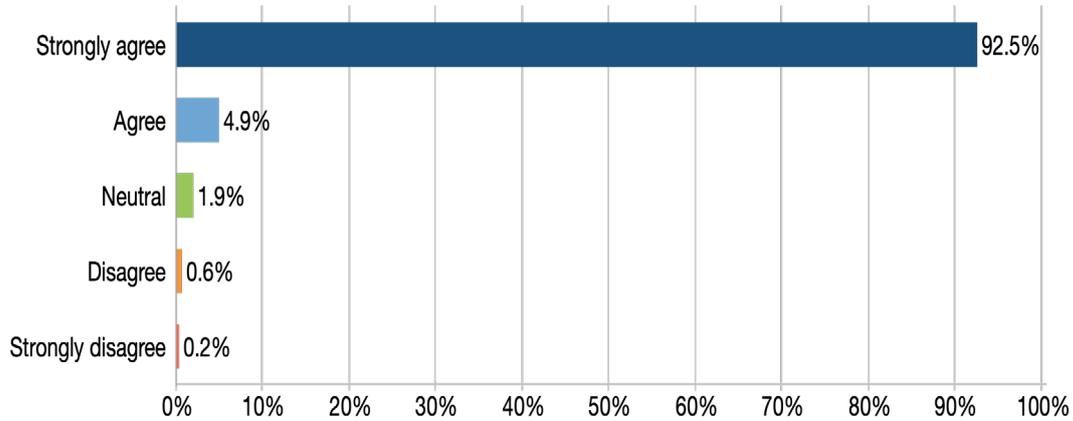
A SYNODAL CALL

A SYNODAL CALL

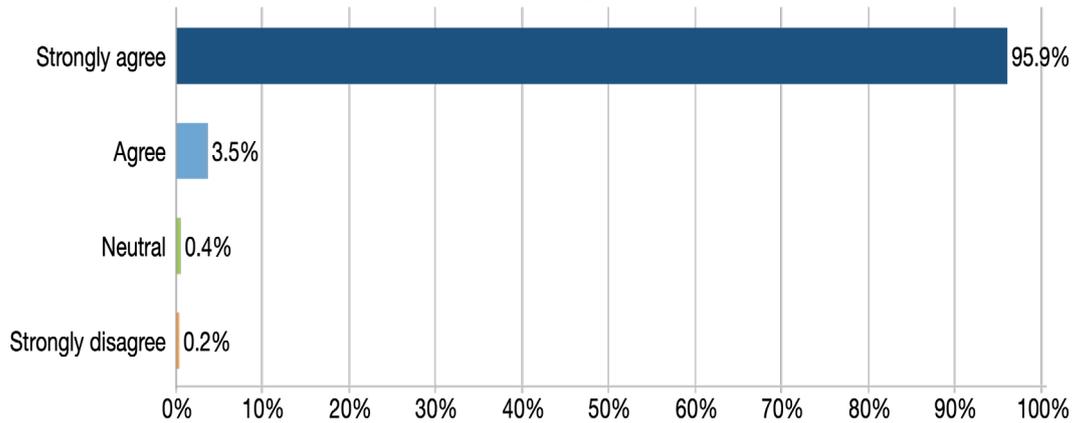
Emphasize placing women of color and women with diverse identities and orientations in positions of leadership, ministry, influence and decision making.



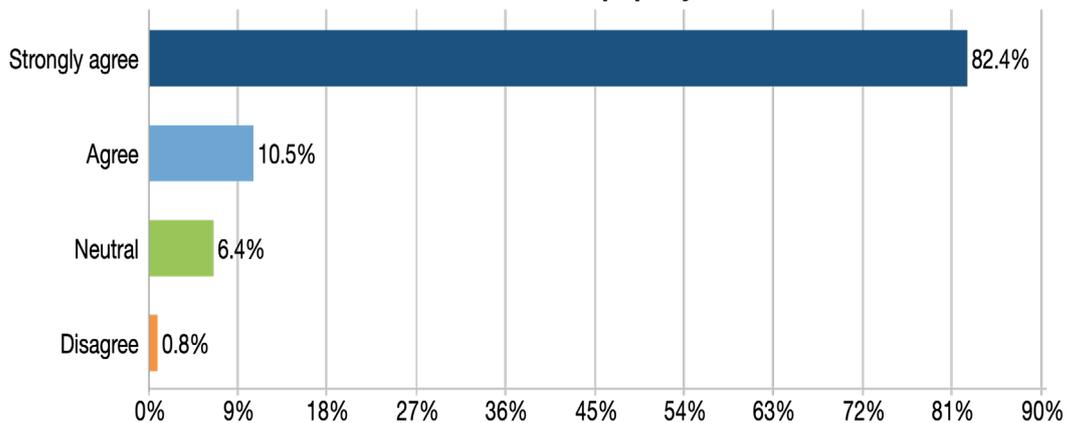
Reverse papal proclamations such as "Ordinatio Sacerdotalis" so that authentic dialogue can occur



Open synods at every level, including the Vatican to women making decisions and voting



Open the doors for women to be cardinals so that they can choose the Pope or be elected to the papacy



Where to start? How about getting women deacons, for a start? There's not that much for them to un-do of the old encyclicals to start that. Also, encouraging laity-led parishes where women are administrators. The abuse scandal - The church in general needs to be more transparent. Open up decision-making to laity and women. More women professors in seminary. Keep exposing seminarians to the works of women theologians.

The priesthood & diaconate and all other ministries should be equally open to women & men. In particular, not being able to preach ensures that women are, in essence, silenced and sidelined.

Immediate steps to begin a preaching women's Diaconate, and to begin the process to ordain women priests. To have women in all positions of authority in the Church, parishes, and schools.

I participated in the Lay Ministry Leadership program in 1989 in the Diocese. A sister gave a presentation and asked "Aren't we all created in the image and likeness of God. I am all for inclusive language. I think it is foundational in helping us to know God.

Ordain Deacons immediately!!! the fact that the wives of Deacons go thru the same - only to be 'the deacons wife' - is absurd. Phoebe was deacon 2000 years ago!! Mary Magdalene was the Apostle to Apostles!

So realistically, I guess incremental changes like allowing women to preach, to join in governance, and opening the diaconate to women would be useful steps. Allowing women to administer the sacraments would be a great first step, perhaps as deacons and eventually priests.

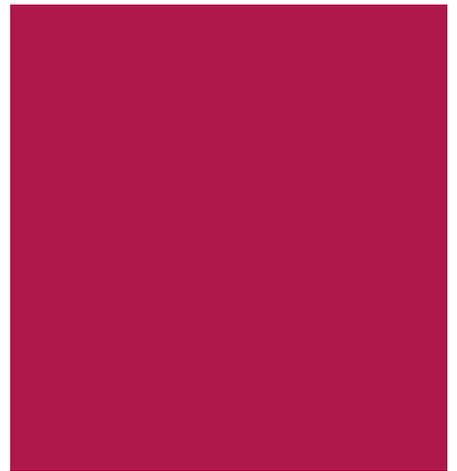
THE FUTURE FOR WOMEN IN THEIR WORDS

The Catholic Church must address the ordination of women as priests. Jesus told us if we wanted “life” that we must receive His Body and Blood! That means we have to have priests. I know Catholics have been praying for more male vocations to the priesthood for over 25 years, yet we have less vocations now more than ever! Is the Church going to obey Jesus, our founder, our God or continue to uphold the exclusively male priesthood, about which we know Christ never said anything! Thanks to modern theologians, Church historians, Church archeologists and Biblical scholars, among other professions we have a much more accurate picture of what early Christianity was really like! We cannot go back and pretend that women did not have their own ministries, were not bishops, were not apostles, did not have their names changed from female to male in later translations of the Bible in order to bend history to what the male hierarchy of the Catholic Church wants people to believe! It seems similar to the manner in which the hierarchy of the Catholic Church has handled and is still handling the clergy pedophilia scandal!

Since the Church has made ordained priesthood the criteria of all full participation and leadership in the faith community, we need nothing less than eliminating the barrier to women being ordained.

I believe that women should be invited into the diaconate and priesthood to bring new life to our church.

THE FUTURE FOR WOMEN IN THEIR WORDS





PARTICIPANTS SHARE TIMES WHEN THE CHURCH
EMPOWERED WOMEN

MOMENTS OF EMPOWERMENT

Participants were asked to share times when they felt empowered or hopeful regarding the role and status of women in the church. Virtually all recalled great moments in the church when the promise of full participation, co-equality, and meaningful dialogue and action inspired them to take up their place in the local, diocesan, and global church.

The release of *Praedicate Evangelium*, Pope Francis' new constitution which creates new roles of for ministry, decision-making, and authority for women, was one such sign of hope. Other respondents mentioned Pope Francis ending the investigation of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. Many offered moments when they worked as co-equals in a parish setting.

As a woman in the Church, and as a woman of color, I felt I have had to steal any power or voice that I may have. Unless the pastor or bishop is pro-women, then it will be a hard way to go.

Seeing male clergy speaking for women and supporting priesthood for women.

When I became involved with a Pastor at a large parish who was very inclusive, open minded, compassionate and encouraged participation of the whole community. He started small Community Faith Groups where we met once a month to share not only our faith and lives and also concerns for the whole Church. His Preaching was always inclusive and used Catholic Social Teaching as his guide. Very justice oriented.

I was invited to give a reflection at the Thanksgiving Day liturgy, Nov., 2019.

As religious director in a smaller parish the priest not only acknowledged me but asked my opinion and we worked as equals.

RESPECT VOICE

Pope Francis appointing women to Vatican posts. He has opened the discussion which was never done before.

EQUALITY

When I worked in Miami and was able to not only preach but I READ THE GOSPEL!!!!!! I was able to have rich experiences with a forward visioned people.

When I finally worked with a pastor who appreciated all women on his staff and treated them with respect and gave them positions which helped the parish.

When girls could serve at the altar and women were chairing the parish council. For the Synod our bishop called women to tackle patriarchy.

Every time we (Sisters of Mercy) were able to create space/place for persons on the margins of Church (divorced and separated Catholics, LBQT+ persons, alienated Catholics, etc.

I ministered in the diocese of Saginaw under Bishop Ken Untener (now deceased) when women could and did preach.

At the closure of the Vatican's 'investigation' of LCWR and US women's congregations. (I am a religious)

I am connected with St. Vincent DePI was Provincial Administrator of the Sisters of Mercy when Sr. Agnes Mary Mansour was asked to leave her appointed position as Director of Social Services in the state of Michigan - even though she had been affirmed in that position by the Archbishop and by her congregational superior - very discouraging to learn the Church has no system for collegial decision-making and/or problem solving - strengthened my resolve to reform the system.

I am so tired of repeating the struggle for women respect with every new priest that begins work, of having to defend the indefensible injustices of the church, now also defending Pope Francis

As a Religious not to have someone from the community give the homily at profession, vows, etc. Also the incessant preaching about abortion and not the right to life is so harmful and near-sighted.

Hurt to see other women even more worthy than myself constantly put aside or pushed back.

MOMENTS OF DISAPPOINTMENT

Archbishop said no more women sacristans or altar servers. We had been sacristans for years. Hurt that I couldn't be a Deacon. No woman could be a deacon even though they were "the" spirit and drive in the parish.

I was really angered by the investigation into women's communities and the intent to bring them into "line" with the institution. At times I feel like a marginal Catholic in the Church but very much on the border.

There have been many things over the years, but what really struck me was the case of Roy Bourgeois. After priests who molested children were not defrocked or excommunicated, he was, for supporting women's ordination. That's where women rank in the institutional Church - less rights than child molesters. the hierarchical clerical model, have abandoned it, with fervor.

(1) Summer 1968 when Paul VI banned contraception against the advice of a lay group.

(2) Pope Francis saying to the European Parliament that Europe was like a grandmother, old and no longer fertile.

STRUGGLE FOR RESPECT

Participants were asked

“What is the most pressing issue the institutional Church should address regarding women’s full participation & equality in the Catholic Church?”

Here are some of their responses.

To see the full list of responses, go to “Our Stories--Appendix III.”

**Rescind
'Ordinatio Sacerdotalis.'**

It is not in keeping with God or the teachings of Jesus. It's funny how the Church thinks it has authority to do absolutely anything, except what it doesn't want to do: treat women like they have the rights of the baptized and are loved by God.

**Appointment
of women as
pastoral
administrators.**

**Open the
doors to women
reading the Gospel, to
preaching, Get the
language changed.**

**Giving women
the credit they deserve by
listening to them and giving
them positions they deserve.**

**This must be a universal policy and
not at the whim of certain
bishops and pastors.**

**Leadership
roles for women at
every level.**

**Clericalism
and racism both of
which reinforce the
attitude gender
exclusion.**

Many respondents shared the need for education of seminarians, and re-education of bishops in order to overcome the patriarchy that still has a firm foothold in the Church. One respondent captured the sentiment clearly.

**Write a
statement of
equality of women in
the Church.**

**Recognize
the importance of
Mary Magdalenes in
our Church**

*The training of seminarians. -- if we do not begin to train seminarians to consider accept all people instead of putting on cassocks and birettas and making them feel as if they are the GIFT to all people, we are doomed
Second, reeducate the bishops -- who are the problem.*

**Diaconate should be
open to women, as there
is no theological or
historical reason to
exclude them.**

**Find leadership
that follows in Pope
Francis' path, develop
the same in seminaries/
dioceses.
Humility works really
well!**

**The most
pressing issue the
institutional Church should
address is a searching examination
of itself, a recognition of the
reality and injustice of patriarchy,
an admission of the harm done
and a contrite determination
to make amends.**

**Ordination of women
and other leadership
positions should be
addressed and made
available to women.**

Full participation as equals and able to exercise their gifts and calling without gender bias

That we are side by side with men and able to share our gifts with the church

That we be treated in the church as Jesus treated Mary Magdalene.

To see women fully embraced in all roles of the church and no longer considered second class or less than.

My dream is for full inclusion. My hope is not high.

That inclusion of women in all roles in church would make church relevant again.

That we will ALL be one as Jesus prayed - women, POC, LGBTQ+, all people of God who were created in God's image and likeness.

That they will have voice and vote, that they will be welcomed for their gifts, that they will be allowed to foster a community of faith as opposed to a structure of power.

I hope women will humbly step up and accept and serve in all aspects of our Catholic Church.

I hope and pray that women continue to press forward and support one another toward equity in the Church.

The Church will become a beacon of hope for all people and a teaching authority that again has the ring of truth. It will walk the walk of living the Gospel and revolutionize societies that have grown stagnant and faithless. I dream of full participation in everyway by all people.

Equal opportunities for women at all levels.

That they be able to serve as they feel they are called, as priests, sisters, deacons and informed parishioners.

Hierarchy makes amends for the oppression of women and expedite the movement forward.

Women's giftedness being recognized and promoted as equal.

My hope and dream is for inclusivity that allows for all gifts and talents to be shared with everyone.

Become a more pastoral church where all genders are welcomed equally and given "a seat at the table" of decision making at every level

Women's full participation and presence together with men.

The freedom for women who feel called to be ordained and lead a community.

I would love if the church would not be so fearful and that the Hierarchy would be called spiritually to relinquish its corrupting power.

WHAT ARE YOUR PERSONAL HOPES AND DREAMS FOR WOMEN IN THE CHURCH?

I hope for women to not see themselves just as parents but also as equal contributors to our Faith communities and for those women who choose not to have children that they realize full dignity and respect to be heard and hired in this beloved institution we call the Catholic Church which has been overrun with men who seem to love ritual and ceremony and social distance from some members of their communities. This could start by taking individual responsibility- not leaving to others to consider these issues.

LAY MINISTRY & LEADERSHIP



Session IV

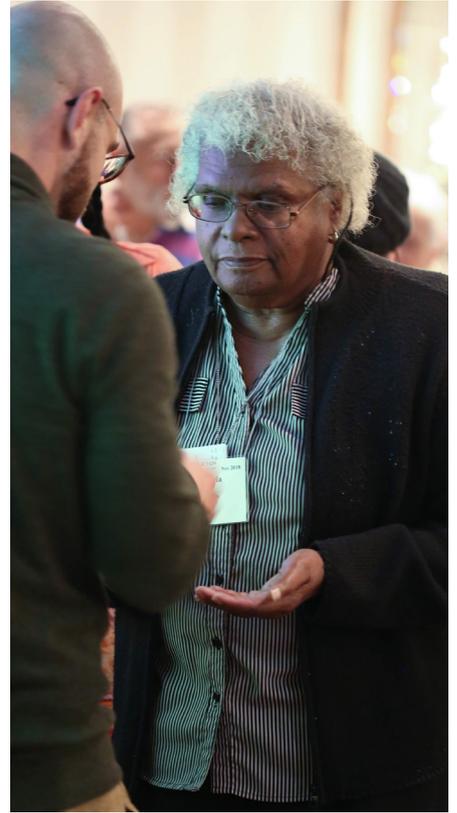
*Lay ministers and leaders have been
the backbone of the parish.*

*We have supplemented our
spiritual lives with our own
contemplative groups, study groups,
prayer groups, action, etc.*

*Yet, lay ministers and leaders have
been reduced to the side lines with no
effective input.*

~participant

A PROPHETIC CALL



*Lay ministers have been the ones to “call me forth”,
to identify gifts that I could share and to give me
the encouragement I needed to jump into a deeper
walk in the church. ~participant*



Lay Ministry & Leadership

OUR CURRENT CONTEXT

Today, the Catholic Church is facing intense change and transition resulting in new realities and new ways of understanding parish life and parish ministry. In the United States the numbers of Catholics has risen to an estimated 78 million - a more culturally diverse and younger cohort than in prior decades. As the number of Catholics increases, the number of active clergy is rapidly declining with 65% over the age of 65.2.

In the midst of this stark change, our understanding of parish structure is changing as well. The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) identified five parish types:

- The traditional parish with one pastor, one congregation with or without parish staff
- The Canon 517.2 parish administered by a deacon, vowed religious, or lay person installed by the bishop
- Consolidated parishes which are two or more parishes have been merged into one
- Multiple, linked, or clustered parishes where one pastor serves two or more parishes that are connected in any number of ways... or regional “communities” of parishes, with or without shared staff
- Multicultural parishes that are more ethnically and culturally diverse

Marti R Jewell, D. Min, also identifies another type -- the “mega” parish with one pastor but thousands of parishioners.

As Associate Professor Emerita of Pastoral Theology at the Neuhoff Institute for Ministry & Evangelization and the Director of the Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership Project, a national research project studying excellence in parish leadership, Dr. Jewell contends that staffing these emerging models of parish calls for creativity in how we provide ministry (<https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/ips/pdfs/Jewell-Conference-Report.pdf>).

According to Jewell, responding to pastoral need is nothing new. The church has consistently and faithfully responded to the pastoral needs of her people, often with new lay ministries. In our age, Vatican II developed our understanding that the church’s mission belongs to us all -- the body of Christ.

And just as the mission of the church belongs to the entire body of Christ, so too, the mission of the parish belong to the entire parish - pastor, parish staff, and parishioners co-responsible for their parish and its mission. Benedict XVI reminded us of this when, speaking to parish priests in Rome in 2007, he said:

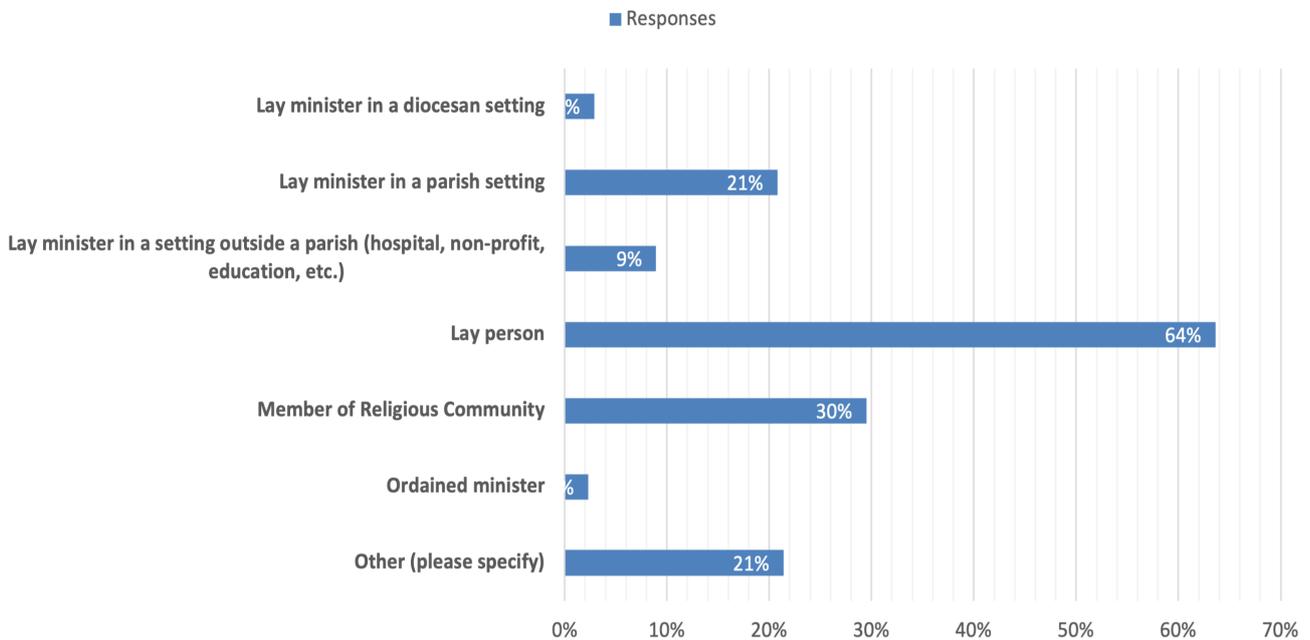
I believe that this is one of the important and positive results of the Council: the co-responsibility of the entire parish, for the parish priest is no longer the only one to animate everything. Since we all form a parish together, we must all collaborate and help so that the parish priest is not left on his own, mainly as a coordinator, but truly discovers that he is a pastor who is backed up in these common tasks in which, together, the parish lives and is fulfilled.

“Meeting with Clergy”
Origins 37, no. 11
 (August 16, 2007): 19.6.

We asked participants to identify themselves in terms of their role in the parish or community. They were asked to choose ALL that applied.



Please check the boxes that apply to you (check all that apply):



Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents indicated they are lay persons and 30% indicated they are religious. Of that number 33% indicated they serve in some capacity in the parish, diocese, or in a setting outside of the parish such as a hospital, educational institution, non-profit, etc.

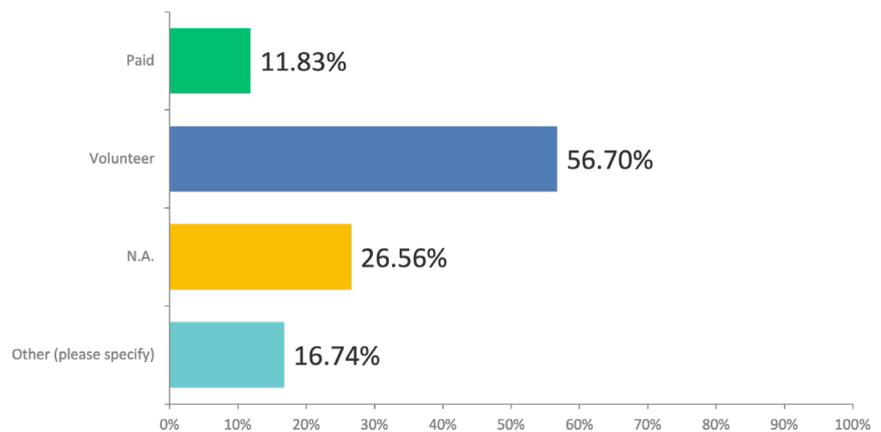
Some of those who identified as “other” shared that they do not agree with the terminology “lay” and find it demeaning. Others added more identifiers such as “married priest” or “lay associate.” Some added they are members of the music ministry, parish council, retired priest, and more.



Respondents were also asked if they are paid or if they volunteer. Almost twelve percent indicated they are paid while nearly 57% are volunteer. Of those who answered “other,” some indicated that their salary went to their community. Others noted they had a degree but had never been paid. Still others have held both paid and volunteer posts.

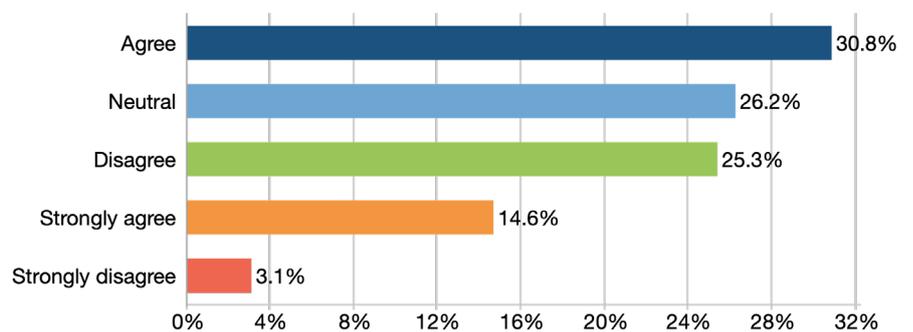


RETIRED PRIEST, REV. GERRY BECHARD

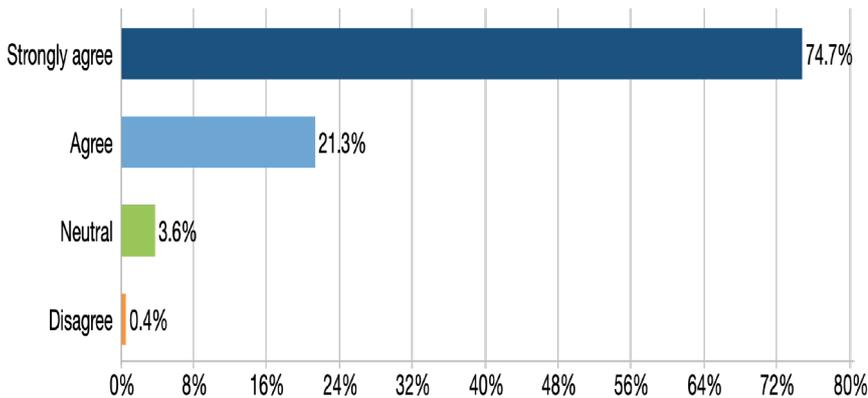


We asked respondents to tell us about their experience of lay and ordained working as co-equals in their parishes or dioceses. Only forty-five percent agreed or strongly agreed that ordained and lay share responsibilities and work together effectively.

Clergy and laity (either paid or volunteer) work effectively and share responsibilities in my parish/community/diocese/church.

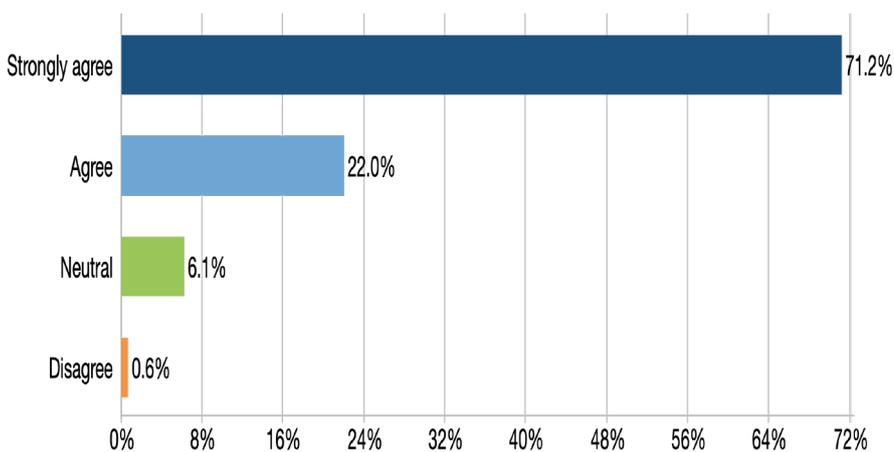


Canon law should be amended to give lay parishioners and parish councils deliberative authority (not just consultation) when it comes to making decisions that affect the life of the parish.



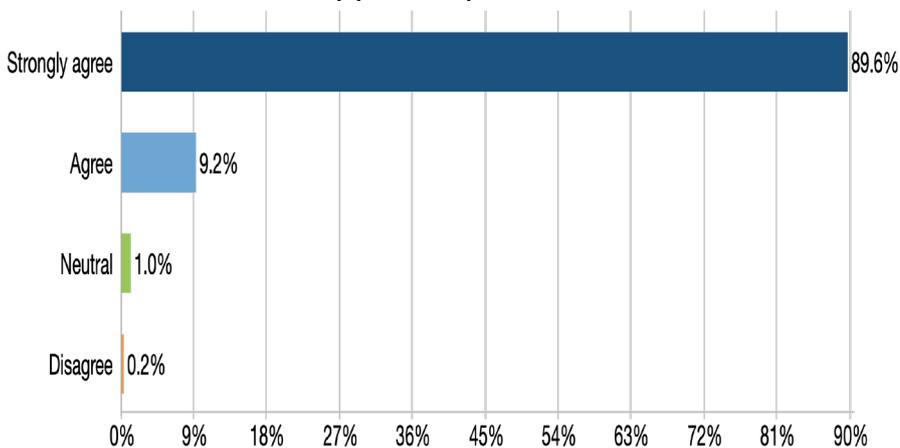
Ninety-six percent strongly agree or agree that Canon law should be amended to give lay people deliberative authority.

Lay persons should have deliberative authority at the diocesan level and on diocesan councils.



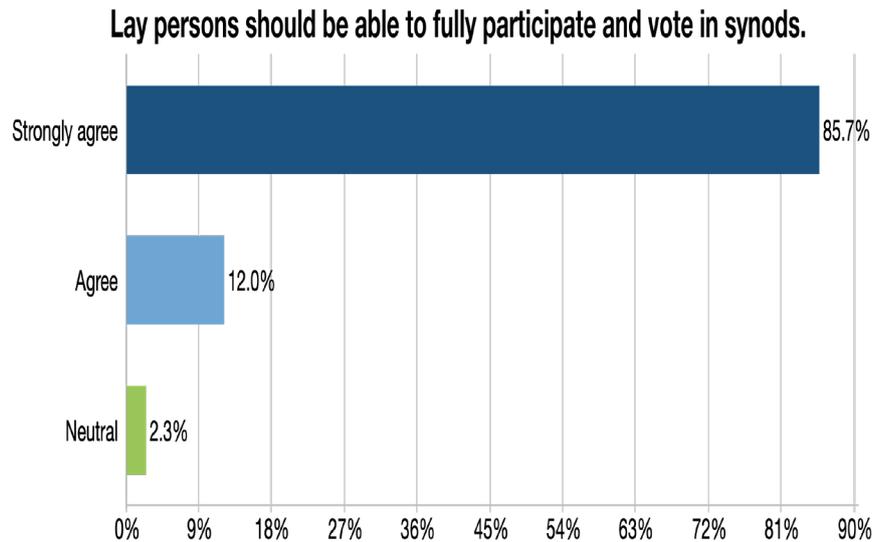
Ninety-three percent strongly agree or agree that lay persons should have deliberative authority at the diocesan level.

Trained lay persons should be engaged in pastoral and administrative roles in order to keep parishes open and vibrant.

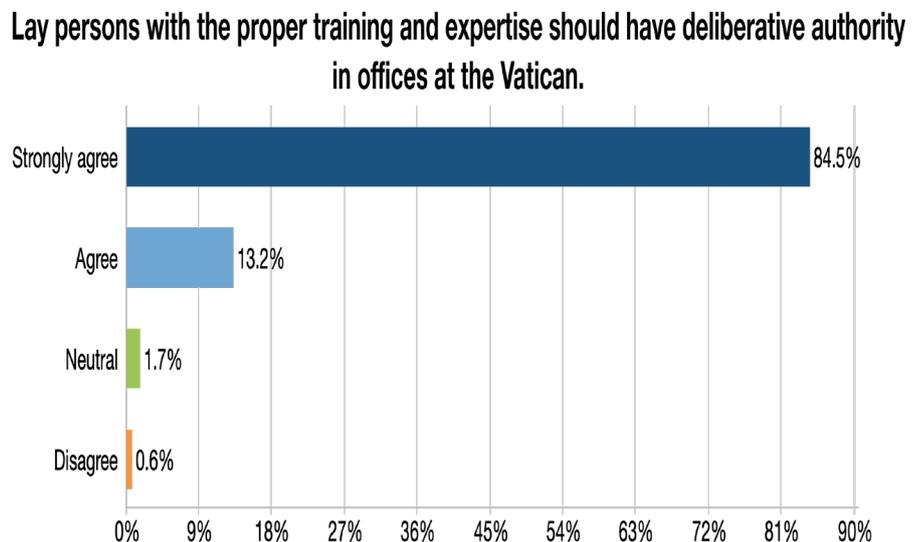


Virtually all respondents strongly agree or agree that lay persons should be engaged to keep parishes open and vibrant.

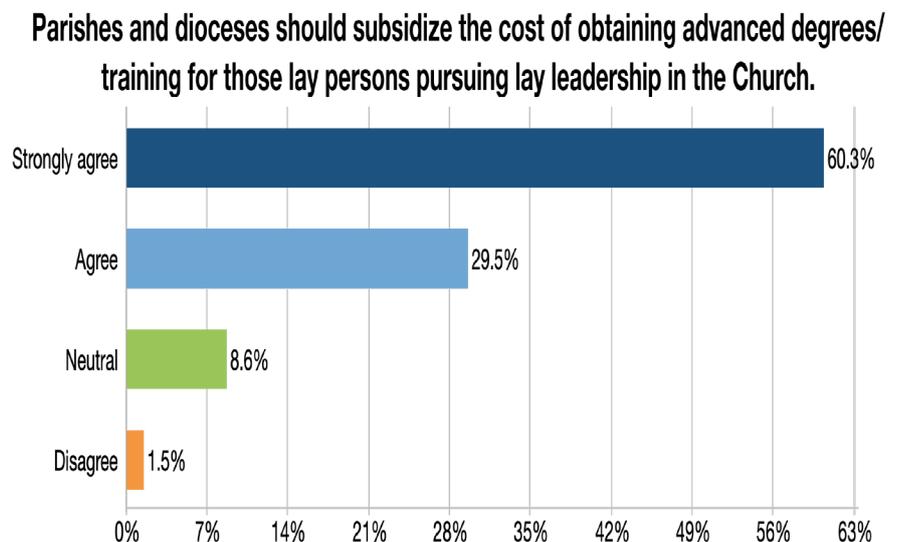
Ninety-eight percent strongly agree or agree that lay persons should participate and vote at synods.



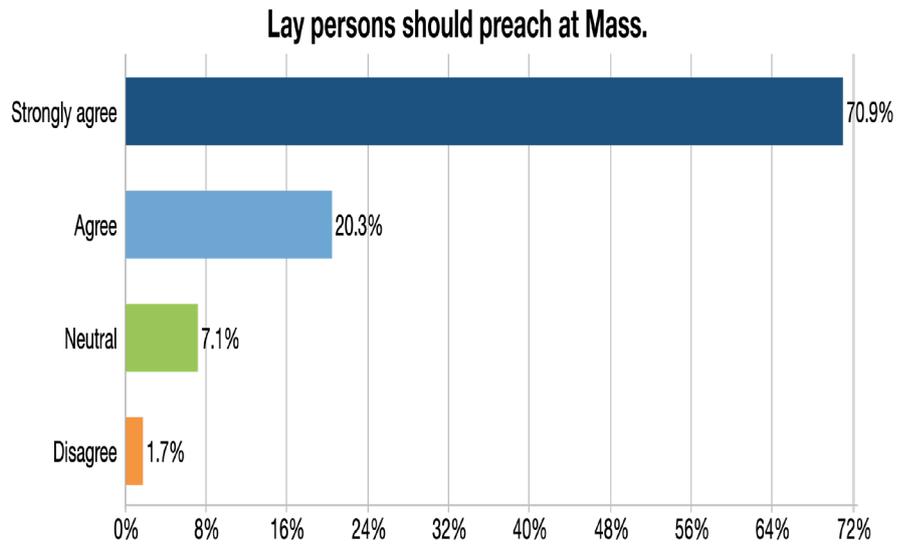
Ninety-eight percent strongly agree or agree that lay persons should have deliberative authority in the Vatican.



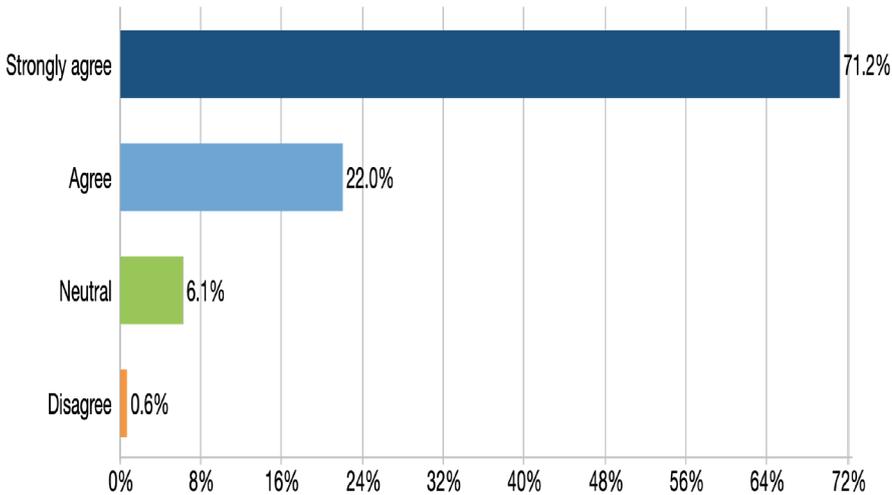
Ninety percent strongly agree or agree that parishes or dioceses should subsidize the cost of education and training for lay leaders.



Ninety-one percent of respondents strongly agree or agree that lay persons should preach at Mass.



Lay persons should have a deliberative role in choosing the parish priest.



Ninety-one percent of respondents strongly agree or agree that lay persons should have a deliberative role in choosing the parish priest. About the same percentage believe lay persons have a deliberative role in choosing the bishop.

RESPONDENTS OFFERED STORIES ABOUT THE ROLE LAY MINISTERS HAVE PLAYED IN THEIR LIVES

I have been part of a Parish Council for some 20+ years - with the right Pastor, these Councils can be very effective.

Especially in the last 3 years I have seen and experienced the very positive difference that lay ministers and leaders have in my life.

I am a diocesan ecclesial minister; other ecclesial ministers have enriched my personal and spiritual life; learned new perspectives; encouraged by their faith and lived reality of their lives.

Post-Vatican II, laypersons were very influential. Now, they are hard to find.

The influence of lay leaders has contributed a great deal to my life. I feel that the Holy Spirit reaches me through a wide variety of avenues.

I stand on the shoulders of countless lay leaders and I can only hope I have served in that same capacity in the 50 plus years I have been a lay minister myself.

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED?

Invite young adults and make opportunities for leadership development, engagement in justice issues

Include lay people in decision making, and in ministerial roles within a parish setting

Practice subsidiarity by empowering the right kind of lay leadership.

Where to start.....involve the laity in preaching, deciding parish direction.

Train clerics to not just accept lay ministry/ & leadership, etc. but to encourage it.

End of clericalism and embracing the actual church teaching that all baptized are equal. People who are qualified should, without regard to being male or female, straight or gay, priest or lay, able to make decisions about their church without interference from the hierarchy.

I think we need to work towards true team ministry where each member of the team, lay or ordained works together for the good of God's people.

I hope we will return to "house churches" where men and women will celebrate Eucharist together.

PRAEDICATE EVANGELIUM

I am thrilled! But I am worried that nothing will come of it at the local level, because as I understand it, it is at the discretion of the bishops. I am also happy to see Evangelization is the priority and CDF no longer is.

All for it. It took 9 years to do this?????
Good heavens.....

I'm hopeful but I'm also realistic. Most bishops will undercut it.

It brings me hope.

I was so happy to hear about this and can't help being excited about all the new gifts, perceptions and talents it will be able to bring to the church.

Positive. Wondering the timing on it, but feel it's good it came out now while Pope Francis is still our Pope.

I hope it is the beginning of something new and fresh in our Church.

Perhaps the time has come when everyone who loves God can work together to bring the kingdom, where each person can share the gifts given to them with all of God's people...and leaders, lay and ordained, can help this happen.

Since the Spirit of Wisdom breathed new life through Vatican II, the future was/has been for more lay leadership.

I have been in lay ministry and leadership my entire time as a member of the Church (entered in 1997). I don't know anything else, though I have heard of dioceses that do not promote or encourage lay leadership. God is calling us to fulfill our baptismal promises; to be priest, prophet and royals.

Return to grassroots organization and leadership. Disciples are called by Christ and sent forth to serve all. We need to accept both of these for lay and clerical who work together in service to God and neighbor.

We need more lay leadership is the future of the Church - and it connects us to the early Church.

Laity need to take ownership of the church and become more educated.

WHAT IS GOD ASKING OF US?

“I believe lay ministry and leadership is absolutely essential for the church to become meaningful and significant in the ordinary everyday life of people living in today’s society.

The future will involve the laity at all levels - administration, decision making, responsibility in all aspects.

It’s really hard to say because the males who find their identity in control and clericalism have been blocking the fruits of Vatican II. Perhaps we’re being called to push for an increase in lay ministry--besides “solving” the shortage of male, unmarried priests by ordaining women and married men.

I believe God is calling the Church to accept much more lay leadership and lay ministries, so that the mission of priests and deacons, whether men or women will be able to concentrate solely on their spiritual and pastoral ministries.

God is calling us to listen to the voices of all the people. To re-evaluate the structure and function of the Church and is it serving the needs of the people and caring for the Earth? How can we become relevant in the daily lives of the faithful, and to all our neighbors...regardless of faith tradition, or none

THE FUTURE OF LAY MINISTRY

I have been in lay ministry and leadership my entire time as a member of the Church (entered in 1997). I don’t know anything else, though I have heard of dioceses that do not promote or encourage lay leadership. God is calling us to fulfill our baptismal promises; to be priest, prophet and royals.



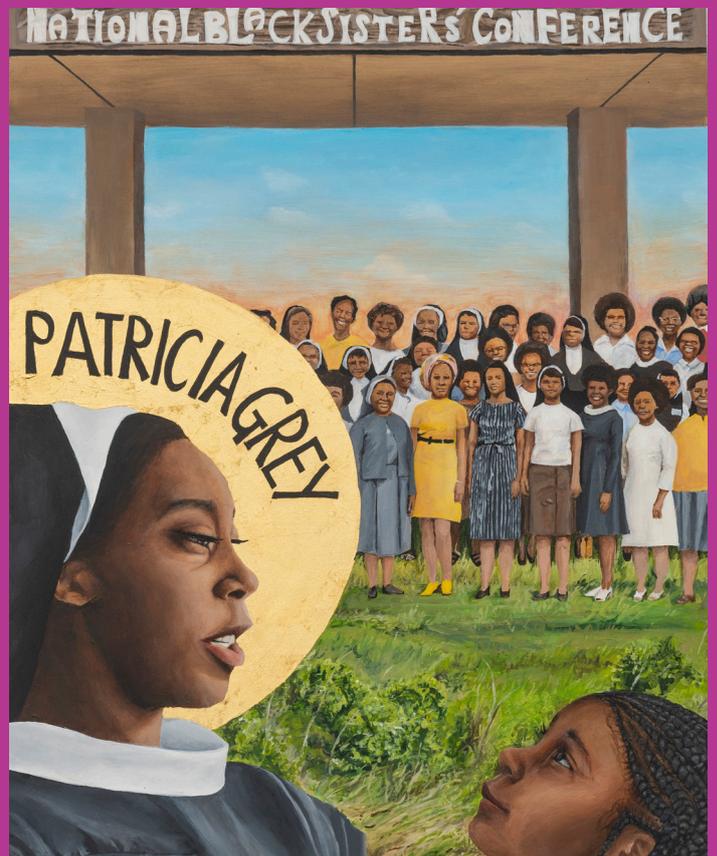
RACIAL JUSTICE IN OUR CHURCH & WORLD

SESSION V

“If it were up to people of color, racism would have been resolved, over and done, a long time ago. The only reason for racism’s persistence is that white people continue to benefit from it.”

Fr. Bryan Massingale





Sr. Thea Bowman, Sr. Antona Ebo, Venerable Henriette Delille, Sr. Martin de Porres Grey. Artist: Chloe Becker

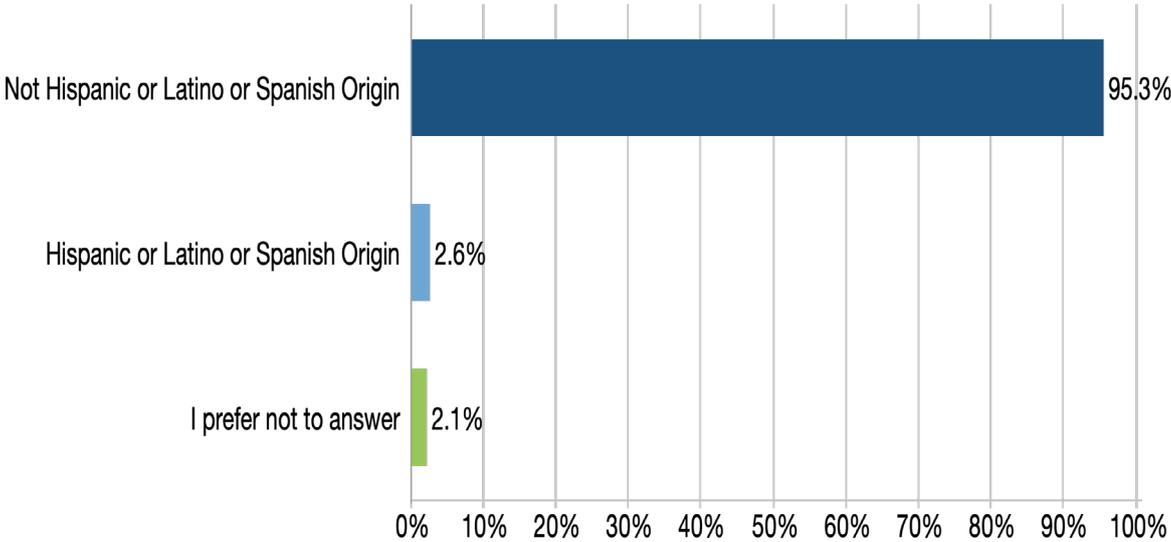
RACE, ETHNICITY

HOW WE IDENTIFY

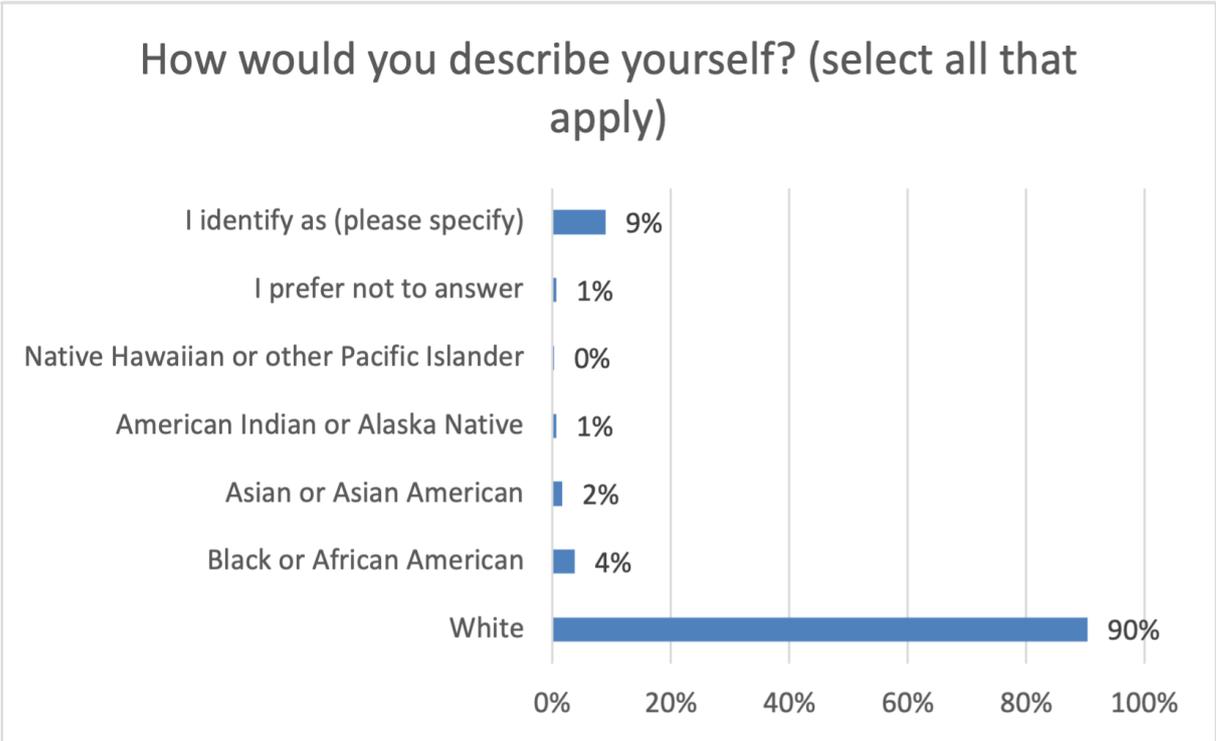
Of the respondents who participated in this session, most identified as white and not of Hispanic/Latino origin. A small percentage (7%) identified as persons of color and 2.6% identified as Hispanic or Latino.

To begin this session, we asked our participants to self identify in terms of race and ethnicity.

Are you of Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin?



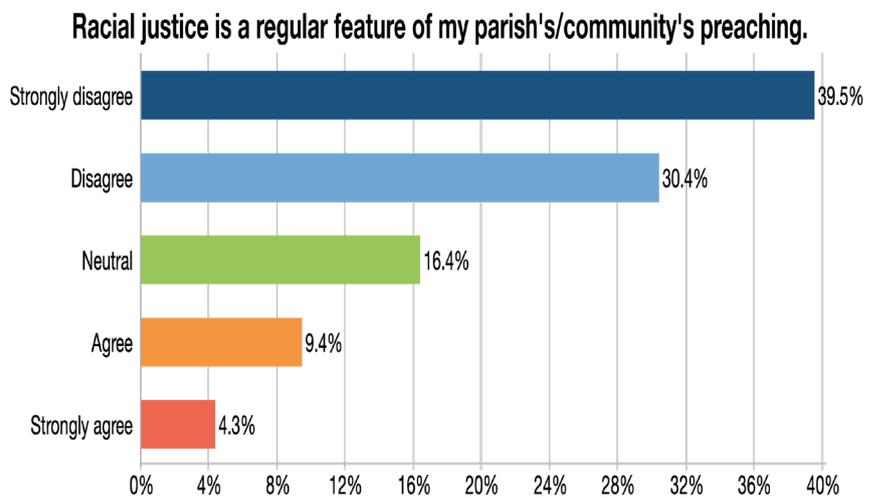
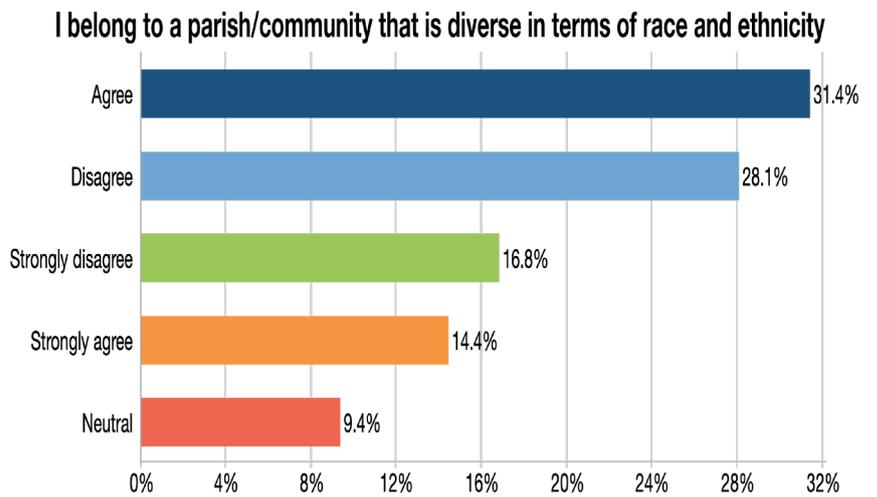
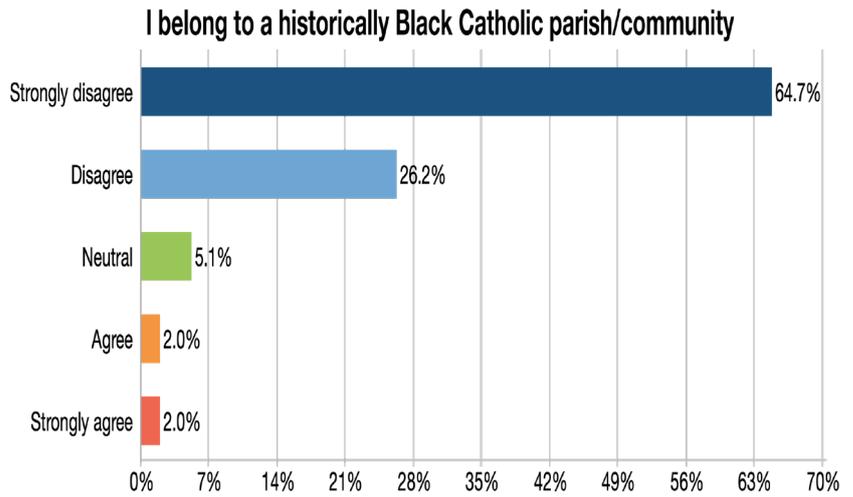
How would you describe yourself? (select all that apply)



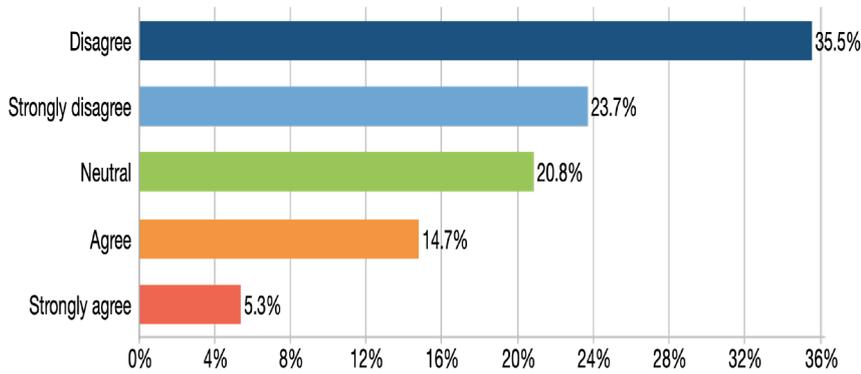
Participants responded to questions about the teachings of the church, the response of faith leaders, and other influences that have helped raise awareness about racism and white supremacy, as well as, motivation for taking action.

Since a large majority of participants in this session were white, this information is particularly important since ending racism and white supremacy is a matter of faith. Working for racial and reparative justice will fall squarely on the shoulders of white Catholics who, like other white citizens, have benefited from this disparity, and are called to lead and heal the damage.

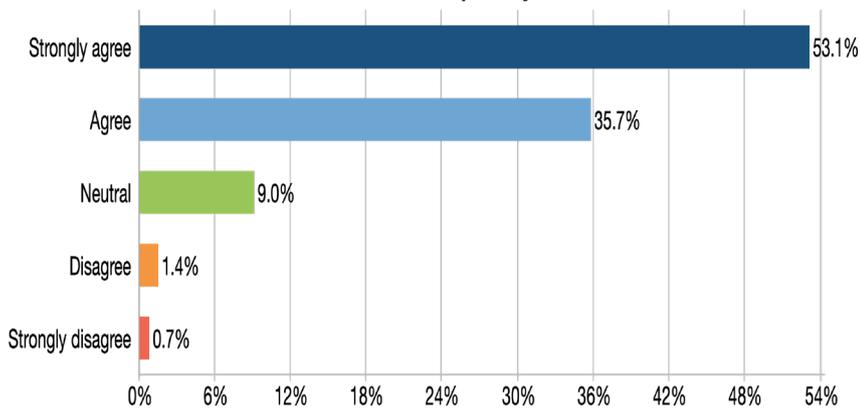
More than 60 years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. described the Sunday morning hour at church as “one of the most segregated hours... in Christian America,” a point that is still of particular importance today in our Catholic parishes.



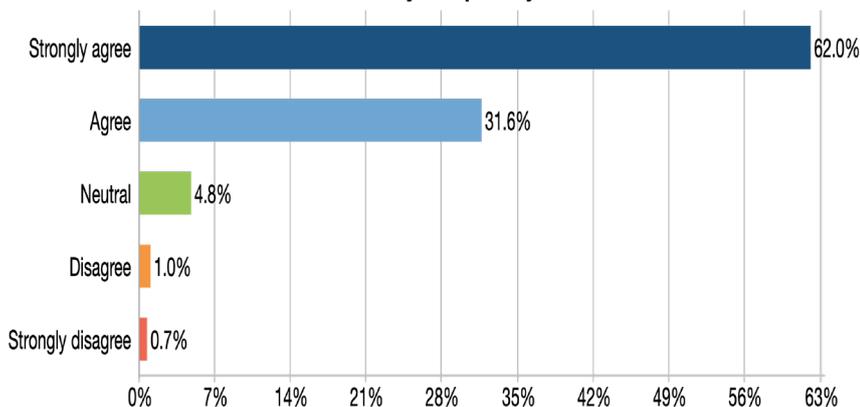
My parish/diocese offers substantial opportunities to learn about the role of faith and Catholic social teaching as a foundation for addressing systemic racism and racial justice.



For me, addressing racism within my parish, my diocese, and in the institutional church is a priority



For me, addressing racism within myself, in my family, in my community and in my country is a priority



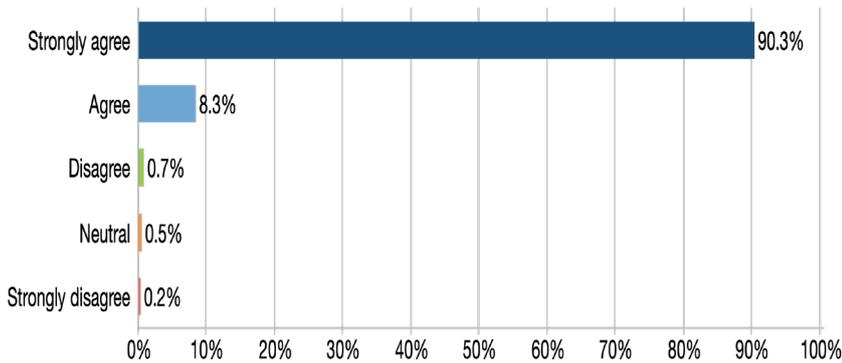
As responses show, there is a critical failures to raise awareness about racial injustice -- rooted in the Gospel.

Four percent (4%) of respondents belong to a historically Black parish while nearly 46% identified their parish as diverse in terms of race and ethnicity.

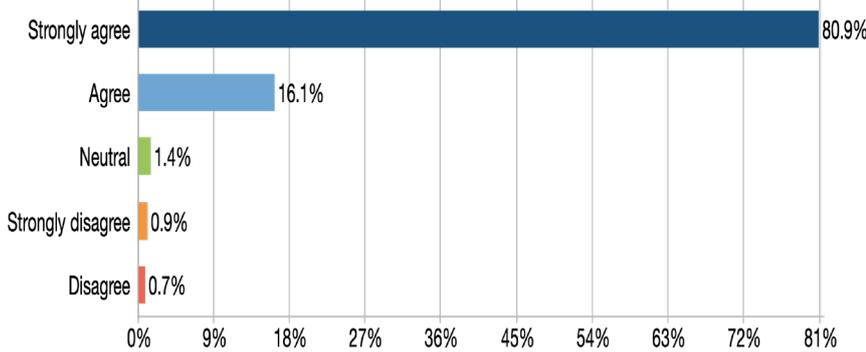
There was strong agreement (93%) that addressing racism personally, in families, communities, and country is a priority with slightly less emphasis (89%) on the parish and church indicated.

While 89% of participants agreed that addressing racism within the parish and institutional church should be a priority, only about 14% said the issue is a regular feature of the preaching they hear. There was a slight uptick (20%) when it came to parishes offering opportunities to learn about racial justice.

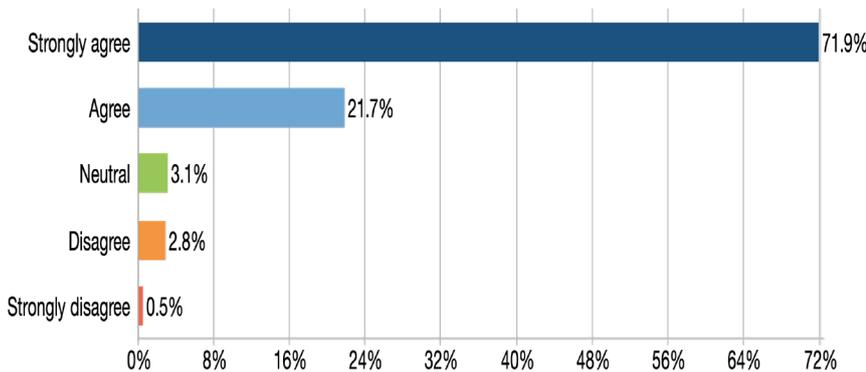
Anti-racism/racial justice education should be a part of every church leaders' formation for ministry, including seminarians, candidates for religious life, and lay ministers.



Catholic bishops, priests, and other leaders, teachers, and ministers need to do more to address the general indifference, denial, and silence of white Catholics regarding systemic and institutional racism in our society and our church



Discomfort and defensiveness on the part of white Catholics when confronted by information about racism, white privilege, or white supremacy is a barrier to realizing authentic racial justice in our society and church.



The Catholics who participated in our synodal sessions want to see more education and leadership on the issue of racial justice.

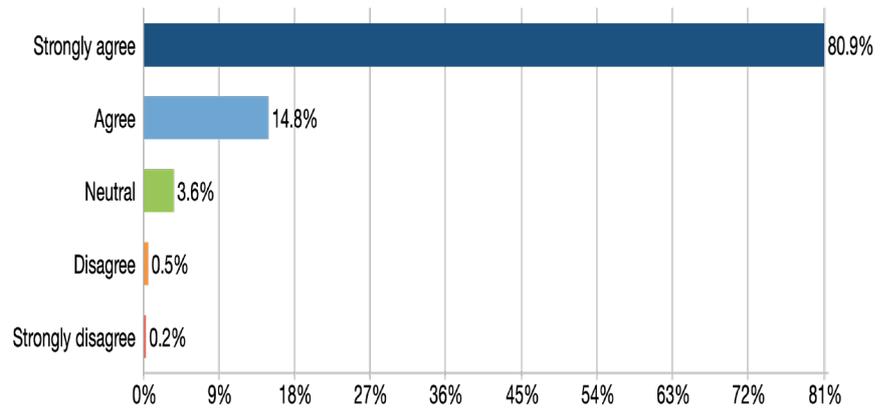
They believe that it should be part of every Catholic formation program including the formation of bishops, priests, and lay leaders and ministers. Virtually 100% strongly agreed or agreed that racial justice education should be part of every church leader's formation.

They also believe that Catholic leaders, teachers and ministers need to do more to address indifference, denial, and silence on the part of white Catholics. Ninety-seven percent (97%) agreed that systemic racism must be addressed by faith leaders.

Ninety-four percent (94%) strongly agree or agree that discomfort and defensiveness on the part of white Catholics is a barrier to achieving racial justice.

Finally, it is clear to respondents that in order to address racism and to reflect the diversity of Catholics, the church needs more people of color in ordained ministry and in positions of authority.

The Catholic Church needs more people of color in ordained ministry and positions of authority



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

RESPONDENTS SHARED A TIME WHEN THEY RECOGNIZED THAT THEY HAD TO TAKE ACTION BECAUSE OF CATHOLIC TEACHING, OR BECAUSE OF THE WITNESS OF A CATHOLIC BISHOP, RELIGIOUS SISTER, PRIEST, OR LAY PERSON.

It has been my life's work as a Catholic and as a woman of color.

Reading Father Dan Berrigan, Reading Father Bryan Massingale, Reading Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton.

Taking part, nearly daily, in the Prayer Tent in Minneapolis after the murder of George Floyd opened my eyes, ears and heart to the reality and effects of systemic racism. It led me to engage in further reading, in taking a seminar by black leaders and promoting it among my peers.

I assume this question will be interpreted and answered differently by color-rich and color-challenged folks. As a member of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) community, I have to take action daily to navigate the impact of implicit bias and racism in both church and community.

Cardinal Wilton Gregory has inspired me with his words and actions.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS (CONT.)

A recent pilot study on racism in the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia brought me to action.

As a community organizer in El Paso, TX, I worked with Hispanic women to raise their voices for the rights and services needed in their neighborhoods.

I have adult children who are not white - we do well with charity but not with justice issues. George Floyd's murder needed to be addressed other than just as a prayer of the faithful. Within our parish we were more concerned about how the message of justice would be received. This holds true on many issues.

St. Thomas University presented a series of Lenten lectures and discussions on the role of our legal system in keeping the races separate: states overriding the 13th Amendment, sending violators of petty laws back into slavery, the heavy enforcement of minor drug violators and inordinate numbers of Blacks incarcerated, redlining of neighborhoods, etc. all involving condonement by our legal system. Many of us had not been aware of the effects of such laws on employment, transportation, lack of earning power, disintegration of families, etc.

My husband and I joined a spiritual group which helped to financially support a Catholic school in the inner city

which was primarily for black children and we still contribute to our group's financial support of groups that help children in the inner city.

Gene Cash, a black member of our parish, started a book club two years ago. We joined the book club.

I was invited by some other sisters who were ministering in southwest Tennessee to learn the skills of community organizing and assist the Blacks there to organize, speak out, and demand their rights and the normal amenities of life, like clean water, paved roads, care at the local hospital, etc.

My husband was an active Catholic priest before we married. The Documents from Vatican II were significant in his life and encouraged him to always focus on social justice. It was his Catholic faith that led him to speak out and, when we worked together at the WNY Peace Center and for the Sisters of St. Joseph, make sure to gently offer actions people could do.

Hearing the stories of the exclusion of women of color from religious congregations, which included my own for a while.

After reading Fr. Dan Horan's book on racism and white privilege, I changed parishes.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

WHEN CATHOLICS ARE PART OF THE PROBLEM

In my religious community we have religious of color. I have heard demeaning comments which I have had to address. The last archbishop of Philadelphia, PA had meetings and he did not have a clue about racism. It was embarrassing.

I worked with the Navajo (Dine' as they call themselves as a Tribal identity) and they are traditionally shepherders. They care for their sheep like they are family because the sheep and goats care for their family with wool for their rugs, food for their gatherings etc. One particular Sunday the priest spoke of the dirty, lazy shepherders in relationship to the Gospel that day. These derogatory remarks impacted half of the congregation that day. His response when asked why he said this was, well they are! Unbelievable!

I was visiting my daughter in Texas and the priest started talking about babies that didn't get baptized before they died. He called them pagan babies. I was mortified and deeply saddened. I wanted to stand up and shout..the babies were born out of love. Such poor, poor theology!

I took action back in the 1980s to protest outside a Catholic Church when a gift Black religious sister was told she could no longer preach in Church. There was a protest march outside the church. When no change happened, my family

and I left that church.

When protests following George Floyd's murder were taking place, our parish refused to address it because they "didn't want to upset anyone." Who is the "anyone" we're protecting?

In general, Catholic clergy do not speak out, join demonstrations in social justice issues like other ministers in other denominations do.

I have abdicated from the American Catholic Church because of the racism that exists among the Bishops, priests. I currently nourish my Catholic faith within the Hispanic, Spanish speaking Catholic community of faith.

In the novitiate, we had an African American young woman enter. There were many postulants and novices who rejected her. I witnessed one time when she took chips from a bowl, another sister refused to take chips from that same bowl. She was a wonderful sister and did much to promote the equality of a vocational call. She died way too young. We would have grown greatly if she had been with us longer.

When Archbishop Gomez made his statement, I wrote a letter. I have been in contact with USCCB when destructive practices occur - such as racism and child abuse.

WORKING FOR RACIAL JUSTICE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Black Catholic historian, Professor Shannen Dee Williams exposes the complicity of the Catholic Church in the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the imperial practices of African slavery and segregation in the Americas, Europe and Africa.

In the 15th century, through a series of papal bulls beginning with Pope Nicholas V's *Dum Diversas* (1452) and including Pope Alexander VI's *Inter Caetera* (1493), the church not only authorized the perpetual enslavement of Africans and the seizure of "non-Christian" lands, but morally sanctioned the development of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This trade forcibly transported at least 12.5 million enslaved African men, women and children to the Americas and Europe to enrich European and often Catholic coffers. It also caused the deaths of tens of millions of Africans and Native Americans over nearly four centuries.

Further, in the land area that became the United States, the Catholic Church introduced African slavery in the 16th century long before 1619. In fact, at various moments in American history from the colonial era to the U.S. Civil War, the church was the largest corporate slaveholder in Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, Catholics, including religious orders of men and women, were also the largest owners of enslaved people during the colonial era. In Brazil, which received the largest number of enslaved Africans imported to the Americas, the Jesuits were at the center of the brutal sugar economy.

Following the abolition of slavery, the Catholic Church stood as the largest Christian practitioner of segregation. In the United States, where the history of many Black Catholics predates that of white and ethnic white Catholics by over three centuries, the vast majority of Catholic institutions and religious orders of men and women systematically excluded African-descended people, especially U.S.-born Blacks, from admission solely on the basis of race well into the 20th century.

The historical record is inundated with gut-wrenching examples of Black Catholic faithfulness in the face of unholy discrimination and segregation in white Catholic parishes, schools, hospitals, convents, seminaries and neighborhoods. Yet, this history is rarely incorporated into dominant narratives of the American Catholic experience. The systematic denial and erasure of Black Catholic history denies the fundamental truth that Black history is Catholic history. It also a part of the system of white supremacy that continues to inflict harm on the descendants of the enslaved people who literally built this country and the American church and those who continue to benefit from the brutal history of colonialism, slavery and segregation.

(Source: <https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/church-must-make-reparation-its-role-slavery-segregation>).



Given the role of the Catholic Church in perpetuating racism, participants offered their ideas for improving the Church's response at the local level.

The archbishop (and EVERY bishop) needs to write a letter to his flock centering on racism as a LIFE issue. Lay Catholics need to step up to be leaders in anti-racism efforts in parishes and community.

I think that we, as local and universal church need to acknowledge our racism and seek forgiveness and exercise public apology.

Mandatory seminary overhaul to social justice, spirituality, and pastoral care and promote education on the parish level for "antiracism" training.

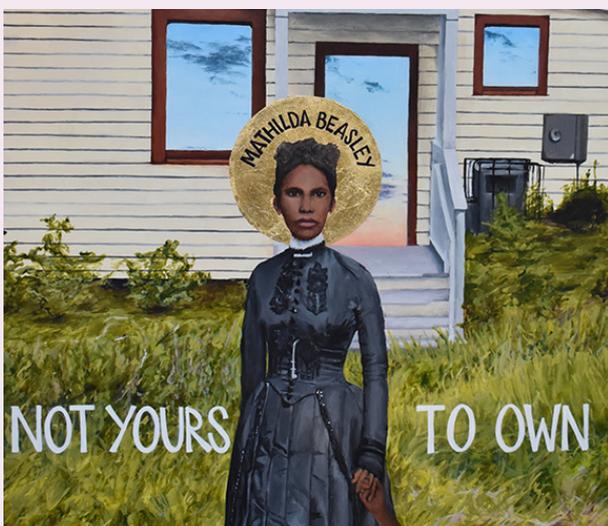
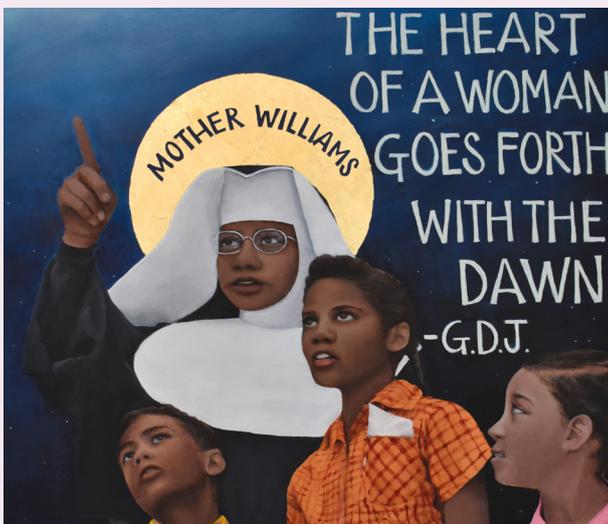
Incorporate music and dance that is racially sensitive to other cultures into the liturgies.

It needs to be preached as it is the Gospel message. It needs to be addressed on all levels. Where is racial justice addressed in our prayers of the faithful, examination of consciences, in our telling of our stories. Whose stories get told? No parish synodal process addressed racism and we have a large Latino population.

Educate the masses of white citizens of the history of Blacks in America and the result of injustice/ prejudice. This starts with the public school system and needs to expand to the Christian schools.

Advocating for fair and affordable housing in ALL communities. Housing barriers are the beams that support segregation and keep people of color from living in white communities.

Talk honestly about it. Admit where we are falling short. Be INCLUSIVE, invite others in without judgment or trying to convert. LISTEN with open minds and hearts. STOP CONDEMNING and LEARN from those who are different. THEY are ALL Children of GOD, to be loved and accepted just as they are. That's what GOD does - aren't we supposed to as well?



TRANSFORMING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE FAITHFUL SO THAT RACIAL JUSTICE IN OUR CHURCH AND SOCIETY CAN BECOME A GREATER REALITY.

Educate our seminarians!
Expose them to the reality.
Remove clericalism.

Educate,
encourage, challenge,
act!

The same way we speak for the unborn, we should be just as vocal about racial injustice in our country.

Speak and preach the truth.

As Catholics, we believe that a recognition of wrongdoing is necessary for reconciliation to take place. We have never formally recognized our “original sin” of racism, and so we continue to wrestle with it today.

Include racism as a required part of seminary training for priests, deacons and DRE's. Publicly honor those who stand up against racism. Encourage alternative Holy Week liturgies like anti-racism processions as Stations of the Cross.

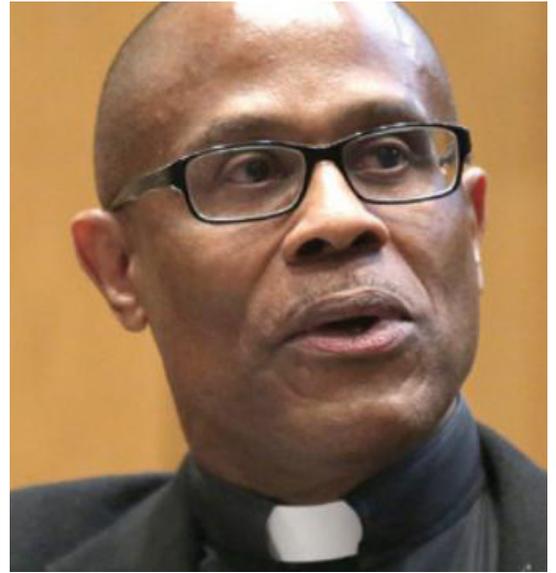
Start to honestly educate.

Identify local racist practices/issues and urge concrete action.

Preach from the Pulpit about racial justice. Engage the Community in opportunities for education in racial justice for all.

Education is so important. Programs explaining Catholic Social Justice in the parishes and schools would be an eye opener for most.

- 1) Openly and honestly disclose, and then repent, of all of the ways they have participated in sustaining a white-supremacy culture within the Church and the communities in every diocese.
- 2) Speak openly and candidly of how parish communities can and MUST do their part to address racism and particularly segregation.



PROPHETIC CATHOLIC VOICES

FAITH, POLITICS & PUBLIC LIFE



SESSION 6

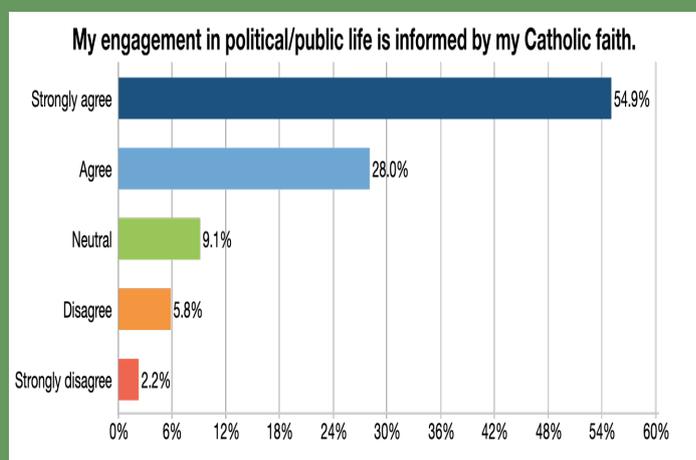


While, as a group, adherents in most faith traditions tend to gravitate toward one party affiliation or the other, Catholics are pretty evenly divided. Pew Research bears this out, although when the data is examined by race and ethnicity, there is another important divided between white Catholics and Catholics of color. The majority of white Catholics are Republican, while the majority of Catholics of Color affiliate with the Democratic party. (https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/09/15/8-facts-about-catholics-and-politics-in-the-u-s/)

That has not always been the case. As columnist Thomas Reese, SJ points out, Catholics were firmly affiliated with the Democratic party through most of the 20th century. But, in the post war era as Catholics became more affluent, they changed their party affiliation. (https://religionnews.com/2019/07/31/will-the-catholic-church-self-destruct-or-bridge-the-partisan-divide/)

As respondents attested in this synodal session, faith is an important component for discerning how to engage in public life, which issues should take precedence, and how to vote.

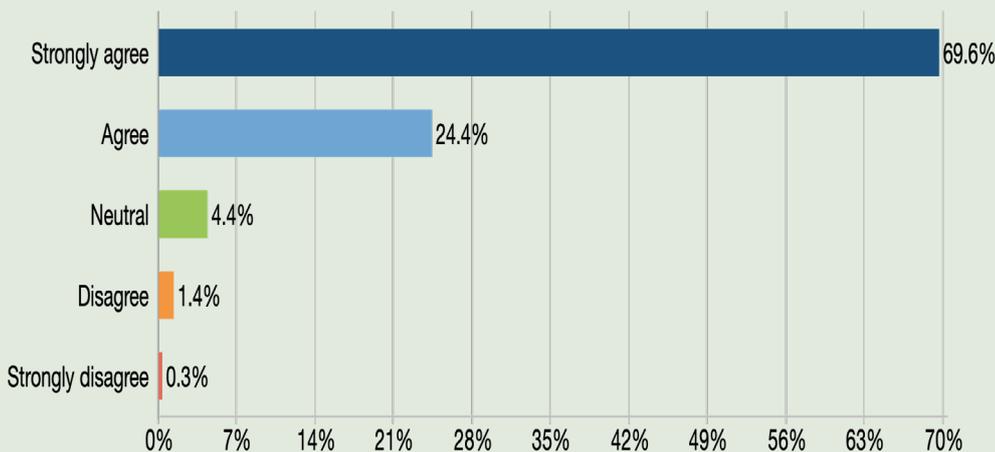
Eighty-three percent of participants strongly agreed or agreed that their Catholic faith is a foundational element when they discern the way they will engage in the public and political sphere.



Overwhelmingly, participants indicated that Catholic Social Teaching is a primary lens for discerning today’s issues. Catholic Social Teaching was cited more than 400 times in responses, an indicator of how central it is to participant formation. The Gospel, the teachings of Jesus, and Scripture were also specifically indicated as guideposts. One respondent summed up the broader consensus.

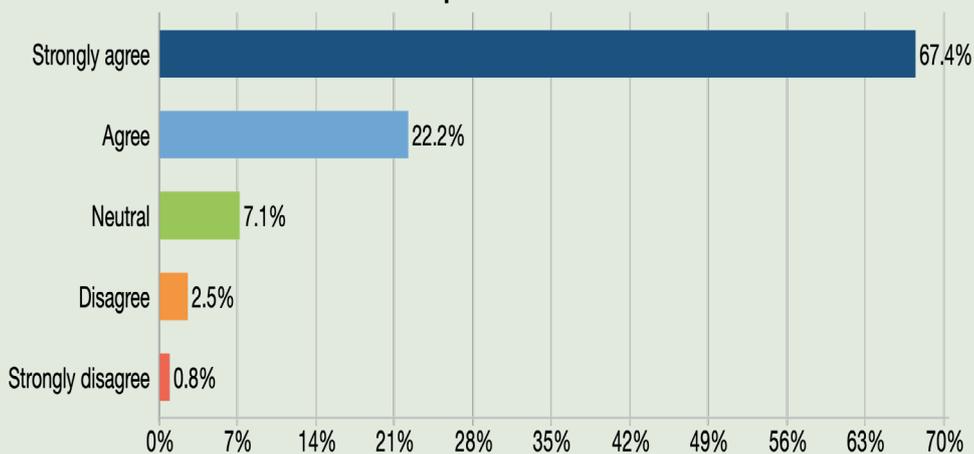
The Church’s social justice platform has been central in shaping the practice of my faith and my response to the issues of our world, i.e. how I cast my vote. However, I find our parish and our diocese does NOT prioritize social justice issues: poverty, immigration, racial disparities, women’s issues, LGBTQ rights, war, criminal justice reform, etc! The abortion issue is the sole concern.

The Gospel/Scripture is foundational to the way I view and interact in political/public life.



Nearly 95% strongly agreed or agreed that the Gospel is foundational in shaping their worldview.

Catholic Social Teaching is foundational to the way I view and interact in political/public life.



Nearly 90% strongly agreed or agreed that Catholic Social Teaching is foundational in shaping their worldview.

And while the list of Catholics who inspired our respondents was long and diverse, many also named people - lesser known Catholics - in their families, parishes and communities who inspired them to carry out the work of the Gospel.

The first nun I ever knew at the age of 8 she was my CCD teacher. As my mother was a widow with a new baby, sister would often have us come after school to the convent to study and play before supper so our mother could have some time “off”. Our mother was amazed when she met Sr “Nativa “ at that time, after months of just talking to her on the phone, that she was Black. We lived in the projects with people of color so it made no difference to me and my siblings what her color was. She loved us and we loved her. To this very day she is my friend. She represented, and to this day represents, so much of what formed me as the Catholic I am today and what goodness, social justice and Gospel values the Catholic Church who welcomes EVERYONE, can be in the world today. She has always been full of joy and hope while being the only Black nun living in a somewhat conservative white middle class convent world. She held and still does “hold her own.” She truly has inspired not only me but many.



Another respondent included their broader community:

My family guided me as they were active in the Church and in community. I am from Minnesota and we knew everyone in the community and church and churches worked together plus the priests and sisters knew all of us and we all did things together.

LAMENTING LEADERSHIP

While respondents shared stories about the inspiring people in their lives, they also expressed significant disappointment in episcopal leadership. After Vatican II, many bishops in the United States and beyond helped carry out the renewal of the Church with significant teachings on the preferential option for the poor, peace and economic and social justice. They helped usher in a new era of lay ministry and leadership.

Yet, under the long pontificates of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, bishops who had helped reshape Catholic teaching bringing its significant influence to bear on the pressing issues of the day were slowly silenced and replaced with a new cadre of bishops who reinforced the centralizing authority of the cleric; diminished lay leadership; covered up clergy sex abuse when evidence required them to do otherwise; and, refocused Catholic teaching to reflect one primary issue – abortion.

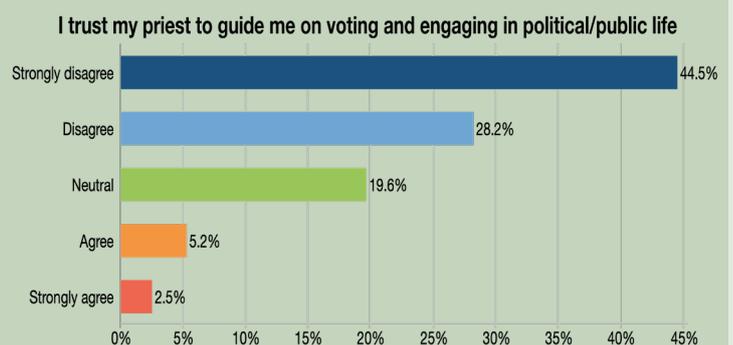
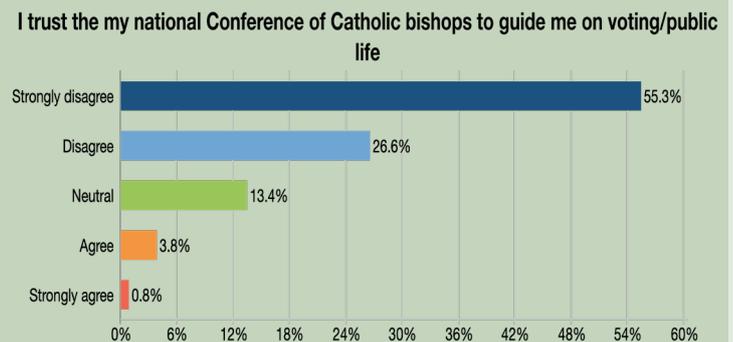
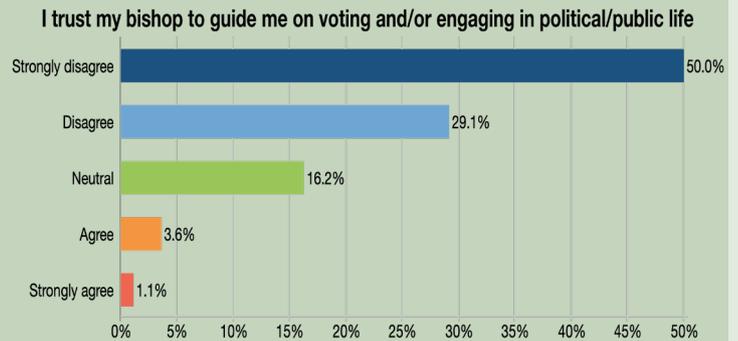
Thus, it is not surprising that Catholics who joined these synodal sessions expressed a great deal of disappointment with their bishops. They often contrasted their formative faith experiences with women religious or other communities of faith with the polarizing leadership of bishops. In some cases, Catholics expressed the fear that U.S. Bishops are contributing to the demise of democracy as well as the rise of white nationalism and white supremacy because of their entanglement with political leaders who do not embrace Catholic values. In this way, respondents believe that the singular focus on abortion has severely undercut the importance of other social justice issues such as care for the poor, immigration, care for the earth, and more.

One respondent captured the general sentiment:

Since moving to the suburbs, I realized that the clergy and hierarchy had not studied nor implemented Vatican II. It was 80% of the nuns and orders of brothers and priests, who had studied and implemented so I could only learn from them. When they decided to investigate the nuns, one of the things that many of them said, was that the nuns were “too much into social justice”. I think that succinctly states just how far away they are from what I think the Gospel message is.”

The distrust respondents feel toward their bishops and priests was reflected in their response to several questions.

When asked who they look to for guidance when discerning how to vote and how to engage in the pressing issues of our day, they were clear that clerical leadership did not have their confidence.



Whether it was individual bishops, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops who issue the voting guide, or the parish priest, respondents did not indicate a sense of trust in their guidance. Only four to eight percent agreed or strongly agreed that these were the leaders in whom they look to for guidance.

One respondent expressed this distrust in simple terms.

I do not trust bishops. They are worried only about money and are trying to roll back Vatican II. There allegedly should be a separation of Church and State. However in 2016, the dioceses of Columbus and Toledo sent letters to all parishioners explicitly telling them how to vote (i.e., for Trump). My sister left the church at that point. I am very concerned that the Church is becoming a one-issue church (abortion only) and casting a blind eye to other issues of Catholic Social Teaching. How can we trust the bishops when they helped perpetuate the abuse scandal and when they propose a candidate who is pro death penalty. After all, Trump executed more people in the last few weeks of his office than other presidents had in 4 years!

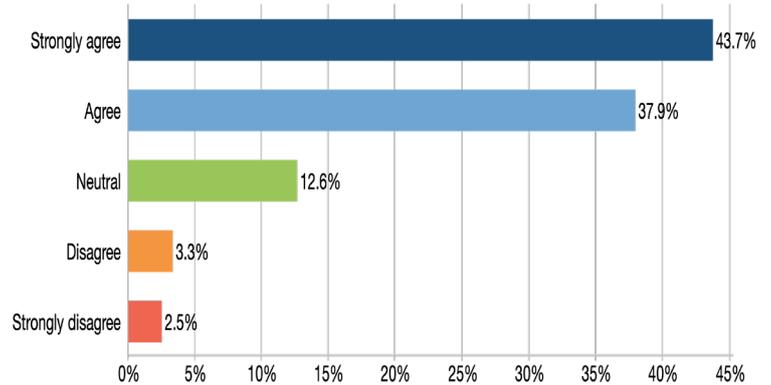
TRUSTED LEADERS

On the other hand, respondents did trust Pope Francis and women religious to offer guidance. Eighty-two percent (82%) strongly agreed or agreed that they trust Pope Francis on these matters, and 75% agreed or strongly agreed that they trust women religious.

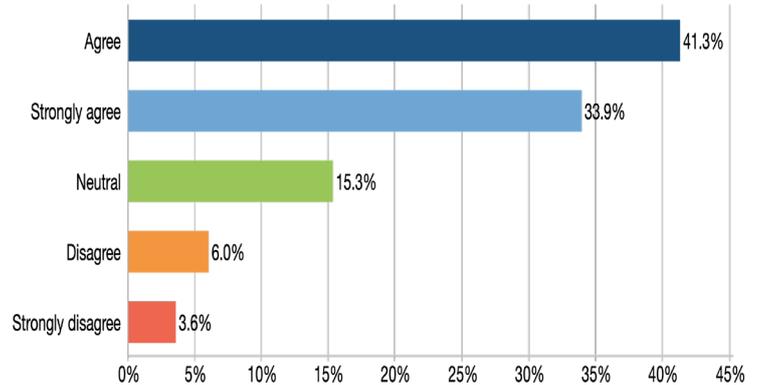
One respondent captured the spirit of all:

The Church's social justice teachings have informed my views on world, country, & community pressing issues. Pope Francis's emphasis on the poor & marginalized has been inspirational. Finally, my reading of Matthew 25: 31-46 has been foundational for me in establishing my views on humanity's pressing issues.

I trust Pope Francis to guide me on engaging in political/public life



I trust women religious to guide me on voting and engagement in political/public life

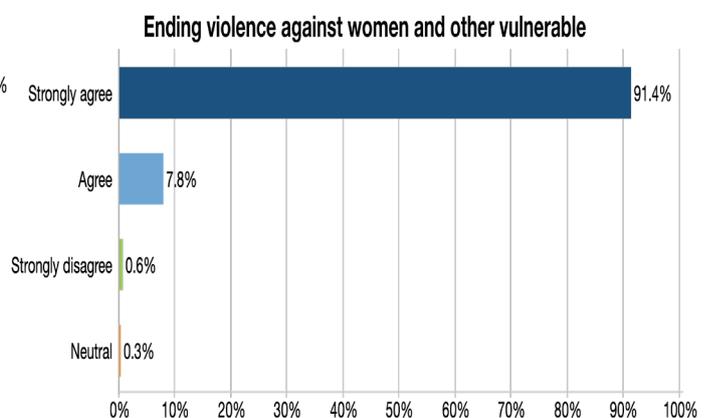
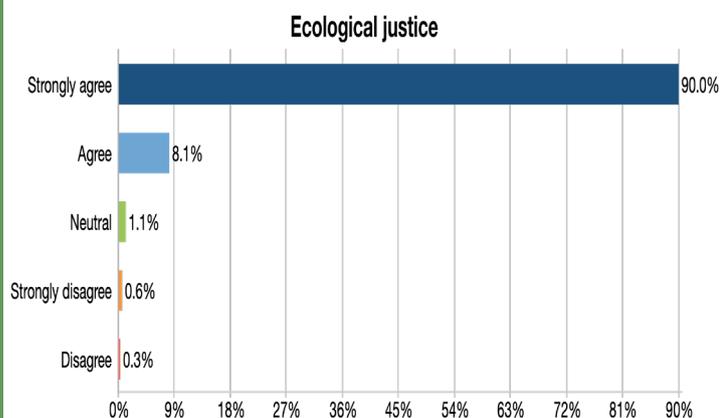
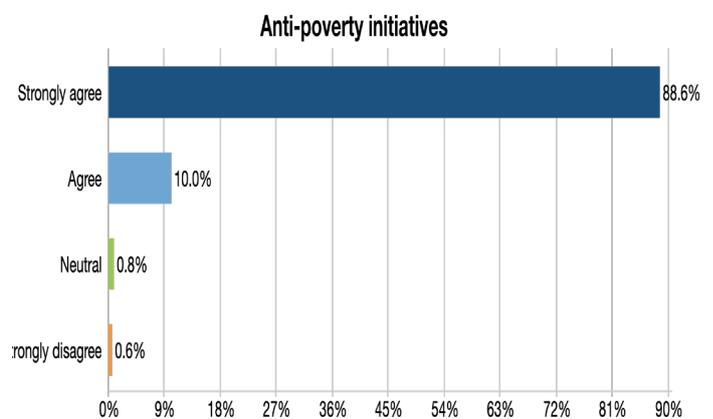
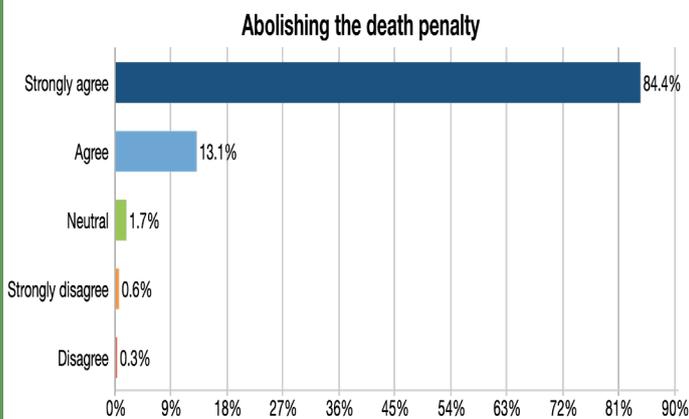


Yet, it is also true that these participants want their bishops take stands that reflect Gospel values and Catholic Social Justice.

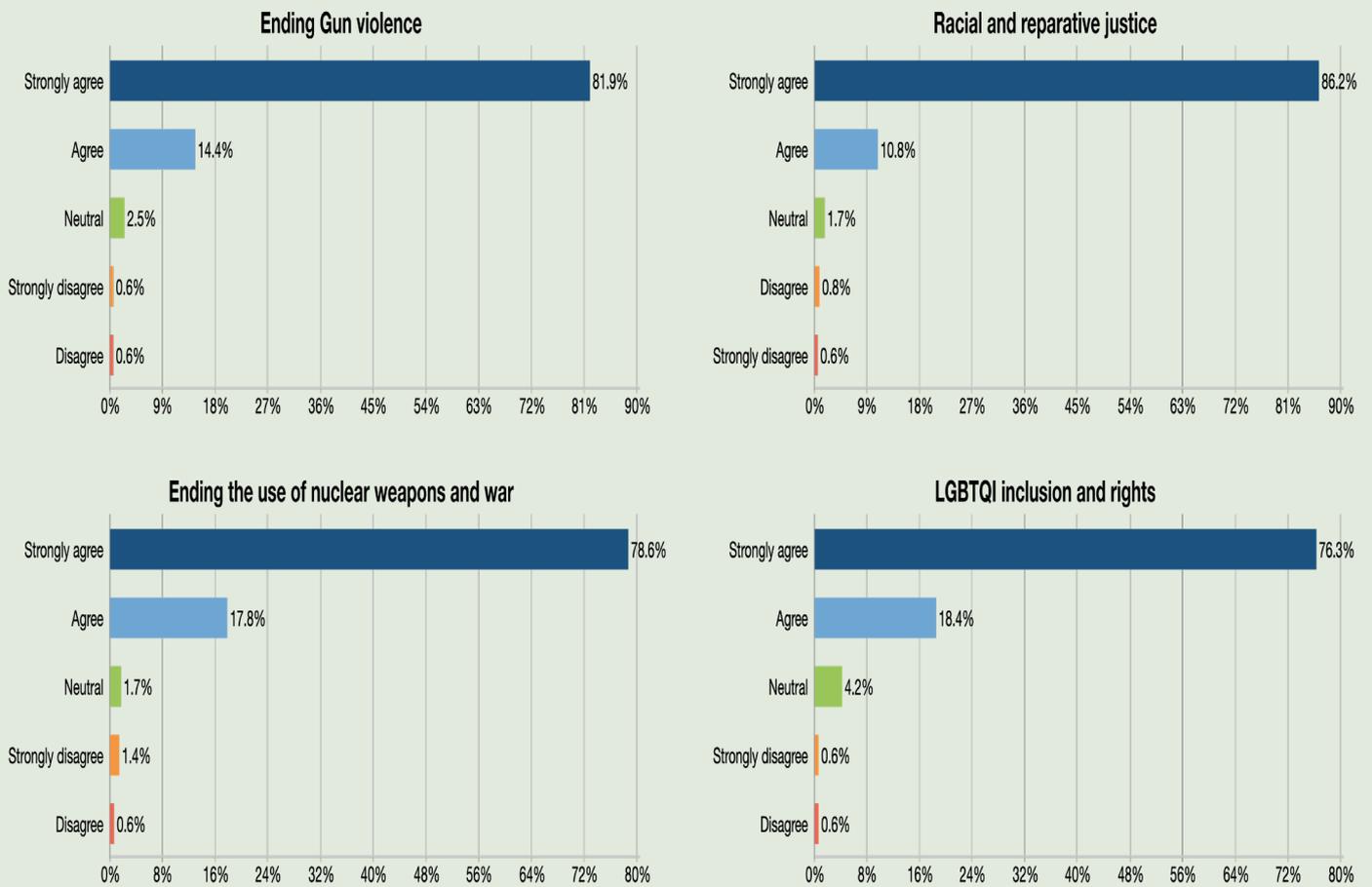
Catholics were heartened when their bishops responded to injustices, especially when those responses were aligned to Catholic Social Teaching. Advocacy for the poor; reconciliation and reparation for injustices inflicted on indigenous peoples in Catholic schools; calls for racial justice, especially when people like George Floyd are being murdered on our streets at the hands of police; calling for peace in Ukraine; the call for an end to nuclear weapons; calls for economic justice; taking a stand for the rights and dignity of immigrants; and, increasing a call to care for creation rooted in Laudato Si is a priority.

When asked what they believe the bishops should be prioritizing, they indicated that abolishing the death penalty; ending gun violence; ending nuclear proliferation and war; ending violence against women; supporting anti-poverty initiatives; supporting ecological justice; supporting racial and reparative justice; and supporting LBGTQI rights and inclusion are priorities.

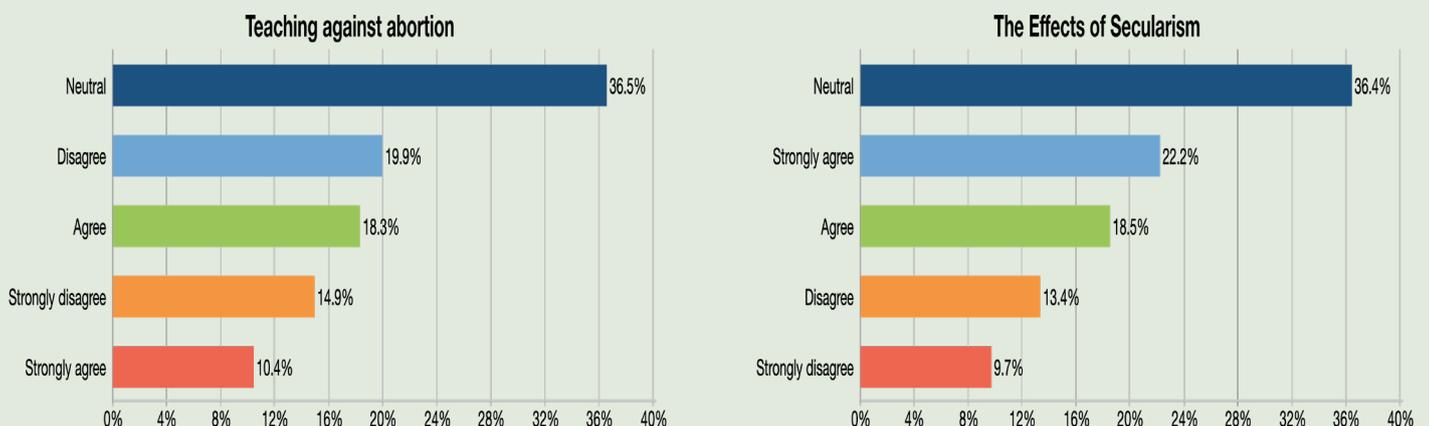
Results from the questionnaire show that respondents were strongly supportive (virtually 100%) of abolishing the death penalty, supporting anti-poverty initiatives, working for ecological justice, and ending violence against women.



Respondents were just as enthusiastic about having bishops speak up on racial and reparative justice, ending gun violence, LBGtQI inclusion and rights, and ending war and the use of nuclear weapons.



It is also clear that respondents did not share the bishops’ focus on addressing secularism, nor abortion. Of our 366 respondents, 28% agreed or strongly agreed that the bishops should prioritize teaching against abortion. Another 35% strongly disagreed or disagreed, and 36.5% were neutral on the issue. This may well reflect the complexity of the issue in the minds of most respondents, an issue that doesn’t lend itself to easy solutions.



Most respondents acknowledged the complexity and difficulty of the issue for those facing it. They contrasted that complexity with the stance of the bishops who, unlike Cardinal Bernadin, are unwilling to address and advocate for a “seamless garment” approach and have thus wedded themselves to a political party that undercuts the policy reforms needed to reduce the necessity for abortions. Some typical comments are below:

While many bishops have taken a pro-brith stance, respondents tended to look at the issues the issue of abortion, many of the bishops have fallen into a pro-birth stance. A true pro-life stance would support life throughout all of life, especially for the poor. Politically, many of them do not support national health insurance for all, especially children, the expansion of child tax credits to allow families to keep most of their money for their families, while the mega-rich don't pay taxes, and also education for all. The US bishops' conference complains all the time that the politicians don't listen to them when they write, but that is their fault, because they have become so political that the progressives only see abortion as their issue and the conservatives won't support the bishops unless they are in lock step with them politically. It is a mess and a problem that can't be solved soon.

I do believe an abortion is a taking of a life and shouldn't happen; however, I don't believe the current push for legislation for this is the way to end abortion. I also believe that this issue is not black and white and I have to respect the life of the woman who has to make this difficult decision.

The reason for my neutral responses is that those are the areas that the bishops have mainly focused on politically. Whereas, I do not believe in abortion, I believe that the issue of abortion is a complex issue that needs to be taken out of the political discourse and approached by examining “all the many reasons that lead a woman to seek termination.” They need to allow for birth control. And they need to look around in our society to see how there are so FEW SUPPORTS FOR WOMEN, MOTHERS.

LISTENING TO THE SPIRIT

And finally, we asked respondents to share what they believe the Spirit is calling the church to at this time. Respondents overwhelmingly spoke of standing in solidarity with the poor and working to create a world where poverty is no longer present in our societies.

Respondents noted the importance of standing for justice, including environmental justice, racial justice, justice for women, LGBTQI justice, economic justice and more. They wrote about ending militarism, violence, and war. They spoke of service, education, and engendering unity, not division. They spoke of civil rights and voting rights. They urged faith filled Catholics to vote and become involved in building the kin-dom of God in our church, our communities and in the world.

Some of the responses were indicative of the spirit of the Catholics gathered during this synodal session:

I think God is calling us,
laity and clergy, to become more
informed about the social and political
ramifications of Jesus' teaching and the
development of the Church's social
teaching; to look at the issues
confronting our society and our
world through the lens of Scripture
and Catholic social teaching.

I think God is calling us
to acknowledge that we are all sinners
and have been complicit in the evils
of racism and exclusion,
and to trust that God is with us
and will guide us
to a place of wholeness and holiness,
if we let God.

OUR STORIES

APPENDICES 1-6

I) EUCHARIST &
PARISH CLOSINGS

II) THE PRIESTHOOD

III) WOMEN IN THE
CHURCH

IV) LAY LEADERSHIP
& MINISTRY

V) RACIAL JUSTICE IN
THE CHURCH & WORLD

VI) FAITH &
PUBLIC LIFE

OUR STORIES

SESSION I

EUCCHARIST & PARISH CLOSINGS

Q1. How have parish mergers and closures affected you, your community, and your experience of Eucharist? Please share your stories and your reflections here. 1

Q2. As the People of God in an authentically synodal church, what is God calling us to do in this time of parish mergers/closures? 30

Q1. How have parish mergers and closures affected you, your community, and your experience of Eucharist? Please share your stories and your reflections here.

In most instances, the mergers and closures have not been well accepted. Most of these parishes have a long history of being associated with an ethnic class or other like divisions. Presently my parish shares a pastor with a parish in another part of the city that is predominantly a Black parish. Even though we would like to share in activities, this has not been welcomed. Events at each parish are not shared with the two parishes. This is sad.

Challenging for the school.

I and many others experience sorrow at the failure of Roman and Diocesan leadership to support greater changes in understanding of 'ecclesia' and ministry that involve greater involvement of all members of the community, with shared leadership and service. The Basic Ecclesial Communities of Central and South America had and have much to offer. Under an earlier pro-Vatican II Archbishop this model was promoted and supported in parishes. Now, however, many of us who were very involved in Church community and life have left the restricted patriarchal parish structures and formed Christian Eucharistic communities more congruent with our faith and evolving understanding of what God's asking of us.

Lots of pain, anger, people leaving. Having to learn to trust, to let go, to change.

Lots of hard feelings. Spent lots of time getting used to the new person instead of focusing on my own spiritual needs.

When the priest is absent, we have our para liturgical services conducted by Sisters. It is very well done and meaningful in our community.

As yet our parish has not been affected by a merger BUT should it someday, I can imagine a lot of people dropping out due to added traveling or in grief for loss of their home church.

A Parish closed that had a Latin Mass. The parishioners asked to continue to celebrate the extraordinary form at our Church. The pastor agreed - now this group who do not believe in Vatican II have taken over the parish and have forced many out.

Two parishes joined mine.

Saddened me. When a parish closes, not all members return or migrate to new parish. They leave. And sometimes parishes are not set up or financially/spiritually ready to welcome new members from another parish.

I have not been affected directly.

Although not directly affected, family and friends report mixed feelings of loss and confusion. Overwhelming share is that they just don't like it.

Not personally.

Hasn't happened. However, the church has lost a large part of its community.

Although we were told this was due to a shortage of priests, we actually now have +1 priest and +2 deacons. This is confusing to the congregations. Also, we no longer have a Pastor, instead we have an "Administrator".

Our administrator is extremely clerical and has had virtually no laity input.

Most have happened about ten years ago. It affected the f parish faith community very much. Most pleaded to stay open and have lay-led celebrations and continue with other committees and prayer celebrations. The churches were not allowed to stay open. Many people were very devastated.

Our merger combined 2 smaller churches (one definitely operating at a loss) with our large vibrant church. We were an inclusive church with close to a thousand volunteers in countless ministries. It truly felt like there was a place for anyone who wished to serve. Clearly COVID had a devastating effect but with new administration and the shift to tighter controls over our programs, we have lost many parishioners. Most notably we lost our thriving youth ministry. Resources being pulled away possibly to assist the elementary school which became a part of our grouping. I am particularly saddened by this as I believe our church has no future without our young people. Teenagers are now a rare sight at our masses. I have been a member of my church for 23 years and have been involved in many different ministries over the years. I have backed away from all except the women's prayer group and a book club, and one service ministry. I am no longer a eucharistic minister as it seemed so overwhelming all the new requirements (hopefully this goes away with COVID). I think that the manner in which our merger was carried out was more or a slash and burn. Maybe this was thought to be necessary so that the smaller churches did not feel consumed by our larger church, but surely there could have been another way that did not result in a loss of very good staff that built up our church. This new administration has created a greater division 'us vs them' which is the opposite of the intended outcome.

Not personally affected.

Yes, we moved from two smaller parishes to one mega-parish. The transition was painful but over 20 years now there has been some healing. My experience is that such a large parish diminishes the sense of community and "sanitizes" the eucharistic experience. There is always pain when bishops FORCE communities to stop worshipping and does not offer them options to continue as a faith community.

I lost my parish, St. John the Baptist. The closing of our parish was announced by a lay person whom I didn't know, in a very flat, nonaffective manner. The priest did not say anything about it. It has been a great loss in our community and for me personally.

A lot of hype from my parish about our fate aka demise. A big waste of our time to spend worrying we should be more proactive in attracting more people to our small community.

Unfortunately, cultural and ethnic needs of some parishes were not carefully handled, and the hurt continues to linger in people's spirits and the energy of our diocese. Harsh comments and actions by a small number of priests increased the pain. My granddaughter made her First Communion in one of these parishes and the harshness of the priest certainly had children, Sisters, parishioners and guests on edge. Marred memories and hurt hearts resulted. Although the affected parishes were included in the closing/merging process and it seemed that there was agreement, the bishop's final choices were reportedly not what had been discussed. Many priests and parishioners learned of the bishop's decisions on the local evening news. Poor use of the bishop's 'power over' capabilities eroded trust. Opportunities were lost for meaningful collaboration in the prayer and work of people, priest and bishops.

It weakens the community in St. Louis. Communities need a moral compass and

guidance on how to become better people and care for their neighbor.

Enclosed is a report on the Birthing, Expansion and D Dissolution of an Ecumenical Community on an Island on which there was no active Catholic Church.

Juneau diocese has been merged with the Anchorage diocese (which is an hour and a half plane ride away).

Loss of community connection.

Impact has been positive for the most part.

Some of our parishes have been gifted artwork from parishes that have closed or remodeled.

This has taken place over the last many years, going back at least 30 years and has been overall planned and gradual change. In my parish, it hasn't had an impact as it is the seat of the diocese, meaning the basilica and it has always been a parish that draws people from around the region, it has never had the feel of being a 'neighbourhood' church but rather one where all gather.

Mergers are in progress now. It is unclear yet how things will play out.

Some people resisted very strongly. Father Responded by keeping their mass times so that group could stay in their "own parish" in the new church.

In Great Falls, MT, the closing of the small Adoration parish which also offered weekend Masses, hurt many people emotionally. The parish that became the focus parish took on a young priest who is pre-Vatican II. My brother's funeral, celebrated largely in Latin with his back to the people. He is now garnering the attention of priests from outside the city who have similar views. My brother and his wife remained faithful to their experience of Eucharist.

Depending on who was pastor in each parish, there was a difficult merging of the 3 parishes in ways that the Parishioners could be heard, or their Sacramental needs provided. In many sections of the Diocese the hearts and foundations of the People did not receive the compassionate attention required. Many times, the issue of finances determined the closings even if that particular community had been vibrant. The Grieving Process was not seen as important in many situations.

It was sad... most decisions made because of money. It's not the church of the poor.

None to share.

I have lived in places where this has happened, I am not currently living there, but I remember that when a parish is merged this affects elderly people because they need to drive larger distances to that church, or they cannot go walking. This affects poor people who do not have a car to transport themselves to mass. Also is challenging when trying to form new communities, this creates chaos because there are many communities with different priorities in one parish.

Many people in Cleveland involved in the local initiatives to teach nonviolence and advocate for the US to end its wars in Afghanistan and Iraq became consumed with the church closings. The while experience fractured the local effort to oppose war. When the pulpit could have been elevating the voices of peace, instead, we received crickets about the immortality of cluster bombs, etc.

First the Catholic schools of the two parishes in town merged, with the school being located on the campus of the wealthy side of town. Now, the parish that is being closed is the one on the poorer side of town, which also forces those who come from across a valley to the parish, to now have to also cross the town as well.

No closures or merges in the Appalachian Mountains of Virginia.

No apparent effect on my parish.

My father's parish was merged with another in the Boston archdiocese. His parish was chosen as the primary site because of its historical value. The partner parish had young families and they were motivated to function well.

Building community becomes difficult.

My high school parish church merged with several others decades ago and we participate yearly because of distance.

Finance for all, reduced religious to sustain economic weight for schools, reduced number of ordained priests, and the breakup of geographic communities due to work availability, sports etc.

I experienced the tragic closing of Historic St. Peter's Church, its resurrection in the form of the Community of St. Peter, the rescinding of the closure by the Bishop because he violated the rules, the excommunication of the pastor who responded to the request of his parish to provide spiritual care to them when the Bishop had made no provisions for them. It was a painfilled scandal that is unhealed.

Not directly. I belonged to a large cookie-cutter suburban parish.

Our former bishop decided to bring in a slew of foreign priests rather than merge/close. Many were not culturally sensitive to US ways and English skills were weak.

Small towns are devoid of churches all together. The church had been the center of activity, unified parishioners.

The merger with another parish has stretched our priests and it has changed our Mass times. It makes it feel like our community is sort of slit up now because they are trying to make us

one big group, but it's just spread people out around more, so we don't feel as connected as before.

I am a member of a diocesan lay ministry support group which met just today and one of our topics was "with so many small parishes and so few priests they feel like circuit riders, and don't get to know their people. What can we do about it? It's a complex problem and we are working on it.

Lack of Priests to lead Parishes and Retired Priests are Tired. Our Deacon leads our Parish, but Women cannot read the Gospel or Preach!

I am not in a parish--refuse to be.

Not me personally or my community as I am in an order parish.

I have served in a County with three parishes. I was to help one parish close (heart wrenching!) There is no way short of direct Divine Intervention the other two would ever merge amicably. Both small rural parishes. The most vigorous of the three parishes, I came to understand was the one that closed.

Breakups have caused anger & some people have left the church.

My first church on the South Side of Chicago (St. Ethelreda) is now a Baptist Church. I recently went by, and it is dirty and run down. I was so sad to see it in this condition, but it in my old neighborhood that, in the 50s was all white. It is now mostly Black as is the grammar school that is now also all Black, but still Catholic. The good thing is that I was able to speak to the Principal and they have a girls chess team and they have won championships with their team! However, even sadder is the convent--only 4 nuns and they have to raze the building because it is in such disrepair! The Principal wants to build a clinic in its place, but needs \$1Million. This demonstrates the financial disparity between whites and Blacks

because they do not have the money to repair the school or raze and build a new clinic in their neighborhood!

It broke up our local church community!

I have not experienced where I live currently; but in the area where I grew up, where my mother still lives, this has been an issue for the last 30 years. The parish where I was married was paired with another parish about 20 years ago; and about five years ago it became part of a triad. The access that parishioners now have to the Eucharist and other sacraments, especially reconciliation, has been dramatically reduced.

Being a religious woman and living near the motherhouse, I don't participate in a parish. However, there is much unawareness around the theology of Eucharist among many sisters. They have forgotten Vatican II and, for example, during the pandemic, expected a communion service every day and this was enough for them. As far as a real theology, little is understood.

No experience.

Nothing personal - however, it truly seems that it is always parishes that serve our poorest sisters and brothers that close - while more affluent parishes thrive?

I belong to the Cathedral parish, so it is still operating. A few of the churches in the country have a parish priest who serves two parishes.

I have not been personally involved in any.

Some parishes really should be closed/merged, since we have too many churches from the era when different nationalities each had their own church, very close to each other (Italian, German, Polish, Irish, etc.)

My experience is that the mergers have been positive.

I haven't experienced a merger or a closure.

Eucharist experiences have been dependent on pastors persons who are more inclusive have greater participation in eucharistic services.

Process is still unfolding, so not sure of the extent of effects.

It has mostly been a negative experience. Initially it appeared that the parishioners gathered and had input, however final decisions did not reflect the same. There are different experiences and spirit in parish communities that can be respected and allowed to grow.

It is heartbreaking to live through your home being taken away.

My parish school was closed without any warning. I found this disrespectful for the students, their families and their fellow parishioners and pastor. Now the diocese is going to close some churches. These are faithful communities there must be a better solution. And a better more effective process.

I have not had parish mergers yet. I am well experiencing Eucharist thru Mass. We have not yet experienced without Mass.

In other places such as the Archdiocese of Milwaukee where I'm from, closures and mergers were very painful. And if they were survived, numbers of attendance or involvement dropped. Lay personnel were especially negatively affected with "right-sizing" which usually was downsizing.

I have not experienced this here.

It has marginalized even more communities.

They have not directly affected me, but they have greatly affected the African American parishes.

There were no effects on me, positive or negative.

4 parishes were asked to submit answers to questions in the first round to unify them. The excuse was fewer clergy in the coming years. (this was not explained nor presented with concrete details to the people.) One small parish (Anglo and poor) one small parish (Anglo and rich) one large parish 90% Hispanic. One large parish mostly Anglo who were moving out as the Hispanics moved in but with little pastoral to the Puerto Rican, Mexicans, Dominicans. 10 years ago, and 3 pastors. Last 2 pastors Anglos with no training in Hispanic care. Each parish pushed to stay separate. Rich parish would not reveal their money. The little Anglo parish knew that they would not be saved. The Anglos refused to be anything Hispanic while the Hispanics of the larger suburban parish refused to go back to the city. The large Hispanic stood alone. The rich stood alone. And mine absorbed the little one which grow more Hispanic but the pastor is incapable of giving them any inspiration. So, the three die as the Hispanic parish thrives.

They have not personally affected me.

When the new pastor came in, he dismantled all programs, dismissed lay leadership, and completely changed the feel of the parish. What had been a warm and welcoming parish is now lifeless and spiritless.

Since I now belong to the RCWP community and also CORPUS group we have regular Eucharist among us, so no closures at all.

Inability to participate in Eucharistic Celebrations, limitation of Mass times, limitation of Eucharistic Adoration.

Not yet. They are happening down state in smaller parishes merging with larger parishes in the area.

Have been positive experiences when people have been part of the experience and understood the need for mergers or closings.

Some have gone elsewhere. There needs to be a transition group that assists the merged parish to begin anew.

I've just seen one priest going to three or four parishes for Mass. They keep the buildings open and have Masses for mostly elderly people in that town. Since there is no regular priest there full-time, there is no community. The priests don't have time to reply to emails or phone calls. The parish contact person is often an older local lady with very little knowledge of anything Catholic, for whom making the bulletin is just a part-time job. The parish contact can be "nice" but also biased, suspicious, partisan.

We lost our 7:00 Sunday evening Mass at St. Mary's in downtown Grand Rapids.

As a leader in the community, I hear the frustration of the people in the bayou communities losing them since of who they are, and their churches are a huge part of who they are. For us here in Cajun country the Catholic churches are a part of our culture.

There were a number of mergers...with name changes. Not everyone agreed. The parishes that served the poorer neighborhoods were closed and they had no debt, but the money was needed for the Cathedral. "Mother Church".

My parish St. Gregory had its pastor retire and key staff left. St. Ita took over. It still has masses but lost its core. I moved to a new parish closer to home St. Gertrude which stayed intact and is affiliated with St. Jerome. St. Ignatius closed at the end of June. I am happy in this new active parish. There has been a lot of grieving amongst parishioners with closings and reorganizations.

Many parishioners left for non-Catholic churches or quit going to church. Some went to other parishes. It was painful for so many.

The merger was lead with little leadership that was open to cultural differences. So Hispanic cultures were pushed into a setting that was still Anglo first and for 12 years we have slowly died.

I have not experienced this in my area; my family in Massachusetts has experienced closure and merger. While the opportunity to experience a different style of worship that joining the 2 communities could offer seems valuable to me, and my aunt reports that there is a beautiful Afrocentric mass periodically, she also reports that the communities remain largely separate in much of parish life. When I have visited our sister parish in Haiti and am reminded that many members of our parish there do not have access to mass daily or even weekly, I feel very appreciative of and recognize that I have taken for granted, the presence of priests and ability to have multiple Sunday masses and daily masses in my own parish. I also recognize this when I spend time in summer in New England in a small New Hampshire town which can offer a Sunday mass at a mission location of the local church in the summer when vacationers are present, but not as regularly through the winter when the population diminishes. How does this affect those families who live there year-round?

This was done quite a few years ago but it still leaves a bad taste in the mouths of many people in the community. They feel their voices were not heard or listened to.

My personal parish of 40 years was not directly affected by a merger or closure. For 40 years Saint Mark's was a strong, vibrant and spirit filled parish. Three years ago, a young priest with pre-Vatican ideas and a following from some of the churches that experienced mergers arrived at our Church. Unfortunately, the people of Saint Mark's witnessed the undoing of all their hard work, spirit filled celebrations

and their call to ministry replaced by liturgically correct symbolism, a return to the ideology the priest is above the people and the Latin mass was to be reintroduced. The spirit of the original people of Saint Mark's became so low many, myself included, chose to leave. Many of us have been on a soul journey and have settled in parishes throughout the diocese while others have found a new home in some of the other faith communities in our neighborhood. The spirit of Saint Mark's was and always will be in the hearts of the people. A people whose spirit was molded by the words of Vatican II and words instilled in us from the beginning by our first pastor Father Kevin Barry "You the people are the Church". We continue to go forth proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom of God".

Instead of merging, our Diocese has "twinned" parishes which means one priest for two Parishes. Our Priest does his best, he is a very dedicated man. It is evident that this has added an extra layer of responsibility that affects all of us.

I attend Eucharistic services in churches that offer nourishment, community and outreach service to those in need. There are numerous parish communities that are not as fortunate and not involved in the greater church or community outreach dynamics.

I don't have experience of mergers and closings in my direct community, but I am aware from friends in ministry, in the Archdiocese that it is a painful and growing problem.

My answers to this question and to #4 below refer to my opinion about and experiences of parish closings and mergers in the Archdiocese of St. Louis, Missouri, our previous place of residence. Our long-time parish of Resurrection of Our Lord Parish in the South City area of the city of St. Louis was suppressed due to loss of parishioners, financial burdens, and the shortage of priests.

The demographics of the neighborhood changed over the 35+ years we lived there and raised our four children. The parish environs became less white, less Catholic, and less affluent. (I would say that most of the parish was lower middle class.) The parish school was the focus of the parish and strained the budget. There was some degree of white flight as families moved out in response to the neighborhood changes. Finally, after a somewhat consultive process, the diocese suppressed the parish, along with a number of other St. Louis parishes, and merged us with a neighboring parish. (The “consultative” process seemed to mostly pit one parish against another, each arguing why the other one should be closed.) The parish facilities became, and still remain, the city-wide parish for Vietnamese Catholics, and is staffed by a Vietnamese order of priests and Vietnamese nuns. The school, however, has remained closed, to the best of my knowledge. My wife and I were empty nesters by the time of Resurrection’s closing. We explored several nearby parishes to see if any “fit” our style/sense of worship and met our need for a religious home. After a while, we found a parish not far away that seemed “right” for us, although we never really experienced the closeness of community like we had at Resurrection. However, we were welcomed warmly at our new parish of St. Stephen Protomartyr, we knew several parishioners, and thoroughly enjoyed the vibrant liturgies there. The pastor we knew from when he was a seminarian stationed at Resurrection, so that helped a lot, too. Also, the parish employed the services of a wonderful pastoral associate named Mary Regan. She was a God-sent for us. Not many St. Louis parishes employed a pastoral associate, but luckily St. Stephen’s did. While we attended St. Stephen’s, another round of parish closings and mergers were initiated. Luckily, St. Stephen’s was a bit more stable financially and the school didn’t put such a large burden on the parish in general. St. Stephen’s was not closed or merged, and the parishioners elected to not pool their school children with another nearby Catholic school,

despite unfavorable long-term prognostications by the archdiocese. At the present time, we hear that the St. Louis Archdiocese is again undergoing a strategic process of pastoral planning called “All Things New.” (We still subscribe to the “St. Louis Review,” the St. Louis archdiocesan weekly, which describes the two-year long process in the Jan. 31 issue.) The process seems to have been initiated, not due to Pope Francis’s call for a world-wide synodal initiative, but due to local changes, namely less Catholics and fewer priests. (I saw no reference to Pope Francis’s call and the world-wide synod in the “Review” article.) However, perhaps the St. Louis process is in fact a synodal undertaking since “Over the next few months, all Catholics in St. Louis will be invited to pray and offer their feedback about the future of the archdiocese.” They will be asked to fill out the “...Disciple Maker Index survey...an anonymous survey of parishioners that provides insights into the level of missionary discipleship in the parish in addition to the effectiveness of different aspects of parish life.”

Not at all as the closings were in the inner city and I am in what’s considered central Omaha.

Deep sadness at a closing of a friend’s E. Harlem parish with the Cardinal sending in the police. They have celebrated Liturgy together for 13 years outside the Church. My parish had a merger... it is not the same... I have really not participated (first because of COVID but now because of a renewed frustration with patriarchy) since 2020.

I don’t have any direct experience.

Unfortunately, in the Diocesan Revitalization, no recommendations for Lay Administrators although many well trained are in the diocese and would readily step forward.

No such mergers or closures due to many priestly vocations and Ordinations in various dioceses.

It was/is painful for all involved.

None.

It split up our community of believers; many went to other local churches.

We are two rural parishes outside of Madison. We were linked about 10 years ago due to shortage of priests. We have lost pieces of our identity in trying to make the celebration at each parish identical for Father. We have lost working committees on liturgy and environment because of the difficulties of having joint meetings and Father's lack of time. Perhaps a real merge would have been better. We are each still working hard to keep our schools going independently.

Closing of St. Agatha's Catholic School—Alumnus in 1988.

My fellow Catholics have felt left out, sad, angry.

They have taken away the close communities, & caused disruption in towns & in families

Not personally...but it has destroyed my human community, some went that way... other another way...many insulted by the way the diocese dealt ...preoccupy by taking all the money. The rest did not interest the bishop at all...and we have proof.

I am part of an intentional Catholic community (the only reason I am still Catholic) that, after 41 years in one parish, was forced to leave. A neighboring parish welcomed us and many of us are regulars there. The Community developed traditions and practices that have kept us spiritually alive and together for now 50 years. Pre-pandemic, we continued to gather for a monthly Mass as we had previously. Now we come together via Zoom every Sunday, increasing the number of people who can come.

Our parish was part of the "Making all things new" process which was not designed to seriously engage the community. Parishioners did not feel that we were heard, and solutions did not rest with us in any way. Our church may have been closed but we were able to merge with a large Ghanaian church.

Frustration. Appears political and or money issues rather than what's best for the communities. Skeptical of how decisions are made

Folks often have to charge what they are accustomed to. In some cases, that's good; in others, that's bad!

I am no longer in the church.

I have not been affected, personally.

My parish merged with another parish about 8 blocks away but has not really affected me in any appreciable way. I do think it's very sad to hear of church closings, especially because it's due to need for money to pay for lawsuits, etc.

Because I am a woman religious, I do not connect with a parish. I have felt the pain and sorrow by my relatives and friends. Eucharist is usually available through congregational sources.

I tend to go to churches that have not been directly affected but I have friends whose parishes have closed.

There are fewer daily Masses, particularly early in the morning. Parish priests seem overworked, ministering in two or more parishes.

Because of the pandemic, I've been attending church virtually at St. Cecelia in Boston. Prior to the closings I've felt alienated anyway. The "Christ Life" series offered to churches in our diocese was probably to prepare us for the closings and to help form community/

communities. Because many in my church (this area) have refused vaccinations, I continue to attend virtual Mass but miss the Eucharist.

Many parishes are hurting. Major closures in inner city and communities that have majority immigrant parishioners - usually from Vietnam and Latin and South American countries.

Our parish has not yet been affected. Family members who attend inner city churches now have non-English-speaking priests, so they watch Mass on TV. No Eucharist.

Have not personally experienced a parish merger or closure.

We are a small community with a larger population of senior citizens, who have easy access to our parish. We are combining with a large church further away, which could pose a problem for those who currently have easy access to their parish.

Not directly - 15 or so years ago new rectory built with possibility of offering hospitality for priest(s) of closed parishes.

People adapt but are not happy when a parish they feel a strong family bond with seems to desert them. Often there is a cultural connection as well that gets lost. For the elderly this is particularly upsetting.

We have only one man to be ordained to our diocese this year. My parish has not had a "formal pastor" for almost two years due to health issues. We have several retired priests who have come forward to help at different times. We have had no daily Masses and with Covid we had 1 taped Mass for months and now have a Saturday evening and 1 Sunday mass. Our former pastor who is poor health is the present "Administrator" until June! We have some very capable and dedicated lay women and men who have worked to keep us open. With Covid, many have found wonderful communities on YouTube to join

daily or weekly. There is no lack of searching for a deeper relationship with our loving God. A number of us feel strongly about a more inclusive church. Our parish of the Resurrection was founded in 1969 as a result of Vatican II and people wanting a community where both adults and children would grow together in small and large groups of faith.

My parish did not merge, but others in the area have causing much heartache among the older parishioners.

The transition from two parishes to one, was difficult at first, but after 10 years it has worked out well. We are at risk of yet another merger due to declining numbers.

It has changed the makeup of the parish into a broader and more welcoming community. Increasing the inclusiveness of different ethnic groups.

Since the reversion to exclusive language in the Mass I cannot attend any regular parish. I belong to a small Christian community where we have our own liturgies, bible studies and retreats.

We are concerned of one Church in our Deanery being closed.

Since I'm a member of an itinerant congregation, I can say I experienced such especially in the Albany, NY diocese in the mid- to late 90's and early 00's. I also hear of some in my home diocese of Philadelphia.

Hasn't personally affected me but I feel large churches "lose" people and defeat community.

The Eucharist is not as easily accessible. Then, with the pandemic, we failed to use our Eucharistic imagination and further denied people Eucharist. Jesus did not teach us to exclude or make the Eucharist inaccessible. If I was asked, I could have given 10 ways to safely give Eucharist in 2020. I did offer to my Church

(which is outside the Archdiocese) and finally they came up with a creative and safe solution.

The people are not part of the process, THE church has a, I will tell you what to do attitude.

No closures but many priests from other countries, e.g., Poland. Also, many Irish priests over 75. Ordain women and married persons.

It has been devastating to some nuisance to others. To me they were simply not well thought out and they alienated hundreds of parishioners. They were done to bail out small parishes and to allow the chancery office to sell the properties and take the proceeds into its coffers! Greed in one of its ecclesiastical forms.

The Holy Family Church in Beech Bottom, WV, was a model community for many of my 20 yrs. Much to the credit of the previous pastor (who hired me); he had taught them about Vatican II and they took responsibility for ministries and for care of the home bound, also for care of the church inside & out.

We used to have communion services lead by female pastoral associates on pastor's days off but that was completely eliminated years ago. Then the merger of 4 churches to two parishes was bumpy initially but with much preparation and lay participation it went well and worked for a number of years. Good leadership aligned with heavy lay participation honoring the particular "environment" of each parish was key. But misfit leadership came into play and a major drop off in lay participation caused a great deal of defection. Now it is one "old school" pastor in charge of four churches and two schools (inhumane!! Whether you agree with his style or not) supported by subordinate lay staff. This is my perspective with input from others as well. I have since left that environment.

Displacement of existing community of support and commitment.

In the community, there is a loss of identity and closeness and convenience.

They have not directly affected our parish as we have not had to merge with another parish. However, other parishes in our area have had to merge and have limited availability of pastors and changes in available times for celebration of the Eucharist.

The community has become very disenchanted.

I am from Chicago, a city of neighborhoods. Churches were built by the ethnic groups that settled in the neighborhood & became the center of the community. With each generation the ethnic connection became weaker. As the original population aged, homes were sold to new ethnic groups which were not accepted by the original community. Younger generations were more educated, able to leave the city & build new churches in the suburbs. The new people in the old parish couldn't afford to upkeep the old church. And there were less Catholics in the new group. So, the Church was closed. I don't think that most of those ethnic churches, by that time, had strongly dedicated Catholic parishioners.

Replaced by priest who reinterpreted Vatican 2 becoming liturgically isolated from congregation.

I personally have not been in such a parish.

Our little parish community (St Marcella's in Woodside CA) was close knit, and had a very high rate of participation in our activities - we all pitched in. In year 2000, it was closed, no more services were held, and the priest was retired. People were given a chance to speak at a meeting only after the decision had been made. The children preparing for first communion were left hanging. We were told we could do it on our own at any Mass. We were sent to another parish with no introduction or welcome. The priest had no idea my child had come that day for first communion. Soon

after that, I found myself in difficulty due to domestic violence. I went to see the priest at the new parish. I didn't know him, and he didn't know me. He offered just a bromide "he cannot have his cake and eat it too." He could have provided some funds, but I didn't need that. He said they didn't have anything else for people in my situation. Next Sunday, during his sermon, he quoted from my conversation with him during (did not give my name). I did not feel comfortable sitting in church. I moved away. Since then, I just sit in the back row in case there is something disturbing said during the sermon, so that I can get out the door quickly and deal with my trauma privately.

My parish has not closed, but the school which was once a part of the parish no longer operates and neighboring churches have closed.

My pastor is assigned two parishes who have not merged their identities and maintain two church buildings. The Eucharistic symbol of unity (1 building, 1 pastor, 1 community) is diffused by multivalence.

Fewer Masses, loss of long-time parish communities.

People go "shopping for a parish" some go to Mass at parish then go to the Baptist church for the homily (sermon).

None have happened in my area.

Have not affected me personally, but people I know were very unhappy when they lost the parish they had been attending for years. Since this happened quite a few years ago, the time has healed.

It's just beginning.

Our closure occurred prior to the pandemic, and was determined by the diocese, not the congregation. The closure resulted in many parishioners leaving the church.

None that I am aware of in our diocese.

Some priests are less open to activities or focus outside of the physical church. Father often is not part of the community as he lives in only one of the parishes.

Have not been involved in a closing of merger of my own parish, however, in this diocese the inner city has suffered the loss of parishes. This is shameful to abandon these parishes.

Not personally.

My parish has not been affected directly but I know there are some that have been.

I have not experienced mergers or closures directly but know that other parishes in our diocese have and that they have been extremely distressful.

The experience of being a community, having a common identity, knowing and caring for one and have not affected me personally.

Not at all.

I don't think we've had any yet, But I do hear the archbishop is talking about it.

I have not been personally affected. However, our former Bishop welcomed Spanish priests of the order of "Jesus Christ, the Priest" a conservative religious order. They now serve several parishes who have merged. There are instances where dissatisfied members of the parish must travel to another parish where a priest with more contemporary thinking and theology is the pastor.

They haven't. However, I realized today that I should have been more attuned to the impact of the closings nearby (Archdiocese of New York).

We haven't had any closures

Because of Covid I haven't been back to church. I used to feel I had to have the Bread to do the journey, but I don't feel that now. Instead, I pray every day to be made the Bread/ any kind of Food to nourish people. And I am so pained that women are not mutual in the church that I don't know how to bear it. We are a scandal to the world. It is abuse of women. If we were mutual, we would help heal abuse of women by example. And the ignorance of sexuality, gender, and orientation is the height of abuse. I can't leave because the mystical soul of the church, and Trinity are my life, how I live and give life. When we were sharing this morning, I began crying. I didn't realize I felt so deeply. I am nearly 89, and a sister. Thank you for hearing me.

We had a major re-organization in our deanery in 2005. At that time, three parishes merged into one, and two parishes merged into one. It was very traumatic for our community – and it still is. I regularly take communion to homebound parishioners who are impacted by a closure of their parish nearly 20 years ago, and the emotions are still palpable. It is extremely haunting. A diocese next to ours actually has, or at least had, a staff person who helped parishes that were being closed or merged to deal with the grief. We cannot underestimate how great it is. It truly is like losing our family.

I have belonged to an Intentional Eucharist Community since 1972. We have married priests and women priests.

A devastating experience that left me “roaming” and I still am.

I haven't experienced these situations but have heard others share their sorrow, misgivings and efforts to move forward.

Nothing positive ever came from these mergers. Just sadness, loss, anger and people leaving the church.

The parish and school closures are in the poorer socio-economic neighborhoods. They do not have the means in many cases to travel--many are seeking other faith traditions who welcome and nourish them with open arms.

It has not touched me, or those of us who live here at our Motherhouse, that much. Our difficulty is in getting a resident chaplain. Our last two chaplains have been/are Nigerian priests finishing their doctorate thesis through Notre Dame University. Good persons, difficulty understanding their accents.

Three parishes of four in our city merged. The reason seemed to be the lack of priests/ money. I came to the merged parish just after it opened. Statues of the patrons of the former parishes are in the sanctuary along with the current parish patron's statue. Everyone says we are one parish, but all this talk of unity belies the fragmentation. Yes, we have Masses. In English, Spanish and Latin.

None in our community but the number of priests is dwindling.

In clusters with only one priest for the two parishes, each parish had to give up one or two mass times. Reception of this varied from parish to parish and led to some dropouts. For the most part this system was accepted. Depending on the leadership (lay & clerical) in some places the communities thrived as they shared each other's resources: lay leadership, catechists, etc.

Don't know.

Haven't really affected me. I can understand with smaller parish population why it's done. We've had mergers, but the churches still are stand alone with one priest serving all.

Our larger parish merged with a smaller one 5 minutes away. The name of both parishes are combined. Both parishes have daily and Sunday

liturgy. Activities are listed as North or South geographically.

Unlike other areas, about 8-10 years ago a “sister” church opened in our area. There are 2 weekend Masses in English and one in Spanish but there doesn’t seem to be much togetherness.

Mass opportunities change when parishes merge, with distribution across the multiple parishes. Sometimes it is not as easy to get to the “neighboring” parish.

It’s hard to keep parishes fully operating and staffed with the shortage of priests. It’s wonderful that so many foreign priests are coming. One problem I see is that some of the foreign priests do not understand American culture. That makes it difficult for them to be effective pastoral leaders. More efforts need to be made to help these priests before they are assigned to a parish.

The outright closing of our parish made me believe that the hierarchy does not value meeting the needs of God’s people. Rather, they were concerned only with financial affairs and made top-down decisions to close our spiritual home. I believe it was very possible to have kept our very engaged parish open with some flexible thinking about how to minister to the parishioners. This experience has made me very cynical about the concern of the hierarchy for God’s people. I am very sorry to say I truly believe they are concerned only for their own security and succession.

No longer have a church in my area that I care to participate--one by one, they were closed--the last one because the Bishop moved a priest in that he thought could ‘change’ the parish. That didn’t happen--the parishioners came together. So, the Bishop closed the parish... even though the church served the neighboring University.

Only through friends who have found them disappointing.

I have not experienced myself, but my family has gone thru mergers. This especially affects small rural towns, where the Church is such a community hub.

Has affected us personally.

It has caused division between people and communities. There weren’t any attempts at healing the hurt feelings. It was a top to bottom decision even though people tried to in good faith make recommendations. The institutional church was not being very Eucharistic to the people they were supposed to serve and minister too.

My own parish has not closed but in the next three years two much smaller parishes will be merged with us. We do not know what that will look like yet. Two parishes in our city have been closed in the last 2-5 years. The closings were done so thoughtlessly with no consideration of the generational impact on the people. We witnessed the heartbreak that the people of those faith communities experienced and how they were essentially lost at sea so to speak, left to find another parish. It was heartbreaking. At the time our pastor led us (we are a large parish of 2700 families) to reach out to, welcome and embrace members of those closed parishes. One of the closed parishes was eventually reopened to serve the Vietnamese community which was and is a good thing.

Our local parish community is unaffected--wealthy, white, suburban, and staffed with two priests. It has been troubling for me, though, to see the urban poor parishes, in mostly black communities, close.

Very little. One church was likely ethnic when it formed and the building is still used for weddings, for instance. Former parishioners have kept it in excellent shape. Two Black parishes merged some time ago and I don’t

know what happened to the one that closed. It's gone or taken over by another religious community.

The parish where I was baptized and where my parents (aunts & uncles) grew up in closed several years ago. Also, the parish I grew up in closed. Both were in South Shore. Much of this is due to the Great Migration and white flight.

I have been left with distrust in the process. The diocese had led us to believe that each parish had input and yet when all was said and done, the diocese knew all along which church would remain open. I don't think that all of these parishes needed to be closed if the institution would allow for greater participation of the laity and if priests were trained in working in collaboration with laity.

A new bishop has tried to send our Paulists back to their East Coast home, but thankfully failed. Most Cal Berkeley students attend our church, and I think this has helped us stay open because of their numbers. Our parish, Newman Hall/Holy Spirit, used to be more liberal, but that has been squashed, and many parishioners have left because of it. We miss having occasional homilies delivered by nearby female professors at the Graduate Theological Union.

My wife's parish, St. Mary's in Jessup, PA was closed/merged and at the time this was happening, I connected them to FutureChurch and Sr. Kate to help organize a resistance. They ultimately wound up working with Peter Borre and their case got brought to the Apostolic Signatura, Raymond Burke at the time, and they lost. I was not personally invested in all of this, but I heard often all of the stories, conflicts, dramas, etc. around this. I did go to the parish a few times and went to a number of their big feast day celebrations for the Feast of St. Ubaldo which is a major event in the town, with the race of the saints in the streets and many festivities. I also used to go to Our Lady Queen of Angels sidewalk Church protest

in Spanish Harlem in NYC. This was a small parish that was closed by Cardinal Egan and some women leaders/eucharistic ministers locked themselves in the sanctuary and NYPD took them out in handcuffs and arrested them. They had an ongoing sidewalk Church for years. There is a documentary, "Our Lady Queen of Harlem" which tells the story. Ada Maria Asasi-Diaz used to attend and preach there as well.

We have not had physical closings in Los Angeles but spiritual closing of Church to rich breadth of Catholic thought and tradition as Archbishop Gomez has focused archdiocese on agenda of groups like Napa Institute that he advises and supports. He even replaced Archdiocesan synod priorities that were guiding the Archdiocese with his PERSONAL priorities. Also lay ecclesial positions like parish life directors and pastoral associates have been prioritized for deacons so laity pushed out of supporting the Church in Los Angeles.

My experience is that until the recent changes of the past year, our parish home had been a welcoming respite of love for those who no longer had a parish home. The pain of the "closed" and/or "changed" parish "refugees" was evident. We were able to embrace them, though, and they found a new home where they were welcome. Until our parish was given a new young priest who seems hell-bent on taking us all along back to the 50's or earlier - a place we don't want to go. And so, just like that, our parish as we knew it is no more. Many of us left - not just the parish, but the CC.

YES.

Disempowered parishioners Called some to create alternative Church experiences People of God experiencing themselves as the Body of Christ/Eucharist as they gather for community VS the Mass being the time, they experience the Body of Christ.

We understood that PARISH closings were based on inability of parishes to meet their financial obligations.

The parish mergers and closings have affected all of us “across the board,” as is said. There have been times when feelings of sadness, frustration, and yes, confusion about how all of this has happened in the parishes and the lives of so many who truly feel called to respond to the graces of God. I think many persons want to move forward in being instrumental in spreading as well as sharing the joy of the Gospel.

We’re in the process of a study to determine how and which parishes will be merged or closed. It’s a time of unrest, questioning, mistrust. Many in the community are upset. The process leaves much room for improvement to make the inevitable more acceptable.

The merging was met with anger, misunderstanding, “we, they” one being more important than the other.

I know details of only a few of the closings. At least 2 affected poor, minority areas including closing a homeless shelter. Schools were closed too. One merger I know of was so poorly managed by the cardinal that parishioners did not know who defied and blamed the other parish. So much pain was caused because our church leaders did not have open hearts. And did not work with the real live people whose hearts were broken. I pray that our Bishops & priests can have open hearts.

I miss the Eucharist. I have not had Communion for three years. I belong to an Intentional Community that meets faithfully once a week on Sunday.

Well, I’m an old Vatican II, New Testament Black Catholic! I could write a book about how mergers and closures have created a sinkhole in

our community such that an active, Holy Spirit filled Catholic fellowship is a distant memory.

Both the mergers and the closures simply tear communities apart. There is no preferential option for the poor considered here, and many communities of color are most heavily impacted. It is the final betrayal for many Catholics who have stood by the Church even though the sex scandal, patriarchy and clericalism have made it difficult, but to have your very home pulled out from beneath your feet is more than can be tolerated. People leave heart-broken and disenfranchised with little or no interest in joining any other Catholic parish.

I don’t feel a part of a community as in the past. My church is very conservative and not as inclusive as I feel our lord would want us to be. Sometimes when participating at mass I feel like I’m at a production and not a sharing of each other’s life.

It’s very sad to see the inner-city churches close or merge. The clergy sex abuse has driven out a number of once faithful Catholics. As member of Our Lady of Lourdes parish, our parish priest died in 2015 and the church has been run by lay people since with the help of a retired (age 83) priest. We’re always wondering when the bishop might shut us down or try to make us merge even though we’re a very vibrant community. Because we’re a liberal church and in the city (but physically close to the new Cathedral), we know we will probably never get a permanent parish priest.

The closure was about 50+ years ago in Marin County. I was not part of that Parish but know there were “hard feelings”; closures need understanding of human dynamics, etc.

We belong to a group that has been so disillusioned by the parishes and the total control by the pastor, that we formed our own group. We have been joined by a RCWP Woman Priest who has been a fabulous grace to our intentional Eucharistic celebrations.

No experience.

We were present at the closing Mass of a parish and, with the bishop present, those who wanted to stay and pray after Mass were threatened with arrest. It added insult to injury to a grieving congregation. Another example was a parish I served that was in the city and integrated and an island of love and support in a changing community that was closed because of a lack of leadership and clerical support.

Loss of community and works of social justice especially within the city; discouragement, anger, hurt...because of autocratic methods (those stuck in the old power ways) that ignore and disrespect the voice of the laity. When finances are the only or major reason the work of Christ and the true ministry of the ecclesia is lost. If only one view is used, then no new options are discovered. The strength of groups and parishioners that are fighting to be heard are an encouragement not to give up- more IS possible. This process may be the opening point needed. If people believe they will be heard there will be an outpouring from them and from the Spirit within them.

Closed parishes transferred debt to remaining open church. Parishioners at churches that closed don't seem to be going to the church they merged with. Catholic schools seem to be closing at a faster rate than churches. There is no financial transparency about where the proceeds from sale of church property is going -- if it is so above board, why can't they say what the property sold for and where the \$\$ went? When there is lay opposition, why isn't there dialog before the decision gets made?

I have blessed to serve in vibrant parishes.

I personally have not experienced the closing or merger of a parish. Good friends have and they felt so abandoned by the church. Their "family" was uprooted and made to take up a new location. Not a Eucharistic experience.

It was two parishes close in proximity, one fairly liberal-more in tune with Vatican II and the other more conservative-a bit pre-Vatican. The problem with the merger was the fact that, instead of appointing a neutral priest for the merged situation, the pastor of the more conservative parish wanted to stay on and was in fact appointed pastor of the new merged parish. I was working in the more liberal parish as the Director of Music and Worship. The working situation was extremely difficult. The "new" pastor was not willing to try doing anything as it had been done. I felt undermined. I could not trust him and did talk with him a couple of times but got nowhere. In order to not become a "bitter old woman", I decided to resign at the end of the first year of the merged parish.

Closings of parishes has been, for the most part, in the inner City of Buffalo However in more country parishes I understand that priests share responsibilities.

Some who cannot get transportation, have "walked" --sometimes to a Protestant Church nearby. Poor in the area are often not being served. Money used by pastor to pay for music minister, a friend. Parishioners finally went to Bishop, refused to worship with the one priest. Bishop named a Sister as Lay Administrator, and she sought priest for Sunday Mass.

Has not affected me personally since I attend a Spiritual Life Center, but it has many I know negatively. It's been difficult for them.

I was overseas with Maryknoll Lay Missioners from 1985-2018 so parish closures were not an issue during that time. We were opening parishes!!!! When I came back to my parish in Urbana Illinois it is still going strong, and the parish priest says it is the ONE parish that definitely will not close. That's because there are so many active well-trained laity who are committed to their faith and participate. Other

parishes have merged nearby but we haven't had any closures since I returned in 2018.

Small places struggle but I don't know of closings. Many Pastors of these parishes struggle with several small parishes. The ones with educated lay leaders sometimes thrive.

Fortunately, or maybe unfortunately I have not personally lived through one. As is in all forms of hurt and pain there needs to be forgiveness, understanding, extending hope to one another.

In my past in Montana, I saw two things happen: one priest driving miles to serve several parishes out on the prairie; the closing of a small parish in Great Falls, a center for full Eucharistic Adoration with Masses on the weekend. It was very hurtful to a family member who was a leader in the group.

We left our parish in 2006 after 35 years attending and serving on the parish council, CCD teachers, youth leaders, EM and Lectors and singing in the choir. We had a "young" priest come to our parish, it was his first and he also had to do a neighboring parish. He was very conservative, scolded people who were divorced, and was more concerned about cleaning the chalice after communion than having any social justice committee on the parish council. We left the parish and began attending a Mother House of Dominican Sisters in a city an hour away, because they opened their doors to welcome people from the public community in 1985. They welcomed all people, and many families attending were from across the Diocese. We all still belong to the Sunday Assembly.

These mergers were challenging. Some were not well organized, and decisions made without sufficient input of those affected. laity tried to make the best of a hard situation because they want to be church. Leadership in the diocese was "clerically dominant." Transparency poor or flawed too often. Over time things settle.

I have taken myself out of Sunday liturgy because it was the reverse of nourishing of my faith. I now belong in a small intentional Eucharistic community, house-church.

Diminished identity, cohesive community, neighborhood vitality, be perceived as valued and honored. Diminished hope.

During the closures in New York and Hartford, I listened to stories of family, friends, and other community members about the ways in which they felt deeply disempowered by the leadership. We never felt consulted or considered in the decision even though our families were often the ones who actually built the church with time and treasure. Bishops and Cardinals have all the power but didn't suffer any of the pain or consequences we as parishioners felt. We can always creatively imagine ways to keep these smaller church communities open if given the chance to be included in the conversation. People before profit! They should not just be seen as ways for the diocese to expand its financial assets or cover debts. These spaces belong to the people not the hierarchy.

The most recent merger of which I am a part has resulted in a "super" parish with thousands of parishioners. While each church building has remained open the small parish, I belonged to is only open for mass on Sunday. It is closed for the rest of the week. The neighborhood is a somewhat poorer area compared to the other parishes two of which are very affluent. The home church I belonged to use to serve the needs of the poor in the local community. While the super parish has a food bank and social service ministers, I don't believe that service reaches into my local community. Belonging to this super parish has resulted in a feeling of not belonging. The intimacy of the small community is missing. The more liberal feel has also been lost. I don't think the priests know I exist. I am one more person in the pew.

Because of a pastor who had no idea how to deal with an active group of parishioners, half the parish left in the first year of his pastorate. Parishioners provided the diocese with extensive data and asked for a facilitation. The diocese ignored us. More parishioners left. The removed the pastor after three years, but the damage was irreversible, and the financial deterioration made continuing the parish impossible.

Travel farther to find a Mass, particularly one that speaks to my spirituality. Means less able to attend Mass in person as we don't drive distances at night any longer. Unable to attend Mass in person today so no ashes. Attended Old St. Pat's in Chicago online instead and it was great. Find ways to feed my soul despite the decisions our Church leaders make.

Parishioners felt it unjust and had anger and great sadness. They went to parishes other than were merged with their own.

Some parishioners feel powerless and without a voice. Some struggle to find new welcoming communities/parish.

Yes, I am in a suburb of Chicago and the two parishes in our community were merged about 3 years ago. The process did not go very well. Had several meetings to give input etc., in the end it did not appear our suggestions were taken seriously and the group in charge did what they wanted. One school was closed, and the two churches were kept open and are now under a new parish name. Pandemic hit and caused reduction of Masses and services, have a new pastor who is trying to restore a more cohesive community structure. Will have to see if those who left will return.

Many hurt people. Loss of people to the church because of how it was handled. Less trust of hierarchy.

My sister-in-law is in a parish about to close made up of many low income/retired, older

parishioners, life-time members, attendees of the parish school at one time - feeling forgotten after supporting the church actively and financially for a lifetime.

The smaller parish was more cohesive in nature and struggled to keep some identity within the new merged parish. Others tried to make the best of a new less personal situation. In some way it felt everyone lost in relationships.

Here in Baltimore, there was a peaceful merger. Many of the laity became more involved in their merged Parishes.

My own childhood parish has closed and like so many, was situated in the poorest area of our town...many elderly have been left with now transportation to the merged parish church and suffer greatly from lack of frequent Eucharists. As a lay associate of a religious community that served many parishes throughout New England (I was part of that community for 7 years/now a lay associate for 32) ...we have seen the majority of our schools first, and then the parish churches as well either close or experience a merger. (Numerous/countless stories of heartbreak here...)Also, I recently was asked to facilitate a 3 weekend retreat to try to bring together members from 4 different parishes who were experiencing merging: the disillusionment, sadness and frustration was palpable making community so difficult to achieve, largely due to the way the Bishop had handled this issue in the first place...so needless.

I worked 12 years in a parish that formed from 4 small rural churches in WI. There was initially much hurt and grieving about the closing of those churches, but due to sensitive leadership on the part of the new pastor who had been in two of the 4, a united community resulted with the faithful who stayed with the newly formed community. I had the privilege of being the lay leader for the past 12 years, and the community thrives due to the cream of the crop from 4

staying active and bringing life and spirit to the new.

Made it more difficult for some to attend Eucharist because of lack of transportation. Many of the parishes that have closed were doing good work in outreach to their communities.

There are fewer Masses available to attend. Less availability of the priest outside of his scheduled time. At this point, we do have 2 priests for our 4 city/parish group, so it is better. On the other hand, it is good to become closer to members of the other parishes and share our ministries. Unfortunately, that ministry might be offered in just one of the 4 locations, not all.

In this Diocese there are many churches that has become mission churches to a central parish. Ontario has many small rural parishes that can no longer host a priest because congregational numbers are dwindling and there are not enough priest to 'man' the big parishes let along the small one. The sad fact is these rural parishes we formerly vibrant centers of their respective communities.

Two of 3 parishes had to close. The bishop required them to decide which would remain open. The other two are so angry that neither of them now attend the remaining one. Poor execution.

I currently adore the Eucharist at a parish nearby that I worry might close because it's older and in a lower-income neighborhood. I love that Jesus is waiting for me there in that exact place and I would miss it terribly. Also, some of my previous parishes in Chicago have closed and I'm crushed to know how devastated my former parish communities have been. I am truly mourning with them. Those neighborhoods will never be the same for anyone there, Catholic or not.

Not much at all.

Not personally affected (yet.)

Many former St. Francis people now go to the one other liberal parish. We have formed an intentional community and have a van which goes to the homeless encampments with supplies. Many other people have left the church entirely.

I am relatively newer to the London Diocese, but my understanding is that there has been significant amount of suppressed and closed churches. I do not have firsthand experience of being part of a community that has closed.

Closure Former small very close parish decimated. Now belong to 1 large parish that joined with nearby smaller parish. Small parish thinks the large parish (which has large debt with school) only wanted their money.

Led to separation of communities and communities from the church. Instead of growing the Church and its vibrancy it led to decrease I think in its vitality.

Though my parish hasn't closed, the new pre-Vatican II pastor has made many leave from a spirit filled, vibrant, and engaged church. He now is lacking money to keep up with bills and keeps asking for money, while not connecting with the people who are not being spiritually fed. These same people gave more in 2021 than 2019 with less people attending because of pandemic because the parish was their spiritual home.

I was involved professionally as a consultant in a parish merger process in the Archdiocese of Newark, NJ. It started with robust discussions where parish leaders had the chance to participate, but that deteriorated over time. I was involved in the closing or merger of two parishes. Both were long past financial viability and had very small congregations, so I don't know that there was a possibility of saving them.

I'm not sure on a local level, but I imagine the added stress and pastoral responsibility of basically two dioceses on our current archbishop is tremendous.

Painfully - leading to distrust - no interest, leadership hown to our situation - 'there is just too much drama here' said our pastor who is not diocesan by a member of the Neo-catechumenate ... the time of pandemic has had its strain and is challenging us to see if and how we can welcome folks back.

Parish Identity and mission may have been compromised.

I am feeling very discouraged; sad to see parishes close and merge when there are other people in our Church who could serve as leaders and ministers of the sacraments. In addition to covid interruptions I have not seen many of my fellow parishioners in several years and wonder who will come back. We need new leadership, new energy and calling back those who have left. Friends are hurt that the Church is failing them as am I.

They have not affected my experience, sorry to say but I resonate with the concerns mentioned.

I've heard via others the effects of mergers/closures; for myself I have issue with existing parishes where there's not as strong an emphasis on the Word -- poor or nonexistent homilies -- still many "sermons" topical rather than coming from the Word.

No personal negative experience.

It has made me very concerned about the future of the Catholic Church and my willingness to still participate in it. I am 70 years old and a life-long practicing Catholic and have been able to sustain that because I was able to identify parishes wherever I lived in the US that more closely matched how I wish to practice my

Catholicism. I do NOT want to be part of some gigantic parish [i.e., mega-church]. I am very worried that the Bishops will not be creative in finding solutions to closing our parishes. As Sr. Chris said -- there will be plenty of ministers to our fellow Catholics if the Bishops will move from their celibate male only priest model of "church".

Many have found new homes, often not Catholic parishes, where they feel more is being done on a local level to reach out to the larger community. Many feel they are not welcomed, even though we are supposed to welcome the stranger.

VERY NEGATIVELY.

I don't have experience of it.

Although we have not closed parishes we have experienced where over 1/2 of the parishes did not have resident priests. Lay people took over as pastoral leaders, and were given faculties for leading liturgy, finances, etc. a priest came every other week. At first this was very hard. many people left and either quit going to Mass at all or joined other parishes. As time went by, the parish settled in with lay people becoming more educated in their ministries and taking responsibility for them. When the parish did get a resident priest, we again experienced the shift because the lay people were not allowed to live out their ministerial call.

In this my 6th yr. in this archdiocese I have found a parish that I want to commit to. It is an integrated community of both Afro-American and white with a Filipino pastor.

We have limited resources. It effects our wider community, not just our Catholic community.

Sadness and anger for so many people. Communities broken apart. More people leaving the church because it was the last straw. A sense of hopelessness. New priest with different theology caused pain. It put a strain

on the priests who now were all trying to work with a disgruntled community.

Not really.

My Parish has not closed or merged but so many in my diocese have. I feel a sense of loss for people who grew up in these parishes. One church was torn down and replaced with a Royal Farms, which features a gas station and a five-foot chicken statue. Ugh! Would feel sick if I had received my sacraments at that spot where the church stood, and now THAT is in its place. A corner property on a busy highway I am sure had a lot of commercial value.

I have not personally been affected, but know from others that it is a difficult experience and saddens and angers those affected.

As a missionary in South Sudan, we had Mass just on Sundays. A Sudanese brother and myself were appointed by the Bishop as Eucharistic Ministers and we had in our parish daily Morning Prayer and Communion Service for the people. The people did the readings, we have shared homily and mostly all participated, and ended with the distribution of Communion.

I am a member of the smaller, poorer parish in a 2-parish merger. The emotional experience is one of feeling overlooked, dominated, and ignored. For the first 3 years or so of the merger the pastor never said Mass in my church. The experience has been negative.

5 parishes needed to come together to make 1 parish a number of years ago. It was very painful! A new Church was built which included pews, station of the cross, altar, lights, etc. from all 5 parishes. Also, the 4 schools became one. The Prince of Peace in Clinton, Ia seems to be a welcoming parish. We love the pastor.

Affected us negatively - small, thriving communities who were financially staple

could have continued with catechists, could have ministers of the word and sharing in the community.

Theology is not Vatican II; homilies do not fit with the new cosmology; community is lost, ministry is lost; Eucharist is abandoned; people are not prepared for the closing/merger and are not prepared for becoming new parish: left to themselves.

I have not been personally affected by the mergers.

Know that I NEED AND CAN SHOP AROUND.

My friend's eclectic, vibrant parish was devastated by a young new priest. He fired the Pastoral Council, took women off the altar, etc. etc. They fought like crazy and were still devastated.

How supposedly Christian people act totally unchristian toward one another? A merger of three parishes turned out to be a merger on paper only. When a new church was in the planning stages, one of the three existing parishes in the merger flagrantly abused the pastor with their words and actions. None of the three parishes were willing to give up their "church" building in favor of one single worship space.

Parishioners did not have adequate input.

Less Masses and community activities that parishes enjoyed.

The merger is just beginning. My parish and another smaller one are slated to merge. I am the spiritual guide for the Council of Catholic Women and know that there is some anxiety about the merger. I do not work for the parish and so do not know the under story about the merger. But I want to help the women's groups meet their needs for connection and support.

Bishop Richard Lennon's closure of 50 Cleveland parishes devastated our diocese which had been formed in social justice and a valuing of the Catholic presence in urban and inner ring neighborhoods under the previous Bishop, Anthony M. Pilla. I still grieve at the loss of these important anchors in economically challenged neighborhoods.

The closure in a parish to which I belonged in another Diocese caused deep grief and pain as the parishioners was very involved in the parish.

Not directly. The two churches I am aware of having been closed involved low attendance and severe structural deficiencies. Falling stones and unstoppable leaks.

Mergers—we are in the “Bible Belt;” in the 22 rural counties surrounding Columbus, the Catholic presence is barely 3%. With mergers, the presence is diminishing.

Covid has affected much of my spiritual practice... I do not currently belong to one parish, but now that I choose to take eucharist again, following a long period of not taking eucharist, I visit one parish or another, depending on their covid practices, whether I am able to understand the priest (African), but overall I have not forgiven the catholic church for the shabby halfhearted way they have dealt with the sex abuse scandal. Ritual runs deep and having been raised from birth in the catholic faith, it is deep in me, but I continue to resist settling into a parish when so much of the bureaucracy/hierarchy is still running the show.

I served as director of worship at a “new” parish based on the merge of 3 neighborhood parishes--struggles, yes, but richness and openness as well, and a good amount of creativity--we've been blessed with good leadership in the process.

I have only observed other parishes closed. These are mostly in urban areas affecting

the poor as expected. My current parish was merged with a small ethnic parish. They still have their own Sunday liturgy but all else is managed through the larger community.

The only parish that closed in Raleigh was during the Civil Rights movement when the Black parish was closed. We are facing growth and shortage of priests.

On a positive note, lay leadership has become more popular. During pandemic I experienced some home church where preaching, music, community and social justice issues were developed.

Parish mergers have affected my niece's & nephews children; experience of the Eucharist not affected at this time.

My parish was not closed. I vicariously walked with both a colleague and some family members who parish was close. There was refusal to dialogue. It was painful.

There was grief, the elderly were most affected since they can no go further to other parishes.

The poor lose their parishes, and their lifetime investments of time and love. The wealthy parishes are burnished -- their marble walls cleaned and shined.

Sometimes very sad; active parishes become empty and alone. Good people are abandoned.

There was no growthful healthy transition time.

Morale in the diocese and local parish sank during closures.

Yee, people have experiences and are not prepared to join with others with different experiences. A wall is built unless the people have been prepared. We were not.

I have not had any direct experience of this.

Painful, distrust, a sense of loss.

A lot of pain and sense of loss in the community.

Resource allocations to real estate rather than social justice and anti-poverty initiatives
My parish community has not been impacted directly. As a leader in the social service sector in my region, it has been devastating. Neighbors have collapsed as the diocese made closures. It was disheartening, from a social just perspective and seemed to be in direct conflict with who we say we are as Catholic.

A lot of give and take if you want it to work a lot of preparation, meetings prior to merger so that everyone has input!!!!!!

No experience.

No impact yet.

So much pain and hopelessness.

It has been painful and frustrating. It has caused even greater erosion in my faith in the Church. It has not felt like the Church cares about the community or really engages the faithful in the decisions.

I have not experienced a closing or merger.

Had a hard time with pastor as they felt challenged.

Not directly.

The 5 Evanston, Il parishes (St. Nicholas, St. Mary, St. Athana, St Joan of Arc and the Shiel Center at Northwestern U.) have lived through the Renew Your Church Program of the Chicago diocese for merging parishes within this last year. For a few months the process has unfolded and there have been listening sessions within the parish with the diocesan leadership team. As of January, a decision was made and announced to all parties. 2

parishes merged with each other, another 2 other parishes merged and the Newman center at Northwestern is separate “parish” with its own unique needs. Our merged existence has not officially begun but we already have St. Nicholas and St. Mary supporting 1 Catholic school for many years. Folks were obviously nervous that the mergers would be orchestrated by the diocesan clerics, and we would have little input. Even though the actual merger has not begun, 2 of the parishes have celebrated an Ash Wednesday Prayer Service together. One pastor will be assigned for 2 parishes. One church will be the place for Liturgical celebrations. With regards to the celebration of the Eucharist during the pandemic, St. Nicholas (my Parish) kept the CDC protocols consistent. As science changed more situations opened up. Within this context, many parishioners chose to celebrate the Eucharist together at home with the parish, as it streamed the Liturgy of the Word, then the whole Eucharist liturgy. This is still an option and well attended, even as physical attendance in Church is increasing. Some women have been meeting for 20 some years on Saturday mornings, for reading the Sunday scriptures from a woman’s lectionary and prayer. Many years ago, this parish began to use unleavened baked bread at all the Masses in the parish. When this women’s group met, many of the women had been part of the bread baking ministry, so the recipe came with them. At the beginning of their time together on Saturdays, on Zoom, we each hold a piece of bread, offer a prayer, and then recognize each other as the body of Christ before sharing the bread and the scriptures. During the pandemic, this time together has been the stalwart support for each member (20-25) and will continue. As women of the church, these women believe it is their baptismal right to reclaim their rightful place at the Table, even though the male hierarchy will not recognize women at the table. St. Nicholas parish is an inclusive place for all and has advocated and worked, for years for peace, justice and equity for all. 3 years ago, a group of parishioners came together and started the Equality for Women in

the Church ministry. Anyone was welcome to join in solidarity and more than 60 people have joined. Our goal is total inclusion of women and lay men in leadership and liturgy in the parish. Step by step we are inching toward our goals (ordination of women and married men into the priesthood, women preaching at Mass (a homily, not a reflection) and leadership in synods and church governing bodies.

I have not been directly affected by parish closures, but I saw the effects when I had a friend who was in a nursing home in the Cleveland, OH West Park neighborhood. The St. Patrick's parish closed and parishioners started protesting before the closure and after until St. Patrick's was reopened! West Park is a poor and minority neighborhood and at the time of the closure, I felt that the Church had abandoned that population. I cannot understand a mentality that shows more concern for richer parishes, than the poor or minorities. In addition, St. Patrick's parish served also the patients in nursing homes in the neighborhood. The nursing home patients appeared to be neglected according to my friend.

These mergers and closures plus the very consecutive, pre-Vatican thinking priests coming out the seminary in this diocese has caused many people to stop going to church and some to find a refuge in another parish or to form their own Christian community. The polarization resulting from all this is destroying parish communities and causing the Church to become less and less relevant in the lives of many, less respected, less believable, and less in tune with the Gospel of Christ.

Yes, it seems to me that there has been more of challenge than I experienced at the time even though divisions among Catholics in our city were made very evident. Even the changing of the names of the "merged churches" became decisive. Of 6 parishes merged into 3 there was a "takeover by two of them (merging schools) with no conversation or collaborative process

with the third parish (my parish). With the onset of Covid19 the effect became even more problematic due to restrictions on gathering in person, singing and sharing Eucharist. As church attendance in person decreases perhaps there will be more "mergers" ahead needing us to be more creative in being Church maybe go back to Pauline times of House churches and connecting through social justice issues

Our parish was merged with St. Stephens. We share priests and services at both sites. I do not remember being told the reason(s) for the merger.

I've seen parishes with deep connections in the inner city close and one reopen as independent Eucharistic communities. This gives me hope that the gospel will continue to be lived out even if a parish is closed. Yet, I would prefer to see dioceses commit to keeping parishes in these fragile communities OPEN as a sign that we understand and live the preferential option for the poor.

I have found it more difficult to find ways to be involved. Even though it's not really merger related, there is a movement towards experiences in the church moving away from Vatican II to more pre-Vatican II experiences and spirituality which is off-putting to me.

Hard to connect with parishioners from the other churches. Perhaps because of geographical distance making getting together more difficult. Lack of an active parish council which really serves and co-mingles the different churches.

The closure or mergers of parishes in rural areas is particularly difficult. Priests may be travelling between multiple rural parishes - with little time to move beyond offering Eucharist. Also, in some instances bishops have eliminated the possibility of lay leadership by a pastoral associates in parishes where there is no resident priest.

People in mergers and closures are often not consulted. For parishes that stay open, the priests are burdened with 2, 3 or even 4 parishes. Women who were parish administrators were told they were no longer needed & were relieved of admin duties because “there are enough men” to fill the positions. Men from other countries who do not know the language, and who do not know about US culture have been appointed pastors in the diocese. Daily mass attendance where I went daily went from 30 or 40 per day to 11 people. I quit going because I could not even understand his words of the mass that I knew by heart. He spoke very little English though he lived in US for 20 years. What an insult to the parish people.

The parish community to which I belong tries to care for both churches, making sure that there is representation from all.

Mergers have destroyed both merging communities. Language, culture and vision are developed over time in worshipping communities. It is not something to be merged God speaks in many voices and is heard in many ways. Who are we to destroy communities of faith by our greed, sexism and patriarchal traditions? We must go elsewhere. The church cannot handle the real Body of Christ.

Has not done so personally. BUT Eucharist is central to our faith-life and community. Limiting real access to sacraments deprives people of life. And I mean true celebration of Eucharist celebrated in community.

It took me a very long time to find a parish that brought me deeply into the Christology of the Church. Our parish motto is, “All are welcome here”. That included women who think that ordination ought to be an option for them, people with nontraditional gender orientation, anyone of any color, people whose theology isn’t in lockstep with the traditional church. While we are financially solid, the most well-

attended church in our city, running beautifully, over 50 separate ministries, we are in the process of being merged. I think it is a control issue as well as a financial plundering. “Get those renegade Catholics who accept everyone under control.” Even here, and with a school on the campus, we don’t attract people under 50 years old. Churches in the USA will, in my opinion, ultimately age out and close if nothing changes.

I have not been affected in any way to the above. I am now in a parish that was significantly reduced by accusations from our bishop that were not true.

The community had feelings of loss that could not be replaced. It meant the closing of an elementary school, convent, and parish. In one case, the diocese tore down a church that was an historical landmark and replaced it with a parking lot.

People are just leaving when they just become a number and have no sense of belonging to a caring community. We need smaller groupings, not large ones.

Feeling second class. Disillusioned. Yet desire for deeper faith

I think its effect has been negative. Each parish seems to still be operating quite independently despite supposed to be a “cluster family”. There seems to be competition rather than cooperation among the parishes.

I have not attended church since July 2021, due to COVID concerns. I have not received Eucharist in a long time. I feel alienated and don’t want to get involved with the parish where I’d been going, because it’s all going to merge anyway this July. I watch a socially conscious parish online that is connected with a university locally. The Kentucky diocese just across the river might be better, but when I went today, Ash Wednesday, for the first time since last July,

only 6 of us out of 100 were wearing masks, so I'm not going back there either.

Most were in remote areas, there was no effect on urban cities near mine.

A number of parishes have been affected. One in particular that was closed in an inner-city neighbor - chose to take their cause to Rome - and they won their appeal. However, the diocese has done nothing to reopen this parish or to acknowledge the hurt and needs of this community. There really aren't enough male resources - and they are afraid of women leadership and calling. If women want to serve the clergy, they are welcome - but if they choose to speak or offer leadership - they are quickly shut down.

Indirectly as a religious as not really associated with parish per say. But I hear and feel the pain of many parishes.

I have worshipped with the Dominican Sisters ~Grand Rapids for over 30 years at their mother house. It has been closed since the pandemic began. They have since sold the 100-year-old building to be renovated into affordable senior living apartments. We, the Sunday Assembly, who have worshipped with the sisters since 1985, have no chapel large enough on campus to meet. It is a great loss to the greater Grand Rapids as it was a welcoming community to many who did not feel welcomed in the parish setting. We have many LGBTQ+ families and individuals.

Familiar only with resources taken from a closed parish and transferred to a new suburban parish through naming the new facility and incorporating as the closed community.

I have not worshiped in the RC Church for a few years though I cling to my RC faith tradition.

There is talk of having a community of several churches merge to share priests. This is in the talking stage and my small city Paris is affected.

My friends fear a loss of identity for their parish when there is a merger. We have 5 parishes in the north of the state with 3 priests...one of them came out of retirement. Another is married/ordained under John Paul II. The parishes have survived over 30 years of unpredictable ministry by priests, and often time members have stepped up to PRESERVE the access to the Eucharist for the people.

More hurt and anger. A feeling that the plan to close is already decided by hierarchy before the people can discuss and inability to understand parishes without a pastor.

It has recently been announced. I am handicapped so I do not know how this has affected others because I'm not sure it had been put into action yet.

My own parish is unaffected, as each parish is a silo. The gutted parish, St Francis, was largely given refugee acceptance in a nearby multicultural parish. But it will all depend upon the longevity and vitality of the aware pastor. My friends from St Francis are devastated, some finding it hard to proceed. We are all the poorer for this.
No experience.

Closures have hit the rural areas hard since alternative church might be 50 to 60 miles away. Many of the rural churches were built by the grandparents of members of the church. Rural communities are hit also since the core identity of a rural community is church, school, post office. they go the community then goes to "dust."

I have not personally experienced a parish closure, but it breaks my heart to hear about so many closures that are done so casually by bishops.

Parishioners are bitter or saddened by loss of their historic buildings, their schools and churches. The diocese closed churches that minister to the poor and oppressed, there is anger at the bishop.

Witnessing closures in other parts of the country has made me so aware of the peoples love for the Church and desire to continue with their communities in an active and participatory way...especially to serve poorer communities.

Three parishes are now “served” by one priest. We have no community, no say in what goes on when or why. We have had a very strong conservative turn.

I belong to a large urban parish, which is about half Hispanic, with three priests, so it is not typical.

Very hurtful and destructive to community, especially in rural areas where churches are few and far between and also inclement winter weather prevents travel to join other communities. Caused friction as to what church would remain. The new ‘parishes’ were renamed.

My wife Jill made a good point that closings are not always physical but because of poor administration or difficult personalities (pastor) people “close” and go elsewhere or perhaps nowhere.

My parish was the controlling parish in our merger with a smaller largely Slovak community. This never really worked in terms of becoming one body.

I left my parish shortly after the merger took place. We had a huge amount of change in a very short period of time - a new parish priest, COVID-19, and a merged church. Any single one of these demanded intensive change

management, but with all three at nearly the same time - it was overwhelming.

Our parish lost its status as a Carmelite parish due to lack of priests and became Diocesan. The difference is noticeable especially in regard to spirituality and some of our members have left.

The leading justice ministry model of best practice, St. Maurice was closed. A much smaller and elderly focused parish was told to absorb the dynamic, much larger in activity parish of St. Maurice. Our parish with a minimum of interest in justice ministry, now hosts a few of the displaced ST. Maurice justice workers with no support from Resurrection clergy.

I don't have personal experience with mergers or closures.

Though indirect, closures put the emphasis of church as a business rather than a religious relationship. Profit over people.

I had to leave my home parish because of the lack of masses or enrichment services e.g., retreats or CST classes. There was only Mass... no longer community input.

Yes. 6 parishes were merged into one.... many went elsewhere to other parishes out of anger, many plain left for whatever reason.

I feel very hurt and angry about the mergers and closings. I feel that our bishops do not care about the People of God or the work the Gospel. They do not follow Pope Francis when he says that even a small group should keep a parish together. The parish is the heartbeat of a community. When a parish closes in a poverty-stricken area, it exacerbates poverty...the weeds grow up, stores close, gas stations close, etc. I am angry that those who call themselves pastor do not do more to keep parishes, especially vital inner-city parishes open.

The closure of St Ignatius in 1989 led to the formation of a small Catholic community that has been in operation for 32 yrs. We have about 50 members

Worry about the health and safety of the retired priests who are covering these parishes that are separated by long distances in addition to subbing at other existing parishes.

My loving, progressive church was merged with the antithesis of this. Oil and water don't mix.

Not me personally.

Having to share a pastor with another smaller parish, we now have no resident priest, even though our parish is larger with a school. To make matters worse, everything must be decided by the pastor with little to no input from the parishioners.

The need for the number was not necessary because of the demographic changes.

My parish has become anemic, so even though the doors are open, it no longer feeds my soul. I now belong to an intentional Catholic faith community.

Did not impact our parish.

I have not been affected by any physical closure. I have, however, sought spiritual community beyond my local parish to find nourishment for my spiritual life.

Have not been affected personally, but it has been very uncomfortable for many. The older people do not want to leave parishes where they have raised their children and have personal experiences with other parishioners. Eucharist is sharing. It seems the parishes that do merge and are successful are the ones who form new ways of being community.

2 parishes merged & for the most part, it has given each parish more options for Masses, but

each parishioner usually just attends their own church.

New priest very conservative and brings about problems of participation.

I have not been in a parish that closed or merged ...but I believe the laity should have a greater say in meeting the needs.

My family belongs to a parish where they share a priest with five other towns, which covers 70 miles. I worked for a parish in Detroit when the Archdiocese decided to put parishes in "families." The process was unclear and unwelcome, especially since we were a Jesuit parish, and the archdiocese as a whole is very conservative.

The people I've known have been frightened, in pain and lost confidence in the church.

Such mergers have affected others more, as I'm in a Paulist parish that serves a large, university community. I have seen attempted closures in the Cleveland diocese and how heartbroken their parishioners were as they fought the closures.

Its affected everyone. Some people have left, and some people are hurt. Hard on priests.

No.

It diminished community.

Shortage of priests have affected me. We need more involvement of the laity and especially women as deacons.

No personal experience.

Q2. As the People of God in an authentically synodal church, what is God calling us to do in this time of parish mergers/closures?

To look at how these mergers and closures are conducted. It takes a lot of work to bring people together and involve them in a new community. Everyone should have a say in how the parish is to be managed, and the leadership in the new parish is chosen.

We need to look at the impact of the local communities - often those parishioners do not have means to travel. Share pastors. Increase use of other people - nuns, deacons, lay. Allow lay people to oversee aspects of the church, e.g., finances, maintenance of buildings, give priests/pastors time for them to do their healing work. Perhaps the dioceses need to have a group that oversee multiple parishes - condense tasks that can be versus keeping at the parish level. I was informed by my pastor that the archdioceses don't assist parishes with purchases, e.g., many stores will give discounts to a large group (which many dioceses are). Each parish and school must develop its own agreements, etc. Waste of time on many levels, but also lost money. Instead of being creative, we were met with roadblocks and non-action from the ADW when they held listening sessions on how to improve the school (pre-K-8th grade). Never saw their report from those listening sessions, have not seen any action on their part (this was over 3 years ago).

Involve more lay people, women, and those who feel excluded by the church. We will lose them if we do not.

Ordain qualified women.

We need to be courageous in continuing to press for a reformed church-understanding of

how we are to be church, and to have a Radical Trust in the power of the Holy Spirit guiding us to bring about the changes needed for us to more fully be the ecclesia that reflects Jesus's values and understanding of the Reign of God.

To restructure especially in the area of clericalism. Revisit the values of Vatican II. Empower laity.

Allow women to become priest and allow marriage of man or woman.

Be humble, be simple, be open, trust. Admit past mistakes. Go forward in hope. We need to be more welcoming, of all people - more eucharistic hospitality, fewer rules, more equality.

Think big.

To think and re-evaluate the situation.

God is calling us to recognize the holiness of all the baptized. God is calling us to assume our role as leaders and go after the stray sheep in our area. To heal the sick, to feed the hungry and bring spiritual nourishment to the Women, Men and Children of our times.

Unsure.

Work together. Accept that we can't run all these buildings - and we don't have enough priests to man them all - either!

Share authority.

Economic pressures are not going away, and we must combine buildings to reduce building burdens. Time to call on the laity to merge, close and form parishes, based on neighborhood needs, and to listen to them.

It's a call for more lay leadership and responsibility. No longer can the hierarchical be the norm.

We are called to speak out and to pray.

Break down the hierarchy and recreate to Church to serve as Jesus did. As is the church no longer inspiring. It's dead. It's closed-minded. It's irrelevant. I'm tired of waiting for change.

Love one another as God loves us.

Build smaller communities like the early Christians. Loving relationships and support groups.

Become inclusive & gender- equal.

Discern what is positive about this and speak out about the unchristian things that are happening.

God is calling us to remain faithful and steadfast in our faith. Lay people must take leadership and have a voice in these decisions.

I believe that God is calling us to be welcoming to all and in a more perfect world we would see the joining of churches as adding to the flavor and character of the grouping - each church adding something of its own to the new one, whether it be a ministry that sews quilts for children in hospital or special projects to serve the homeless or those in extreme poverty. We could do more together. With fewer priests we as laity are being called to do more for our church. We as church need to have more foresight and be less narrow minded in order to solve the current issues regarding fewer priests. We have grown to expect 6 masses a weekend (when I was young there was no Saturday Mass just as there were only 2 TV stations) because this is America, and we expect all these options, but this is just not sustainable.

VALUE, VALUE us, the People of God. There are enough ministers to serve the Church IF only we are encouraged, empowered, embraced to do so. It is very sad to see closures and

mergers when there might be a third option. And IF the people are consulted!!!

Offer parish communities the option of praying together regularly and traveling to other parishes for regular eucharist and having a traveling priest come to their community maybe once a month.

Stay open and reach out and be patient and share ideas.

Continue to faithfully attend mass while examining past and present practices which harm our witness in the community. I believe that it is a great time to open up the priesthood to married and female applicants.

Embrace the potential positive that could come with more deliberate communities rather than a geographic defined parish.

Seek to become a more contemplative person with a heart for peace and justice. With prayer, study and reception of the Sacraments, increase one's personal friendship with God and with each other. Notice who are the excluded people and work to include them. Develop communication and leadership skills, as needed. Learn the rights of Catholics who not ordained. Observe Jesus' leadership and collaborative styles.

Encourage the participation of and acknowledge the wisdom of the laity, trust the Aliveness of the Holy Spirit of Transformation, and acknowledge that we all are church, not just the institution. There is a great spiritual hunger in our society that is not being addressed at this time the wisdom.

Rethink Church. Create opportunity for women to be priests and deacons. Separate the administration of a parish from the pastor's role to lead spiritual direction and care for a parish. Allow priests to marry, if they choose. Allow celibacy to be a choice, not a mandate.

Organize to hear the voices of the faithful and structure to free utilization of their gifts.

Support community and welcome neighbors.

I think God is calling us to remember the beginnings of church and embrace that gathering in his name is a dynamic function of the people and that in this moment of change there is a new church that can emerge and be in the image that I think God imagined for us - smaller, focused, inclusive and profound.

I don't find God in the church buildings. I find God in the people of God. If we value every baptized voice, we need to bless and hear those voices. We need to value the lay people and build the church as the people of God. The power, the Spirit, is in the people. The people need to form small communities with lay leadership, maybe the same way the early Christians did.

Pray TO God rather than ABOUT God. It can make a world of a difference toward growing a relationship with God. Jesus came to tell us how much God loves and is mercy and forgiveness. Yet prayers at mass talk about earning our reward or gaining our REWARD. I understand Jesus freely welcomes us into Oneness with God who is in with and through all including us. Jesus endured so much violence and death on the cross and still we don't believe that Christ saves us from our illusion that we have to accumulate our eternal reward. What will it take for us to believe Jesus is with and in us enough to do the same to wash our brothers and sisters feet, as we are all the family of God?

We must be willing to spend the time to meet with parish officials, i.e., the clerical figure (s) making the final decisions. We must be ready to listen to dialogue; we must seek the possibility of alternative arrangements. We must be insistent and feel the dignity of our thinking as the lay members involved in the situation. We must not let ourselves be talked down. We must

want to be informed about all the facets of the decision-making process.

Encourage and assure the Voices of the People in the process. Expect and receive the opportunity to be Church Liturgically, and Sacramentally by providing Spiritual Leaders who take VC II seriously, and who are capable of designing and implementing creative Celebrations that Speak of Priests and People collaboratively working together as an INCLUSIVE Community of Hospitality and Service. Birthing an environment of Welcome and Reaching Out to Everyone in nourishing and spiritually fulfilling ministries.

Dialogue!

“To act justly, to love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8 Shouldn't it be that simple?

Address the causes. Just as a business would ask customers why they are leaving, we should find a way to do the same.

We as laypeople need to step out and live our baptism call. Lay people can perfectly become parish administrators if they are qualified to do so. We need to work with our Bishops and ask them not to shut down our communities. In many countries, the people of God survive thanks to the help of lay leaders and the priest visits them only once a month or once a year. The United States is a missionary territory, laypeople need to have a greater role in the church.

Update the liturgy. Clergy should start “smelling like the people of God”.

To envision good stewardship of resources-human and financial-and a 21st century vision of church that calls us to a deeper relationship with each other and the world's injustice and lack of peace. It also was an opportunity to realize that we no longer need a sole “decider” but a communal process.

Lay people should open to current realities, but so should the Church.

Accept the need for women (who are qualified and ready) to have a role in the administration and continuity of churches.

We need sacramental ministers and parish leadership drawn from the communities, to keep parishes open and active.

To seek to find my place in this difficult situation.

Ordain women priests and married men and women.

God wants the Church to recognize that it has to ordain women and institute a married clergy.

I am amazed that bishops are still in blinders when it comes to communities of faith. Small communities throughout history have always been the change agents. Ask Margaret Meade! Schools of theology are graduating lay men and women with knowledge and skills to provide parish ministry rather than closing communities of faith down. Where parishes may need additional assistance is in administrative roles. I'm guessing the diocese could cluster parishes administratively while truly pastoring the faithful, creating small communities of great faith.

To reflect on what needs the Church is not meeting for people and figure out how to meet those needs. For instance, for modern women full participation is needed. It is not enough to do all the work of the church and yet be denied access to ordination.

Create welcoming environments that are racially and culturally diverse.

Look at ways to subsidize low-income churches if they are filling an important role in the

community. Allow women to be deacons and be ordained.

Inclusion of gay, lesbian and transgender, women, black and minority the poor is 1 of 3 aspects to be addressed. How to maintain and share sacraments within a community without a priest, how to educate within the faith with Catholic school with limited access and how we become ever more inclusive of Blacks, the GLT populations the divorces and immigrant or different cultural/ethnic, racial members.

We are called to live the gospel of Jesus Christ in the spirit of the early Christians, where there were no Jews or Gentiles, etc., a community where both men and women were mutually respected.

We are called to renewal. To view the church beyond the sacrament dispensing model. To seek new ways of community. To rethink Eucharist.

Advocate for shared responsible ministry among all the baptized. Let the Holy Spirit work!

Speak the truth. Have courage to talk to pastors? Write letters to bishops.

There needs to be a focus on the Church as a community. It is not a place that feels like it is there for us in difficult times. It is not a place we feel like we know everybody like we used to. We need to build community, so our children feel connected.

Work together, pray, & discern.

We are to come together as communities with full participation of women and men.

Integrate faith, administration and clerical ministries with all- cease with the clericalism.

Take over from the incompetent clergy who are incapable of conceiving of ANYTHING holier

than their extra special ontologically endowed penises that make them right next to God' that allow them to rape children with impunity that doctrine so proudly and meticulously documented IN CANON LAW! The Australian canon lawyer and the sociologist published two documents. The first is a legal report entitled "Canon Law – A Systemic Factor in Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church." (Free download) written for the Australian government. The second is the lay version "Potiphar's Wife." (Buy online for real money). I verified the information with the author of the second book and the legal firm from the movie Spotlight. A third is "Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church; An Interpretive Review of the Literature and Public Inquiry Report" another free download through the Center for Global Research; School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT Both books thoroughly document how the Vatican ORDERED the bishops to protect the pedophiles starting 100 years ago. They include more detail on the Pontifical Secret that Francis just abolished. The Vatican turned the CHURCH into Q's international pedophile ring! Francis just made pedophilia a 'crime' in Canon Law rather than a 'sin' like masturbation.

I think that a lot of these mergers and closures have been conducted without a lot of input from the lay community. The parishioners need to be included in the major decision planning. The hierarchy also has to be open to alternatives such as having laypeople run those parishes where there is a lack of clergy.

There needs to a good bit more give and take in lifestyle choices for people to be able to come together for dialog.

Evaluate what is necessary for a parish and be more inclusive. Ask What would Jesus do?

Small group communities.

Review priesthood and ministry in the light of Jesus' example. 2. Recognize the

priesthood of all believers. Ordain women who have a vocation to priesthood. I know so many women who do have a strong call to priesthood but have not been able to exercise their gifts. I also know men who should never have been ordained, as they lack the capacity or recognition of their own capacity for the role. These men do damage in parishes and schools. 3. Teach priests and parishioners good theology, including good sacramental theology, especially re eucharist, so that no-one is excluded, especially on purity codes that Jesus did not live by.

Try to survive and renew.

Authentically involve the parish people in all the workings & activities of the parish. Train the laity for Leadership positions in the church! Be present to diversity!

The people are willing to serve, but we have to wait for "Father" who seems to be waiting for a "better assignment." The focus on clerical leadership has stripped the community of the leaders within the community who willingly serve the people.

God is calling all of us to have the courage to speak to the pastor, or write to the bishops, and point out what is going on, what is unhealthy, how the People of God are being treated by the those with a clericalist mentality

Open up - prayer that bishops will begin to think outside the box. Address clericalism and be true to Vatican II and Pope Francis' vision.

To look once again at home churches and encourage laity to be the faith leaders our baptism calls us to.

God is calling us to support the church in our area. Closures may be unavoidable due to lower numbers going to church. It is costly to run a church so support is needed for closure may be inevitable.

Form new parish's more consistent to Vatican II recommendations.

To offer creative opportunities to celebrate Eucharist using trained and formed religious and lay people married and single, so that we are fed in healthy, contemplative communities that respond in truth and justice especially to those of the poor and on margins for the common good of humanity and our global brothers and sisters.

We should not be afraid to close/sell some church properties, if we have too many buildings to maintain in large/old urban areas. The Church is the people, after all, not the buildings!

People were attracted to early Christianity because of the love that Christians demonstrated to one another. Today it is all about rules and trying to keep those who disagree with the church out. The church no longer is an instrument of love- - it is an instrument of exclusion.

Receive laity reflections and experience on parish mergers/closures; share economic reasons for mergers/closures; put forth visionary possibilities drawn from mutual laity and priestly sharing.

We must be open, educate, and learn.

To invite persons to become authentic communities.

The laity will make new forms of church. It may look different, but the Spirit will be there.

God is calling us to be open to a new prophetic church. Perhaps this means smaller church communities that are a blend of leaders and laity, who can also gather and lead a parish. We need the strength of each other and an openness to change, which is grounded in Vatican II.

To find ways to serve communities of faith in new and non-traditional models of outreach.

Listen to the Holy Spirit about needs of the people, including Nones and minister to them in a loving way, extending mercy, which is forgiveness and healing.

Pray and offer gifts and talents that are relevant and valid.

Stay open and expect the Spirit to guide the people of God along with the clergy and come to consensus of what's the best for the community.

I have not experience parish mergers or closures.

Stop the sources. Recognize each community of faith as unique and offering a facet to the Body of Christ. Allow lay administration to handle the day-to-day life of a parish while the priests focus on the sacramental needs.

Please prayerfully consider women and married men, who feel called to the priesthood, and who are highly trained to serve God's people rather than to close churches.

Form home churches.

Bring up the laity.

Be creative!! Think of ways to keep them open. Also, think of ways to draw the youth back into the fold.

I don't know. I think we are so far gone with parish life in the American Church that it is beyond repair. Perhaps the Holy Spirit will work miracles.

Speak truth to power. My fear is that the Church will need to die before it can be resurrected.

Pray Advocate for change in Church Policy about women.

Peak clearly and transform the old good news into a contemporary expression of real. "God" is a singular male term. It is neutral but we use it as a personal "name". We demand the Creator of the universe give us thinks that already have been given. We do it again and again. So, our educated children ask, "what are you talking to". We need to confess of social since especially those the hierarchy and then repent.

We must listen to the SPIRIT as she leads us to consider more liberating and fulfilling ways to respond to the times in which we live.

We need to speak up and step up - do what needs to be done, even if it's under the official radar. We are the church, and no pastor should be able to eliminate ministries that we are willing to continue with our own time, talent, and treasure.

Ordain women NOW...ordain married men NOW.

To increase the role of the laity, and to reinstate the female diaconate.

First of all, looking at the Pastoral team model or Parish Life Coordinator with bringing in priests to do liturgy. Discern what the Spirit is speaking to the Church now - especially who is being called to priesthood regardless of gender.

Listen to one another, help people grieve, become more transformed by the paschal mystery.

Come together in unity to create something new...a new community of love and service.

Formalize processes of mediation and conflict resolution. In Canada, we need a place to complain to above and beyond the Bishop of our own Diocese. We need DIVERSITY

(women, progressives, people of color, people of the working class, new immigrant Catholics) to hold positions of decision-making power. We also have to recognize that real estate is very valuable, esp. in Canada and the US now, because of mass migration, climate change, etc. and so the costs of keeping churches, rectories, training centers, retreat centers open is increasing. I think if there were more vocations from people with a spirituality that makes sense to modern people e.g., Rohr's Universal Christ ... then this would lead to the vocations, and participation and support (financial, political, social) that is needed to keep buildings open. I really hope that we can keep buildings open so there is a respite from the digital world. Can an entirely 'virtual' Catholicism still be Sacramental?

Open the priesthood to women; ask more people to prayerfully consider whether God is calling them.

Stand up and ask for our small community churches to be led by lay ministers and/or women.

I think the priesthood- all men and women welcome.

To listen to the people!! Smaller parishes minister to the people in a more personal, pastoral and intimate and caring way.

Reorganize and get active in social justice issues like immigration, refugees, incarceration, criminal justice system, restorative justice, etc. As Catholics following Christ, we are to walk among the people promoting nonviolence, listening to their voices, accompany them on their journey and taking action to make social changes and provide assistance wherever we can.

I think God wants those called to step forward in leadership roles and think of new ways to be church.

De-clericalize. open our closed theological postures and apply other sciences to our mindsets. focus on the future, not the past.

Listen to one another's stories to learn more about why maintaining small communities may be of value. How can we ask questions and listen to answers about what is really needed to maintain a parish - or a mission? For example, can we share stories: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27_Prqg0BWM or "When this historic Black Catholic parish was closed, its tight-knit community fought back—and won." (<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2022/01/20/cleveland-community-parish-historically-black-242250>) Learning about this community helps me to consider more how important this may be. What models might there be in areas of the world that function with low numbers of priests (for example, our parish has a partner parish ministry in Haiti) through the use of multiple Chapels in a parish largely administered by trained laity, Chapel Directors? How could we adjust expectations about levels of expenditures to maintain wealthy communities in order to more equitably distribute resources among all our church communities?

We need to look outside the box. There really isn't a priest shortage there is just a short-sighted hierarchy.

God is calling us to follow the words of the prophet Micah, to act justly. Love tenderly, to Serve one another and to Walk humbly with our God. Jesus gave us the Beatitudes as a road map and breathed His Holy Spirit into us so we would have the courage to go forth spreading the Good News.

The Catholic church needs to embrace women as leaders in the church. The church must be inclusive. The Catholic church should drop redundant rules and dogma. It seems like a waste of time to be arguing semantics, rules and enforcing dogma that was relevant to the Middle Ages. Christ has, to me, a singular

message, "Love each other as I have loved you." This seems lost in today's Catholic church.

It can be traumatic to lose your parish. The community is being torn apart. It is losing familiarity with the community, its building, its history, traditions, friends and LOSS! For those whose church becomes the center they need to be aware that God is calling us to be welcoming, spiritual, active, positive, accepting and aware. It may be awkward at the beginning and all need to recognize change takes effort and courage. I am getting to know and hopefully accept a new priest is really at the core. We all want a positive experience that will take us forward.

To truly embrace following the gospel in this culturein this age and time.... Implement the Vatican II challenges.... A professor at Loyola University in Chicago shared in the early 70's ... we are headed for a period of chaos.... we will not see the results of Vatican II ... but we must be ready to journey thru this period and allow the Spirit to guide us.

Explore new ways for Catholic Christian communities to pray and worship together. We need to be innovative and not restricted by old rules/regulations. After the first followers of Jesus did not have church buildings as we now know them. Community should be out first priority.

I believe God is calling our communities to lift up our lay ministers in support of the Church. I see fewer pastoral associates and I also see the usage of title "director" transitioned to "coordinator" with respect to lay positions. I believe the Diaconate should be lifted up for both woman and men.

I believe that a new and/or revived organization for parishes within a diocese is needed and should be tried. If a parish is financially viable and seems to be so for the next few years, if it seems to be a vibrant community

of believers, worshipers, and witnesses, then I believe that the diocesan leadership and the local bishop should do all possible to avoid the parish's suppression, despite a forecast of fewer priests. The priests may have to travel between parishes, but I think that is preferable to closing and/or merging viable parishes. Lay permanent deacons, pastoral associates, and parish lay leadership can assist a peripatetic priest in sustaining and growing parish life and worship. It won't be an easy life for priests under this schema, but perhaps the format might serve as a bridge to the time when the Roman Catholic Church wakes up to the possibility of married priests and women deacons and priests.

Rethink the parish model per se; rethink the male only, celebrate only priesthood. Oppose gender apartheid. Welcome LBGTQ including at least blessings for couples. Improve preaching!!!!

God is call us to have other ministers to fulfill these positions besides the ordain priests.

Look to table celebrations, educate and support small intentional communities, expand inclusion, drop clericalism, ordain women deacons and priests, have the Laity as equal partners in cooperation with ordained servant leaders.

Broaden from hierarchy to many being active lay leaders. Accept and use women's insights and ways different from men's. Broaden from male labeling of God to recognition God is genderless and make language inclusive. Most importantly change many parts of bad theology even in the Mass.

Find ways to do the least harm. Be sure that a variety of "styles" is available when someone has to find a place where they are able to participate fully.

Be realistic, transparent and honest.

At long last, Pope Francis has put in place a way to let the People of God speak about the future of the Church. I hope we are heard.

Be more authentic and less bureaucratic.

Be creative and include both men and women to share in real leadership roles within the local church. Many are more than qualified.

Perhaps we need to discern new ways to have a parish. Lay leadership with sacramental ministers was talked about in the past. Perhaps parishes hire the lay leadership, and the priests serve two parishes? These are new times with new realities. Always looking to the past, to recreate the past, won't help us move forward.

Listen and value all members of the Body of Christ.

Personal invitation to ALL folks to join us for Mass or other event. Continue promoting woman to leadership roles as deacons etc. Allowing our priests to marry. It's really up to our Male hierarchy to make changes. Stop putting up walls for change or Acceptance. Become what Christ started. All humanity is loved and accepted. Jesus lived it why can't we.

Do all we can to educate ourselves.....make choices the best we can..... Pray.

The dominical celebration has to be adapted to the community where it is prayed together... put an end to the obligation of always saying and doing the same prayers etc....and bring new people with a new approach...lay people should be able to.

What I have written is the result of my pandemic reading and thinking about Mary Magdalene, mysticism, the wisdom tradition that is buried, about "oneing" rather than "othering." A few thoughts: Rethink the concept of priesthood. We are all priests. We have different gifts, not limited to those the hierarchy attributes to us or chooses to limit

us to. Change our thinking about sexuality. Clerical obsession with sex has obscured what is really important—our relationship with God, each other, the Earth, and social and planetary justice. Rethink every article of faith. What does it really mean? How does that further our relationships with God? Just for starters, who says God is male? Or 3 persons? The term “person” in English describes human beings, except when describing the Trinity. The very word limits our thinking to God to anthropomorphic terms. And will someone please tell me why resurrection of the body is article of faith? Are we so hung up on the importance of our bodies that we can’t let go of them? Is the complexity of our theology getting in the way of our relationships with God? I think so. Remove control from the bishops and the hierarchy. Welcome the female and the feminine. Welcome everyone whose gender or sexuality is different from ours. Welcome everyone whose religious beliefs look different from our own. They may surprise us because they get to the same place without a lot of contortionist theology. Welcome everyone, without conditions!

Continue to try to be the church. Reach out to youth and have meaningful Catechetical programs, for all. Open church involvement for laypeople along with formation to carry out tasks. Living the truth that Liturgy means the work of the Whole People of God, not reserved for the priest alone.

Lay leaders. Open ordination to anyone who feels called. End clericalism. Smaller communities rather than larger ones. Open to everyone. Focus on the challenge of living the gospel message not numbers and money.

Look beyond parish! Continue to create small faith groups, base communities, to create connections.

I do not know.

I believe the Church must be open to the varying ways of life among its people. I definitely believe the church should stop making silly pronouncements like declaring baptisms invalid because the priest used a wrong word when delivering the sacrament.

Speak up and make our opinions known to those who can make a difference. BTW, I so wish the Catholic Church would allow married priests and women priests. We would be so much more joyful!! I’m in my 80s so have little hope that the above changes will occur in my lifetime, but am praying for the sake of the younger members of the CC.

The people are rarely asked this question in both wealthy and poorer parishes. Finance committees of the dioceses make a corporate decision. We have a huge empty Catholic High School that has been sitting and up for sale for at least 10 years. This could be a technical school to re-educate workers in modern day jobs. Mergers break the spirit of the community without the people having any pre-involvement in the decision. In the past, congregations were told we cannot afford to keep you open. If you can find \$100,000, we will keep you open. The people scrambled to find donors and got the money. They were closed down anyway. Wealthier parishes that had money in a savings were closed and the diocese took the money. This seems more like Pharisees than living the life as Jesus would want for us.

Design a different structure of the bonding of Catholics to form Christian communities to replace church communities, get it accepted, and make it work. This could start as a pilot program in various places.

To form smaller house communities of faith who are not attached to permanent buildings to confront a future that will be continuously faced with demographic change.

The Church MUST look at being People of God who respond to communities in current times. Our son, who lived in Brooklyn, was surrounded by many churches and all the ones we attended (probably at least 5 - 6) had very meager attendance even on Easter and Christmas. Young people who leave the Church because they do not feel that the Church connects with them need to be brought back with vibrant priests of both genders and programs that are relevant to their lives. We need to get women as priests, deacons and entirely integrated into the church in a deeper leadership way. After all, in every church that I've belonged to it is the women who run it for the priests, they just don't get the credit. Churches intent on being archaically pious and ending up closing have no one to blame but themselves. Forgive my bluntness, I stay in the church in part to effect change!

Allow for the ordination of women and foster the return of married priests to active priestly ministry.

I wish I knew. This is why I continue to try to be informed and pray. Hoping your sessions will be a start.

Re-examine the exclusion of married men and women as priests. We have enough people called, not enough ordained. Listen to the people who want community. Small populations in community still form church. Re-examine teachings on what it is to be human- and in the image of God. Get out of exclusions based on gender identity and sexual relations.

To listen. To reflect. To pray. To act.

Work together and with other faith traditions to help the poor and all those who need our assistance...it's a major communal issue definitely not restricted to the 'Catholic world'

Increase the number of pastors by better enabling married priests and increasing the

pool of pastors by ordaining female deacons to serve as pastoral administrators.

To be open to the Spirit, and to try to make the mergers/closure as smooth and to be aware of the people who will be affected by the changes.

transform our Church from one of exclusion, judgment and rules to inclusion. To me Francis' pastoral love is an inspiration.

Ordain women to the diaconate and the priesthood. Make consecration a sacrament equal to ordination. Give women and men a choice or ordination or consecration.

Create Community.

God is calling us to look at the CHURCH as the PEOPLE OF GOD. Clericalism and male domination must end. Church must move from Excessive focus on ritualism and priest-centered ceremonies to Parish community centered celebrations. The priest must be at the service of the community and not behave as the Master of the rest. the people of God must assume the responsibility to be partners. Women must be recognized and given Equality of place with Dignity. Lay men and women must be made Sacramental Ministers and Spiritual directors. Male preaching alone is not acceptable. women's Diaconate ordination must be quickened, and Church must recognize with due respect, the importance of other Religions and recognize the values they hold. Invite them to participate as well as to share their cultural riches and values. Convert antagonism into opportunity.

I believe we are called to be more creative in supporting lay leader as ministers in the community - both women and men who have the gifts, preparation and who feel the Spirit calling them to help their communities to grow and flourish as God's Holy people.

Consider expanding the role of clergy to include a married priesthood, including those

who left the priesthood to get married, and of ordaining women to the priesthood.

Mergers are fine when needed, but do not close the poorer churches. Force wealthy people to join poor churches. Make them attractive by the placing the best artists, musicians and priests in these areas. Good liturgy and meaningful lay ministry opportunities will attract and keep serious Catholics. Maybe younger ones, too.

Hang in as the Church tries to understand the message of Christ as it applies to current times.

To be invitational and welcoming individuals to our faith community.

Equality of women in language for God and the people of God, in ordination, and in parish workers' salaries.

Have more Women in leadership roles pay attention to what Vatican (2) is promoting look to the lay people.

Pray; Listen; Exhort those in power; Work for change in the best way you are able.

Go back to the true meaning of communion/ community of Christ and leave formalism and legality.

God is calling us to expand the priesthood to include all genders, married people, and people who the church has previously excluded.

Become more inclusive and share the joy of the gospel so that people want to come to church to be fed.

Have mass only once every two weeks but have instead two or three large group discussion on who God is in our lives.

Hire, or train and hire (Ordained Deacons, men/women) to oversee the responsibilities of a parish as a team. Priest(s) could be part

of this team, not as leader, but to take care of sacraments as canonically required.

Heal the structural sin of clericalism/ patriarchy. For example, why may the Synod in Rome in 2023 be composed of 50% women. Otherwise, the penultimate discernment will reinforce patriarchy/ clericalism.

Try to wrest from the hierarchy control of finances and clergy appointments. Until these 2 things are done any reform of the RCC in North America is merely window dressing. In sort replace the medieval form of governance with lay dominated governance. We are no longer uneducated nerds living in moated villages on lands owned by feudal chieftains in ecclesiastical garb.

Ordain more leaders on this crisis period; do it at the parish level; ick some trial parishes where it can happen well. Call religious women to serve for a few key years to assist w/ lay training. Sisters are laity too and know how to share and empower.

Respond to the sign of the times. Aggiornamento! Open discussion with church leaders, lay, women, theologians, Christian leaders, young and old, guided by the grace of the Holy Spirit to find common ground to be alive and working in the world today, so the gospel is relevant and central to all of us who so desperately want to live as Jesus lived. We need a church that looks like the people in the world. No other worldly robed hierarchy on pedestals. But living messengers and ministers (male and female) of the gospel as it applies to the modern world.

Concentrate on reasons and work together to decrease them and to build stronger.

Laity to make voices heard if possible. Is clergy listening? Apathy of some laity. Not really caring enough.

Ordain women and married men.

Look to more equality among all members.

Discern a new 'form of Church that concentrates on the community's needs for practices that meets these needs. Overseas trained priests overall do not understand our various cultures, one form of practice does not suffice to all nationalities yet alone sexual orientations. We Need communities who mean "come as you are." The Vatican, Curia needs to go.....too much power and need for status, we need a leader strong enough to take ACTION.

Include women; move beyond the obsession with so-called "pro-life", sexual orientation, etc. to love of and service to neighbor.

Focus more on community needs, demonstrate our faith by action.

Speak truth to power. Many of the problems are material in nature & not doctrines of our faith as professed in the Creed. The problems are created by man & can be fixed by human intervention moved by the Spirit.

Look more deeply at diocesan pre-Vatican training. Bishop treats people like children who can't mature in their decision making. Too much clericalism.

Call upon those among us who are qualified and willing to minister, to do so. There is no shortage of people who are willing to minister, only a shortage of Vatican II leader who are willing to let them do so.

I hear the Spirit calling us to "be the prayer". To get up off our knees, go out into the street and attend to whomever we find there. To encounter the real Jesus Christ in each person we meet. Synodality is too little too late - it the faithful speaking up, and the bishops editing out. I think God is calling us to "wake-up" the Catholic church organization by walking out en masse. Believers to church: there is no monopoly on Jesus Christ.

We must be open to the pain caused when a church is closed and welcome congregants who have been displaced. We must advocate to minimize closures that disproportionately affect minority and ethnic communities.

We need to ordain women. In our villages, we need to ordain Alaska native women who are cultural leaders and respected elders.

Rethink the dictum that the source and summit of Christian life is Eucharistic liturgy dependent on a constricted presbyteral ministry. The source and summit is Christ who is found in the margins of society and among a wide variety of faithful assemblies -- wherever two or three gather in his name. "I look upon all the world as my parish."

Make all feel welcome with full participation in sacraments. Be open about past wrongs and take responsibility for them. Allow female and married priests and deacons.

Learn to build new and better communities. Even the church must evolve and grow.

Initiate genuine discussions with parishioners. Discover the barriers to full participation by the laity. Allow women to act as deacons. Confront the troubling relationship between conservative donors and the Church's position on social issues.

Mergers/closures seem not to be the answer to be concerned with first - some can be defined as Intentional Catholic communities -with relationships that are spiritual and life-giving. If only one out of 10 parishes are life giving, where can one go to see life ---ONE place may be the Newman clubs at the colleges or bring in Newman Alums to help bring life -be accepting of welcoming, new music, lay homilies. John 23rd said "Open the Windows" The church is still in the horse and buggy days -Vatican II still awaits us!

Reach out in education of young to prevent falling away.

We should get as many people as possible who are affected by these mergers/closures together for decision-making, problem-solving, & the sharing of opinions. These decisions should not be unilaterally made from the top down.

I think God is calling us to do what we are doing... to make our voices heard, listen to one another and step up to be of service.

Strangely, in the area around LA Archdiocese where I attend Mass at several church's, the pews are relatively full.

So that many more people may have access to Eucharist, a basic tenet of our faith, God is calling us to ordain married men and women priests!

Clergy must set aside its pride and protection of its power and stop "othering" women -- immediately make ordination available to women including leadership in all positions in the church, including the curia and the Vatican. The human institution, run by men, ignores and denies the humanity of half the world's population -- women. And sadly, the basis for this refusal to acknowledge women, is the result of a very human motivation -- the fear by the men in authority losing control.

God is calling us to seek out and listen to the needs of our community.

Do what you are doing with this series. Reach as many people as possible.

Priests don't need to be parish administrators or many other non-sacramental functions or offices but the restorationist push in some parishes give support to some priests' desire to have a finger on ALL parish functions, decisions and finances. In our parish it was made very clear the lay committee members

were advisors not decision makers. The final decision in all matters is Father's.

To include the people in the pews in the solution to the problem.

Listen and discern in a whole new way so that we can decide together.

Be a Church so full of God's love as to draw people back. Expand pastoral role of Deacons.

Recognize the damaging consequences of these mergers/ closures especially on poor communities. The stats we reviewed in this session should be widely distributed and talked about!

Recognize the gifts of women and of married laity to develop and lead a worshipping community that has a mission focus.

To be open and receptive of the changes that are taking place and to make known problems that you observe or experience.

Women priests.

God is calling us to let our Bishops, priests, and Pope Francis know how we think our Church can be more inclusive, more ready to listen, more outspoken on racism, more responsive to the spiritual needs of God's people, more willing to acknowledge the existence of clericalism, to share decision-making power with the laity, and to enable women to assume leadership roles in the Church.

Seek ways to provide an alternate sense of parish, advocate for married priests and women priests. (There is definitely a shortage of ordained priests.) Step up and take a more active role in the parish.

Use all who are called to priesthood after thorough testing. Let training be experiences in humanization and education in sexuality, and relating, interspersed with academics. Allow

women and men to be married priests. Very few could authentically be a healthy celibate. Discern priests as in the Early Church... good marriage partners and parents who are prayerful, healthy, grounded in giving to the community. Some few would be called to communal living and be healthy celibates. Parishes should be smaller and more intimate, rather than larger. We should have periodic listening sessions of the parishioners, so we stay in touch with the movement of the Spirit, and everyone grows in mutuality, and listening to the movement of the Spirit.

First, I believe we owe it to people who leave our parishes to contact them and to listen to why they are leaving. I have talked to dozens of people who've walked away from the Catholic Church, and I understand their concerns. I know that many women walk away because of the difficulty in getting an annulment. As one told me, "It's bad enough to be dumped by your spouse and left with hurt children, but then, to have to assume the brunt of responsibility for getting an annulment as well by a church that really should be supporting you, it's just too much." As Pope Francis has said, many people are leaving for reasons that we are capable of understanding and addressing if only we take the time to ask. Second, I believe our church needs to recognize and honor, even to the point of ordination, women and our desire to serve God. Many of us have been gifted in ways that could help the church if only we were allowed to help our church. It's not a lack of people so much as it is a lack of people who are allowed to follow God the way we are called. Third, I think our church needs to seriously look at how it is handling such things as annulments, care to the homebound, and outreach to the most vulnerable among us. We are losing many devout members who feel abandoned by the church when they most need its support. Fourth, I think our church needs to begin making a concerted effort through its preaching to form missionary disciples. I doubt whether most Catholics have ever

had the opportunity to think about what it really needs to be the body of Christ, literally and ontologically joined in reception of the Eucharist. We don't understand how to love each other let alone how to be beacons of light in our very dark world. Thank you for asking.

Listen to the people especially the young adults Everyone is responsible for their spiritual experiences.

I'm completely at a loss as to how to proceed from here. May this synodal process be a way for the Spirit to lead us to very creative new ways.

God is calling us to be creative thinkers believing there are solutions when we work together.

To stand up and be heard. Our archbishop has never been a pastor. He doesn't understand what it is like to be in a parish community of God.

Ordain woman as deacons and priests and allow men to be married and priests. Until that happens allow lay women and men to provide liturgies/communion services.

Take seriously and encourage the willingness and ability of prepared lay people, men and women.

Make a strong distinction in the role of a priest vis a vis a person who has the gift of administration. Encourage Parish Life Coordinators.

Encourage Bishop not to close parishes.

Return the church to the laity. We can run the church. We are the church. Clericalism is on the rise again in our diocese. The laity are being excluded by a reinstatement of ritual...chapel veils, men on the altar investments, music that is not inviting to a choir, incense, bells, Communion on the tongue.

Not sure.

For a start I would like to see clergy relieved of the responsibility/authority of administering a parish and put that in the hands of trained lay men and women. Let priests administer the sacraments, offer pastoral counseling if they are trained and capable but not be able to reshape a parish in their own image. And, of course, ordain ALL those called to priesthood/ deaconate: women and men, married, unmarried.

Contemplative and prayer.

I think we have to be efficient and good stewards of resources. Where parishes close, there still needs to be a presence in the community and the ability of local Catholics to attend Mass somewhere.

Change how we do things. Recognize more than clerics are called to ministry.

Allow married priests and ordain women.

Listening, creativity, hospitality, engaging the gifts and talents of the people, trained lay ministers.

I want to say forgive but I'm not there yet. All my children (7) were baptized, made first Communion, were confirmed. Two were married in a Catholic ceremony; some of the 8 grandchildren were baptized and received Communion and 1 out of 3 great grandchildren was baptized in a Congregational church. They are all good people and I love them dearly, but I can't encourage them to return to Church if I'm not going.

I think we have to work to create new communities, mixing the closed parish with the one with which it's merging. It cannot be an old parish just welcoming new people.

I'm not sure what God is calling us to do more than to step up to the plate and volunteer more. But if priests do not change their mindset and invite and allow lay and religious to do more, we will continue to merge but more so to close.

Explore ways to keep the people in a parish community connected even if their parish closes or is merged.

Communicate with each other. Have genuine dialog on the best way to resolve issues of declining participation. Be open to lay administrators. Ultimately to be open to expanding ordination to women and married men.

The Spirit is calling me to participate in these Synod Sessions. And to spread the word to all 'Catholics' that I know to participate and learn, listen and speak. It's important to participate and take back the Catholic Church--which is the PEOPLE. I'm being shown by the Ukrainian people (and Russian people) how important it is to step up and speak after hearing the calling of the Spirit. The seeds of the Future Church were planted during Vatican II. Somehow the weeds were allowed to grow, watering and fertilizing gradually stopped--and the church is dying. It isn't too late to rejuvenate our church and plant new seeds while we're tending our new Church... new 'types' of priests/leadership, diversity/inclusiveness, and justice for all.

Listen to the absolute hunger for God....and let the Spirit teach us to receive each other so as to satisfy that hunger for the Divine.

Help them keep open.

God is calling us to take advantage of this opportunity, however, unfortunate it maybe. We must work to make our parishes welcoming and loving to all who enter. People need to feel they are important. Know your parishioners. Have parish functions inviting the merged parishes to come together as one. Get to the teens Now!

Have youth groups for them. Invite and help provide opportunities for all of God's children to get to know Jesus better and develop a personal relationship with Him.

Availability of sacramental ministers and acceptance by the Catholic Church of marginal people.

Find creative ways to engage those who are disillusioned and have disengaged.

To re-create the church as it was meant to be in Acts: Small base beloved communities that live the gospel and journey together where they live, work and play. Sharing and supporting one another to fulfill their baptismal call and gifts and ministering to the needs of the people and the earth. To be creative and listen to the Holy Spirit. The church is more transactional than transformational, and the people are hungry for spiritual nourishment to open their heart and eyes to the inclusive Love of God that makes us one family and our interconnectedness to one another, the earth community and our Creator!

I think God is calling God's people to wake up. The two parishes that were closed in my city served in the inner city and addressed many of the issues that plague the larger urban community. Who is there to do that now? God has given the church all she needs in terms of leadership but the church refuses to recognize the gifts God has bestowed on the people of God. There are many lay men and women who of their own volition responded to God's call and sought and obtained education, formation, and advanced degrees. These very people would be absolutely qualified to lead a parish community. I think there is a "failure of imagination" at all levels in an institution stuck in patriarchy (even toxic patriarchy) to let the Holy Spirit breathe life into God's church to imagine a new way of being church - A new way of being church that more closely reflects the values of Jesus and the Kingdom Jesus preached rather than the spirit-slaying

hierarchy and patriarchy of the present institution.

I believe God is calling us to radically overhaul this exclusive, male-dominated, flawed and failing clericalism. This is an urgent, urgent need.

God is telling us to consider other options. Use married priests who have been educated for service to God and are willing to return to that service. Accept single and married men and women into seminaries to become educated for service to God's People. Allow more Religious Women to be responsible for the care of God's People in parishes and other intentional communities. Instead of using former members of Religious Communities to help with collections and cut grass, allow them to serve the needs of the Sick and/or elderly. If a Sacrament is needed, they can certainly make a referral. They might moderate a Bible Study or book study -- probably better than a young mother! God is calling the Clergy to LISTEN.

Vatican II needs to be embraced and implemented. Good adult education needs to be implemented for the priests and the people.

To listen to the Spirit within ALL of us by renewing the spirit of Vatican II that We Are Church. To develop a vibrant, ongoing process for participation.

We should develop more of a voice in our parishes and dioceses. Issues of this importance deserve more input from the laity, esp. since are the ones financing this parish and its activities.

I think the Spirit is moving in Small Christian Communities, Intentional Eucharistic Communities, etc. All of the ways that the Pandemic created a new open space for online faith communities and worship, similar to what FutureChurch is doing. I do not want the parishes to die out and I would love to find a parish that my family feels deeply connected

to and spiritually fed by and that becomes a key site for our life as Christian disciples, but it's not the case now. We go for mass to various places. I have taught in Catholic elementary and secondary settings and sometimes I think these places fill in the gaps where parishes are failing -- families can connect to worship, community service, etc. and many other things that parishes offer. We need married priests, women priests, sanctioned gay marriage and gay married clergy. Open the whole thing up and let the Church be totally turned upside down and transformed. The all-male celibate clergy is suffocating the life out of the Church and the parishes; it's like they have a stranglehold on the whole thing and refuse to let go of their power. Change is deeply needed.

Empowerment of laity to serve as ecclesial ministers Address clericalism and patriarchal systemic issues Closing minds thoughts and buildings will force us to focus outward!

Be creative and find out how to be Christ to One Another... If necessary, without the stamp of approval of church leadership.

We need more laity involvement, women in leadership. The Church needs to ordain women and allow married priests. Our diocese will not make it another 20 years. I am very concerned with some of the education our seminarians are getting. Have they heard of Vatican II? One young priest a couple years ago decided to preach about mortal sin...In the same sentence he described mortal sin examples as missing Mass on Sunday or killing someone. God bless you folks. Great job!

Be creative. Empower laity.

Change the present hierarchical/patriarchal (oligarchical!) model to a more inclusive one that recognizes Catholic married priests, women, and competent lay ministers of the Gospel.

Be more open and inviting to people's creative involvement in their parishes without disregarding our Catholic heritage.

Precisely because we are the People of God and graced with God's presence always among us (whether visible or hidden in myriad ways and for unknown reasons), I feel that we are called to move forward and join our voices with others and function in a broadly collaborative manner.

To gather, to listen, to be open to the work of the Spirit. To learn again, what it means to be church in 2022.

We need to realize more truly that it is the people who are the church and not the building. We need to allow for married priests and women priests. We need our leaders to learn to focus building community. communities that demand participation and empowering. Some people are very angry.

I feel we are called to have open hearts ourselves and so have authority to ask church leaders to take off blinders and approach parish planning with Open Hearts. We need our bishops to think about the human beings, the human souls affected.

I feel called to be part of a major renewal as church.

I don't know, for sure, but if we sell all we have and give to the poor and come follow Him we can't go wrong.

God is calling us to be Church and not to be told that we aren't. Home churches and self-organizing groups of worship and prayer are forming to provide what the hierarchical Church is not. The lack of integrity, of compassion and pastoral care aren't found in these intimate gatherings.

I think God is calling us to become a church that serves all people by having them come to believe that God loves us all and we are to

love all others as God loves us--basically to live according to Jesus' words, Love God above all things and love your neighbor as yourself. This is a simple message, but hard to live, so that's where the Church comes in to modeling Jesus' message how to live our lives. God may also be calling us to see that a focus on ritual and rites and when to bow one's head at Mass isn't Jesus' message. It's the Church being an institution which set up itself to be followed, rather than to lead and serve.

To speak up and express our beliefs so are communities can reflect the true nature of what Jesus wanted for his people an acceptance of all at the Eucharistic table no matter who they are or what "religion" they are. Maybe there doesn't need to be ordained ministers but laity who desire a deeper role in the holy mystery of God There are too many laws and not enough love and compassion for the people of God. There are so many who have been hurt through the years because of rules that really don't make sense and weren't even present in the early church communities. What difference does it make to say I baptize you or we baptize you?

Encourage lay leadership, women priests and married priests. Value and support the special ministries and communities of smaller churches. Follow Canon law regarding church closures!

Examine the reasons before 'hospice is called'! Involve the People of God (parishioners) in all aspects including the 'neighboring' Parishes who might WELCOME those bereft of 'their church'. Avoid abandoning the less wealthy, immigrant communities. Social Justice MUST be a factor to consider before reaching 'closure'..... Address the reasons for closing and take action to mitigate clergy then broaden the 'pool', exhaustion then hire lay Administrators and delegate to share the ministries. Seek what is desired by the people to bring life to the Parish.... sense of Community? Meaningful liturgies especially

Preaching! Sacraments are the heart and soul and must be the ultimate reason for the Parish to exist!

The Spirit is calling us to acknowledge the genuine call to priesthood of married and women priests. The Spirit calls who She wishes without the interference of those infected with Patriarchy. Our Baptism empowers us with many gifts to serve the community. They should be recognized by the hierarchy.

The leadership could recognize the value of the laity especially woman, and consider reinstating married priests, ordaining women, hiring women for pastoral roles, such as administering the parish. Sending laity, male and female, to visit the homes of parishioners finding their spiritual needs and working with them to meet these needs. This should be a paid position in every parish. How else will we know the needs of the membership? In regard to married priests, we allowed the Episcopalian married priests to join the Catholic Church, the orthodox Catholics have married priests. Why not the Roman Priests? And why not women?

We should continue to do what we are doing this evening. Making our voices heard. Need to speak truth to power.

Allow lay people (male and female) fulfill roles in running the Church and Have priest as sacramental ministers.

To not give up. Insist on the claim that every baptized person IS church. God is saying, go to the Heart of Vatican II and hear the spirit once again. Small churches CAN and ARE making their own way if allowed to do so. Restructuring the way, we do finances and what the priorities need to be addressed.

Stand with parishioners who want to keep their church open, even if they have to operate with lay administration. Allow Eucharist sharing sessions (let the priest consecrate at some central location, and let parishioners distribute it at prayer services in their 'priest-less' church).

Form resistance cells that challenge church closings/mergers/sales. Make legal challenges, involve politicians, appeal upward in the hierarchy. Make it tough for a bishop to close/merge churches/parishes. Start to hold small group services -- call them prayer services but celebrate liturgy (of the word) and share a meal (isn't that what Eucharist is -- when 2 or more are gathered in Jesus' name, doing what he did for his followers). Encourage theologians who are calling for new ways to interpret church "tradition" in line with Gospel teaching as opposed to church "history". Encourage communities to "lay hands" on leaders and commission them to lead prayer and worship.

It's necessary to realize the many lay people who are called to assist the priests with tasks they are doing in order to make them free to respond to their gift of bringing the Word of God to those they serve.

To speak up and say that full representation and participation in the functioning of the church is required. Do away with the old way of the clerical system.

Share our insights about God and who God is revealing Godself to be in a new scientific age.

I believe God is calling us to change the role of priests to include women and married couples. For example, married deacons, becoming ordained priests or enabled to participate in all the sacramental life of the church.

Retirement Center is within a parish. At this retirement center of about 700 residents, we are beginning to form listening groups (3 for starters). Pastoral care rep, women and men who attend Mass weekly, those who have been alienated and walked, women, men. We are encouraging others. Need to feel secure about the channel for reporting to Rome: FutureChurch, LCWR, Archdiocese?

I believe God is calling us to examine more closely what is going on in our Church. We

need to gently challenge our priests to grow, to read, educate themselves as to what the people of God are thinking and feeling. God is calling us to take responsibility to grow in our faith and in educating ourselves to think, listen to our conscience, to act in the ways and teaching of Jesus for whom our Church is named. We need to find spiritual nourishment in our parishes or people will go elsewhere to find it.

Be creative and find ways to keep going. My diocese didn't have any synodal process that allowed me to participate so that is why I am attending this series with Future Church. Thanks for giving me the opportunity! There is also a new church coming up in my community with Roman Catholic Women Priests and I have been attending this community. They are also providing a synodal process during Lent and I am participating in that. I want to participate and help to bring about the kingdom of God in the Catholic church which has given me so much over my 66 years of living. This has been a great beginning format. I learned A LOT from Christine and now I realize that while it is important for my voice to be heard, it is equally important for me to listen to others and hear their voices too. So, thanks again and I look forward to the next session!!!

We are called to be creative and to develop true servant leadership. The priests have to be open and relational and have to become encouragers of people. The church has to be everyone's Church no one where the priest is "in charge". We are the Church!!

God is calling the laity forth with their differing gifts. God is calling forth different leaders and leadership styles. Laity find it difficult because the structure is hierarchical. Some type of formation is needed for this. The Spirit is speaking allow my people to be empowered to lead...men and women equally.

Learn about the "why" of the closures, listen, challenge in an acceptable way the decision and who made it. Speaking with those who are

also disturbed and pooling our ideas, resources. We also need to listen for input from the Spirit. And to be aware of not condemnation of their actions, not become an enemy.

Band together. Speak out. Not be afraid to express our vision. Believe that no one is on a pedestal. Understand what pastoral service can be about. Accept greater responsibility as the People of God, the Lay and Anointed Apostolate. Insist on a format to have a place in the making of parish and diocesan decision making. Look outside of ourselves with a sense of enlarging vision to care for the poor.

Listen to the Holy Spirit and be not afraid to attend a parish or perhaps another denomination where you “are fed” or even establish or return to “House Churches” that were popular in the 1970’s.

It is time to emerge creatively ready to reform Church as Body of Christ. For this to happen the power structure as it has been has to die, not merely transform. Gospel values need to be the basis of decision making. the Holy Spirit’s energy needs to be respected so the gifts of the laity can help the Church unify. Also, Church is broader than Roman Catholic. All Christian people are needing to come together under our Shepherd, Jesus Christ. There needs to be a pastoral Church.

To share faith, to seek auto understand reality at deeper levels - using science, evaluating politics, opting for the poor, reading scripture, coming together to celebrate. To start in small groups and then reach out to other groups . . .to share faith, to serve needs, to celebrate.

Reimagine church, sacrament, justice, priesthood. Open up the breadth of Vatican II and beyond.

Democratize pauses and distribute leadership along the laity to creatively discern the diverse ways the Spirit is calling us to reinvigorate these spaces.

Re-think the call to priesthood and differentiate administration and pastoral care. The priest does not need to be the administrator. Look at the possibility of strengthening the diaconate with women being called to this service. Is it time to open the doors to a large group of priests already serving as RCWP?

Stand strong for the values of church that serves the poor, serves its congregation. Trust that the power of the Holy Spirit will work to make the hierarchy more open (the train has left the station, if they haven’t noticed). Pray for the full and complete conversion of key bishops who will be touched by the Holy Spirit and respond to her powerful promptings.

Find a way to feed our souls despite misguided leadership, particularly Bishops who show little comprehension of the teachings of Christ. I was in a breakout group with 3 others. 2 out of 4 worship in Intentional Communities because they find a meaningful liturgical experience there. Would like to have access to the Eucharist more often. A 3rd person, me, has worships in an Intentional Community when visiting my son, as the Diocese he lives in has lost all sense of the teachings of Vatican II. The 4th person was aware of such communities but had no personal need so no personal experience. Is this our future? Perhaps God is calling us to return to the model of the early Church.

There is a need to move clericalism. It is interesting that # of Catholics have increased and clergy has not. God is calling us to have a more inclusive role of its members. Lay ministers should be given more authority, married clergy, women.

To have the courage to speak the truth and to be welcoming to all.

We need to accept change and get back to the basics the Church was founded on. Jesus was Love and we need to show that to all.

Help members find communities of faith where they feel at home, accepted, and their gifts valued as equal contributors to the community.

To participate in discussions, attempt to find solutions - together, be open to options, listen to each other.

Be creative in finding ways to meet the people's needs.

Use the laity to fill in the gaps that will emerge as parishes merge.

Use our imaginations! Respond to very real issues with compassion and a true collaborative spirit, instead of an authoritative one. God is asking for flexibility instead of rigidity/open minds and hearts!

God is calling us to be more sensitive to community members and not simply look at leadership in the church. What is a pastor without his sheep? The church grows when all share their gifts and contribute to its life. Hopefully the Bishops will truly listen to those who share their views through the Synods and allow decisions to be made that will enhance the life of parishes throughout the world.

Need to trust that non-ordained men and women can minister to communities. There needs to be real conversations when closings are needed and not pronouncements from on high. If priests are brought from other cultures, are they helped to recognize and accept different expectations and values among those they will minister to.

To continue to work with each other to keep our parishes vibrant and active. To reach out to those who have left. To call women and married men to the priesthood and all ministries. On the diocesan level, to be more Christian - to serve the people, not focus so much on legality and money and power, to find ways to minister in spite of the legalities and obstacles.

Make the courageous decisions to recognize married priests, highly qualified woman who see ordination as their calling and to recognize the wellspring of benefits to a parish to welcome the LGBTQ2 communities: We are all God's children.

Open priesthood to women and married. This would increase the pool of candidates by 5-fold at least. We could be more selective about which ones get ordained. Having clergy that "look like them" and they can relate to would attract more people to the church and they would be better served by the church.

I love my church, even though it has hurt me, and it pains me that my church is dying, and I want to help resurrect it into something new and better.

Be inclusive, bring life and love and compassion to any new or merged parish. Seek out church communities that make God real.

The People of God need to be included more in decisions and given more responsibility in our parishes.

Speak out and listen to each other and to God.

It is very important that the needs of wealthy parishes not be placed ahead of the needs of parishes in marginalized, lower income and/or immigrant communities. Restitution needs to be made financially for clergy sex abuse and residential school atrocities, but not at the hands of people of faith close to grassroots communities of faith. If the institutional Church keeps its heart open to the people of God and the calls of the Holy Spirit, the Church is being invited to a more open and inclusive calling to the priesthood, diaconate etc. beyond exclusively one gender and celibacy. Before building new churches in wealthier neighborhoods, are we remaining connected to all of our grassroots communities of faith in an inclusive way?

To speak up to listen to all sides act on the most useful and helpful.

Deeply listen to each other, to be welcoming and to live the discipleship we have been called too.

Listen to the spirit and be open to the movement to form community like future church.

I don't know. How will the church find a way of recreating enthusiasm? In many parishes of the Northeast, I don't think most bishops or priests have a clue. I go to whatever group I find nourishing and that is less and less often the parish church.

I believe God has called many, many people to the priesthood and the Catholic hierarchy are and have closed their ears and minds.

To be faithful to our baptismal commitment - to be courageous and prophetic and not complacent but celebrate that we, too, are a priestly people.

God is encouraging the faithful to be creative and savvy in navigating the layers in the Church.

Ordain women, recruit, train & empower ministers of the sacraments. We need women in priestly roles, especially since enough men are not coming forward. Our Church is not living Christ's message of love and all being created in God's image. His image is not a physical one, don't need male parts to carry on God's love and ministry.

Consider involving women who are qualified to preside at Eucharistic Celebrations and to organize parishes. Also, involve priests as celebrants and pastors who have left and are perhaps married.

Give voice to our concerns/needs; act not only speak -- but actions also often speak louder than words.

Listen to the young people Share the power with all Be kind to yourself and all.

God is calling us to reflect on the reasons for closures and develop suggestions for addressing those reasons.

Actively work with the bishops - fight them, if necessary, all the way to the Vatican - to keep our parishes as vibrant faith communities to serve the people of God - continue to work for an inclusive ministry.

It is time to include women and married men into the priesthood. LISTEN to the lay people. They have many gifts! Welcome everyone and stop putting up barriers to exclude people. We have become an UN-welcoming church.

Help lay voices to be heard. Educate people in the pews not to be passive consumers but to hold leaders to live the teachings of Vatican II.

find and form community independent of the clerical leaders. Challenge the clericalism and model a new form of church. E.g., At one of synod prep meetings people expected the bishop to lead with prayer, we changed that to a lay person. Small action but we need to model something different.

Open our hearts to be sure that these closings do not just happen in underprivileged parishes. Speak out to our pastors about our concerns.... shortage of priests, monies being spent on abuse cases in the diocese, inspiring homilies and music to better appreciate the Eucharist, the community of going to church each Sunday, the reasons that women (especially religious) can't participate more in the church service, the reasons that men can't marry to encourage so many young men to serve as priests. We can't seem to talk to our pastors

about these things. And certainly not our bishops. WE are all the church.

Parishioners need to know the meaning of Church as a community.

Recognize the gifts of all the people of God, regardless of gender, marital status, race. Allow the gifts of the Baptized to flourish. End clericalism and patriarchy and rewrite canon law to include all the faithful as stakeholders in the church.

LISTEN and RESPOND TO every voice in the church. Create relationships / deepen the vertical and horizontal experiences of God (private devotion / communal sharing (spiritual/outreach/justice and peace).

Jesus included everyone. We need to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

Part of it might be that God is telling us to get out of the Church building and reach out to live the Gospel among our sisters and brothers who need us. Also, God might be saying that there is not a shortage of ministers. Women, former priest who are married, other married men are being called to minister and being turned away by the Church as it is. God might be saying that Bishops need to learn to listen to the faithful and to the Spirit.

Be the PEOPLE of God and push the church in the direction the Spirit is moving!?

The church belongs to the people, not the male power structure. I would love to see parishes evolve into “beloved communities” where there is equal participation and no top-down rule.

Find ways to make our voices heard. Merged parishes need to work hard at being welcoming to one another. Bishops need to do more than announce a closing and step away. They should be part of the effort to create the community anew.

To be inclusive on all levels, women and men can be ordained, but even those who are not an are able, can be leaders of the Word and Eucharist.

Remain committed to the ideal of worshipping and acting in community. Remain open to the Spirit who may be planting seeds for a new structure. Pray and do not get discouraged while remaining in relation to God and the people of God.

Recognize God is still calling people to ministry. We need to have women give the homilies and be recognized as leaders in a community. We don't need mega Churches. How can there be a sense of community in large groups.

Listen. Be willing to have an open mind - to change, to transform Have our voices heard - take the risk to speak out as well as encourage other people to speak up.

Formation for lay ministers; Lay ministers allowing for the priest to preside at the Eucharist De-clericalize the church Teach an ecclesiology that is in keeping with synodality.

Encourage intentional communities to gather to meet the variety of spiritual needs.

We have the opportunity now to listen for the voice of God through the thoughts, wishes, and prayers of the parishioners. I hope that these voices will lead us to parishes more focused on justice than dogma.

Small group sharing that are life giving. Build on what is working. Preaching and shared dialogue. Lectio Divina.

I know I'm being called to speak the Truth. So, I can apply this to our meeting in that we must speak the Truth to this clerical unjust exclusive power.

Encourage parishioners to speak up for themselves and share their gifts. Don't let the diocese rule their potential as parish communities.

Be good listeners, clergy and laity have to be acting as equals, be authentic, be willing to say we are wrong and have made mistakes.

Be respectful and loving and be of service to one another.

Form smaller faith communities which foster sharing and mutual support. They might worship together in the church but also need the smaller groups to meet their needs for support.

Open ordination to all those called to it by God and the People of God.

We need courage to speak up and hold on to this place of gathering and community, i.e., know that we are Church and that this space is ours.

Allow the church members access to the gift of Eucharistic celebration without the requirement of celibacy and gender. Peter would not have qualified as a priest. Much less a "Pope".

We need to be rid of clericalism in all its manifestations! We need to walk with each other, realizing the "priesthood of the people." And we need to walk together out into the world, meet people where they are—stop putting regulations and rules ahead of human beings.

Introduce reforms, be more inclusive, allow both genders to enter priesthood as well as married priests. Then the church may be in a position to attract and keep young families to be part of a church community. Only when the fallen away are welcomed back can we evangelize with the Spirit Jesus left to us.

If it happens, then we must seek a way to join together in Eucharist and community because we are all under one God and must seek the Holy Spirit's guidance to discover our unique gifts to bring to this merged Catholic community

I'm listening... allowing married priests and women to serve in the capacity that has always been exclusively saved for priests.

Open wide the doors--we are being called to cultural diversity, acceptance and enrichment like never before--neighbors are now a diverse family and tolerance is key.

Convince bishops of the need to be more creative in holding viable communities together. Use trained lay pastoral ministers for greater leadership for example. Reform the seminaries so that new priests are more comfortable working with lay leaders.

Rise up and speak out.

Implement a new understanding of our loving God. Encourage lay leadership. Prioritize social justice issues... strive for peace.

Allow lay ministers, deacons, and women religious take on celebratory roles, allow priests to marry

Be open to all whom the Spirit is calling to priesthood Move from a hierarchical to a more creative vision of what it means to be church/parish Pope Francis.

assert our priestly, kingly and prophetic gifts in the Church, come together as a group, organization to have a voice, never give up develop more lay leaders who can do pastoral work, organize and support one another, let lay people go into theology studies to equip them.

New forms of church. Maintaining costly buildings can be sinful, when people are homeless. Excluding women is sinful. We

need to focus on people, and their gifts -- and create new communities not rooted in sin and exclusion.

Realize the importance of full participation by all. Inclusive, diverse. All are part of the Church. The people of God are the Church. Buildings are not the Church. Clericalism must be faced and dealt with in order for the People of God to flourish.

Realize the Church is the people not the buildings.

Reevaluate the clergy role in the life of a parish.

Continue to work for the broadening of church leadership among all qualified lay persons.

Communicate, pray together for the Spirit to be part of this process, listen to each other, share with the clergy and learn their views and possibly being able to talk differences out.

To question the reason for the mergers/ closures.

Re-evaluate our mission, how we set about accomplishing that mission. Become more inclusive and forward thinking.

Open ordination to women and married persons. It is the work of the Spirit which we are denying and overlooking!

Stay strong and find a new parish.

Be there for each other. Pray for the leadership to not only allow but welcome those who are called to the priesthood, whether men or women, married or not. We are missing their voices and their presence in our communities of faith.

Re-define communities as church (Matt 18:20).

Put the pastoral care of the community first. Be transparent about the reason behind closures. We are then called to make a plan to support those that are left behind.

“Make generous assumptions” Inclusive Women in leadership roles in the church needed Not just opening a window but opening the door!

Out of the box thinking, openness to expanding who can be a priest.

There is a need to listen to the people in the affected parish and not making any decisions on closures or mergers without consulting them.

Ordain women.

See the Church as part of society - how can we use the resources of the closed parishes to serve the community - rather than just enriching the Diocese.

With or without closures, the call is to walk with one another without regard to hierarchy, welcoming the gifts of all members of the community, in service to our communities and our world.

Listen to each other and to the Holy Spirit. Think of Church in a different way.

Insist to be heard.

Make our voices heard.

Invite married men and women to ordination.

Work together with the Spirit of Wisdom and each other to reform the patriarchal clerical hold on the people of God and open the doors and windows (John the XXIII) of the global, universal Church to embrace and live the message of Christ. A synodal Church also needs to support the work of inclusion of all (LGBTQ+, women, etc.) and REALLY bring

the God of Love to all (in DEED not just in word and SOONER THAN LATER)!!

There are plenty of people who feel called to be priests, including laicized men, married men, men who have become Episcopal priests so they could marry, and women.” Twenty-three years ago, my aunt told me that she was in a parish group praying for more vocations to the priesthood. I said that maybe God was using the shortage of priests to open people’s minds to new ways of celebrating the Eucharist. She disagreed.

Continue to search out and speak our truth and witness authentically to the Gospel. Form small, inclusive Christian communities of faith, share the Eucharist among us, continue to share the Gospel and reach out to those in need.

To be more creative. To build TRUST with young people who are the future. To meet folk where they are “at” and offer the spiritual nourishment and support that our church has to offer. (As noted above perhaps House church) Support young artists and social justice advocates. Some examples I think are in process right now: Network, Ignatian Spirituality and Yoga movement, FutureChurch itself, Black Lives Matter, Dance for Parkinson’s and many small Zoom communities across the world. Technology IS going to affect the worship of the future calling forth the priesthood of everyone in the church We are sent out into the world as was Jesus to intermingle. I heard a quote that has stayed with me from the 50”s that Sunday in America is the most segregated day of the week “ We are being called to intermingle, for ALL are welcome at the table. God is calling us to welcome one another and learn from one another so that we can share Eucharist together in whatever form “parishes’ of the future will be.

Here is a list: Full inclusion of women (ordination), allowance of/ for the marriage

of a priest to not serve as disqualification to serve priestly duties, re-education of priests and hierarchy whose training and or attitudes have brought them to a Eurocentric, Patriarchal and/ or “career-advancing” frame of view. Jesus modeled and encouraged Community, Eucharist, compassionate service, and forgiveness among/ for his followers. Everything else is borrowed from (en) trapping(s) of other “worldly cultures.

I do think it’s important to push for an openness to a more inclusive priesthood and leadership.

God is calling on us to make our churches more inclusive and relevant to the needs of our individual communities. In our Diocese we have been given little guidance in participating in the synodal process, but I and several others feel called to stay within the church to be the change we seek.

The formation of groups - locally (study groups, prayer groups, etc.) nationally (Future Church, LCWR, Network, etc.) is evidence of the Spirit moving among us.

God is calling us to create a new church in many ways so as to meet the needs of people, not the needs of an institutional church that refuses to be open to people’s needs.

Be inclusive! Our pastorate welcomes lbgtq+, African Americans, and immigrants. Members work on anti-racism, cross cultural and green committees.

Speak out. Be courageous. Listen to the Spirit within and act with hope.

Call for Pope Francis to answer the question—how we can journey together if women must follow their brothers rather than walk side by side as equals.

To risk thinking and imaging what it means to be a sacramental church, and to courageously

do what is necessary to promote community and belonging in Jesus. A big question is, will all these voices be heard and taken seriously?

Do your homework, understand why they are necessary, and protest if appropriate.

God is calling us through the Holy Spirit to walk together as one in unison. Mainly to speak up in what we believe.

For the laity to speak clearly to the bishops that all the people in the church are part of the body of Christ and that it is important that we see the Christ in us all. We all are the church, not just the institution.

To find other ways to be church.

Pray for discernment.

I believe that the Spirit is calling the laity to assume leadership, to claim their rights as the Body of Christ to be Church. There are many gifts that are not being used because we are not open to all that the Spirit is saying.

See where we can be of help to all- read and study.

To reach out and connect Book, Sharing the wisdom of time with Pope Francis inspiring resource. Possibility of smaller communities led by lay people of faith as stated by Sr Christine in Canon 517. Food for thought and prayer.

Be more welcoming and nonjudgmental. We need to be an inclusive church not an elitist, exclusionary one. The laity needs to be taking much more of a leadership role. Listening rather than condemnation and polarization is called for at this time. Also, much more engagement in Catholic social teaching needs to occur.

Reach out to people in the margins where they are. LISTEN. Listen to EVERYONE. Perhaps

God is calling us to re-imagine church - to open a window... maybe to leave the building and discover the true essence of Eucharist and Community. Find others who are socially aware and working for change.

Form small communities.... invite sisters and brothers to our homes to break bread/ scripture/art/literature/music...to be Eucharist for one another....to support and love be a Christ Mary which IS Our Presence to others.... Hybrid (Eucharistic) gatherings....in person and Zoom especially important for those who cannot drive or perhaps have disabilities/ challenges. Recognize the church of the future will be led by young people. Ask and listen to their needs, wants, questions.... how can they be served spiritually emotionally? What is their vision?

Review and, if needed, make revisions to entire concept and formation of dioceses. God calls us to be informed, engaged, non- judgmental/ open minded and most of all kind, loving, and reach out to the disenfranchised with open minds and hearts. Forgo the old system of parish councils and create a livelier, more biblical based system.

The Spirit is inviting us to listen and act - not necessarily as the priests and bishops want - but as the people of God are also discerning. A priest once told me that when he trains other priests, he tells them to listen to the people - but then do what you want. This seems to be a prevalent attitude.

As a religious I try to be available to those around me and provide spiritual nourishment in many areas. For me Church is people not structures. I could write a thesis on.

Redefine the meaning of church. It is NOT THE BUILDING but rather community. Eucharist is experienced as we share community with one another. Completely revamp the meaning of parish. Won't see in my

lifetime but we need to build what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

I think we are moving toward small faith-based communities such as the “house church” model. This model will focus more on Scripture as our guiding force, a universal understanding of priesthood that goes beyond the limits of being ordained and communities that are moved to the margins to serve the marginalized and to be prophetic witnesses. We, the people, are the Church and we are Eucharist for each other.

To unite as a family in listening plus utilizing the many talents of laypeople in keeping the faith alive. Why not married clergy? This is a major reason for the fallout among potential priests as well as allowing women a much greater role. When did the Church become ruled by hierarchy only?

Listen to the Spirit in the people...ALL the people.

Establish and expanded theology of priesthood. By our very baptism we are called to priesthood.

Practice Vatican II changes instead of pre-Vatican practices. Not only Open the window, open all the windows. Instead of Don't do, Let's do.

Add women (& other lay leaders) at every level. We are spirit filled and eager to serve.

Work together (laity, priests, bishops) to discern the best steps -- rather than having them imposed on parishes * Reverence the community spirit and social justice and social service of parishes when discerning merges/closings and pastor assignments.

To change the church from the seduction of current capitalism model of management and finance to being an inclusive church with all having responsibilities and authority in a

transparent fashion working from the margin of society.

Be open to other ways of being community. Be open to other people's gifts talents and skills to minister to all. Jesus didn't ordain anyone, and he celebrated community everywhere. Eucharist is not a church building but people in community wherever they are. Jesus didn't ordain anyone, He said come follow me and when they were ready, he sent them out to spread the good news.

Stand up to the bishops and tell them that we are the Church, and we demand an equal voice in leadership and decision making.

In our discussion group we heard of many women forming groups to worship or study, these groups often include lay men and are sometimes sanctioned by the priest or sometimes not., we continue to worship on Sundays at the local church but the experience there is colder and less welcoming; our peripheral groups allow us to form feminine centered study, support and worship. Vibrant communities of faith are giving hope and bringing life to people saddened by church closings and the masculine models of church leadership; and will hopefully continue to form and grow and support the disaffected or hurting faithful. But we see the threat of growing conservatism, the young men called to the priesthood seem often very conservative and traditional.

Be guided by the Holy Spirit, step out in Faith, be Eucharistic, don't give up. be a part of Community.

Stand up. Speak up. Encourage and support our pastoral, real priests. Work with other likeminded parishioners.

Organize “small faith communities” within parishes to become advocates with the bishop and priests to find ways to re-energize the

communities so that they will again become vital elements in the Body of Christ.

Use our baptismal credentials to go forth and do what Christ taught us. We can become living Eucharist to others. Perhaps this is what God is asking. Also push for women, married men and others to become ordained. Also lay community Liturgy of the Word can become the standard as I've seen in some parishes - for over 20 years now. Let the lay baptized take their place and let us do it without the input of the clergy if necessary.

Ordain women deacons and priests. Allow priests to marry and ordain married men. Ordain married LGBTQ men and women. Have a Synod on Sexuality to consider birth control, abortion choice, gay marriage, pre-marital sex, etc. -- or at least change the Church's position to allow these things. If Church positions made more sense, young people might stay and fill the churches. We need input from lay people, not just priests. We do not need to be punished in some way if we think differently. (Thank you for your work with the Synod.)

Pope Francis and the Curia have got to listen to the needs of people (as happened in Latin America) and get with the ideas of married priests, female priest, allow married priests to return.

We are formed in community. All of the members of my small group spoke of how important this was-but the communities that we (not so young people) are in are not traditional parishes. We are called push for opportunities to build across traditional lines.

Realize that income and status is not what we should be rewarding, that there is a far deeper mission to which we need to align ourselves. Jesus is an excellent exemplar of such a mission.

Formation of small faith communities within a new parish or from a closed parish to meet the spiritual needs of those who feel the loss of "church."

Actively listen, don't lose hope, and keep praying the Holy Spirit connects us with those willing to stay rooted and upstanding in our call from Jesus, to be a faith community, the Body of Christ.

Lay people need to speak-up to their church leaders. We can no longer be intimidated.

God is, through every means available to God... through people and creation, calling us to be inclusive....to realize we are all connected and dependent on one another. We cannot survive if we continue on this exclusionary path.

I believe we have to TRY, again and again, to hold the bishops responsible and accountable. I'd like to participate in my parish synod WHEN IT BEGINS and ask the bishop pointed questions. also, putting questions and requests via the media e.g., Facebook is an option. My fear is that we may be too late to revive our people's interest...that they may no longer believe in parishes being important. And I feel angered that there will be a Eucharistic meeting of bishops planned for June before even hearing from the people of God via the synod...as if what the people feel and believe is inconsequential.

Look to the Holy Spirit and hopefully be transformed. Perhaps we need to go back to intentional home church communities. Let ALL live their Baptismal blessings as they are moved to do so.

I believe God is calling lay people to take up roles of leadership within the Church. Lay people can keep parishes open and vibrant. If the church refuses to open ordination beyond male celibates, then we must find a way to empower lay people to carry out those roles. We need the Eucharist to feed each other so

that we can carry out the work of the Gospel everywhere.

To form new ways to be church.

Ordain married and women.

Dialogue and listening.

Enable spiritually mature lay people, ordain women, ordain married men, make celibacy optional.

To come together to look realistically at the current situation, to listen to the Spirit in the heart of everyone, to walk boldly into the future not allowing past/current structures to block the work of the Spirit.

Listen to the people of God and make use of their talents. Allow priests who have left to lead services even if married.

Unless a cleric no guarantee of Eucharist beyond the Word.

God is calling us to pray and be open to change. This is an opportunity to be more inclusive and celebrate the gifts of all people, not just a chosen few. As people of faith, we are called to “call out” injustice and work towards inclusion for all.

Support communities and individuals who advocate for ordination of women and married men.

Be sensitive to the people left behind and disenfranchised and find ways to minister to the with committed laity.

God loves diversity! Be open to a myriad of expressions and ways of “being Church.” Be curious about the “new” that God is doing among us all at this moment in history.

To look at church in a new way of sharing and growing together. Sometimes it may

need a second look at closing longstanding parishes and what they can offer to the larger community and their parishioners.

He is calling upon the laity to take more active rolls in their parishes, and I believe we would, if we had more acceptance by our clergy--both priests & bishops.

Clarify the needs of the community and respond accordingly. Truly listen to the parishioners.

Find alternative ways for spiritual nourishment - seek others, invite others - where are you being fed? Also see this as a time of “adventure”, opportunity and a chance to have your voice and lived experience of Church to be heard and shared via the Synod. Perhaps a time to engage with people who have left the Church - if each of us would reach out to them with compassion and ask them to share their experience and how the Church could better respond to them...BE Church to them, welcoming, loving, companionship on their journey - whether they return to the “pews” or not.

Listen. Be open. Be willing to do whatever we can for people who have been so hurt by being “locked out” of their communities. To support the causes of outreach to the poor and other social justice efforts that suffered or closed when parishes were closed.

Listen to and include the people who will be affected by the decisions in the decision-making process.

Be gospel people move from materialism into the creation of God inclusion of all creation and all people. Move from the cooling hierarchical non gospel church structure grow into life giving away from death.

To reiterate that the priest shortage is manufactured: plenty of people are called to the priesthood but summarily told their

vocation isn't valid due to their sex. Also, while priests in religious orders should remain celibate, diocesan priests could be married.

Listen to the people. Listen to the Spirit. Invite! Find ways to keep churches open. Ordain women. Be more creative.

Increase in lay leadership. Challenge clericalism in all its forms.

Bishops' willingness to dialogue with laypeople bishops' openness to thoughts/concerns of laypeople inclusivity.

Involve more laity in their sacred roles.

Speak up and be leaders of change.

Bring the feminine side back to the church.

Small faith communities. Many are experiencing new pastors shutting down all activities, especially social justice groups, changing soul of parish. HIS parish, not OUR parish.

Move to a smaller non-Eucharistic form of gathering?

Keep communicating about how to rebuild an authentic community of worship and serving others in need.

Allow more involvement in parishes and dioceses by lay men and women including opening the diaconate to women.

Examine the structure the Church has traditionally used and modify it to meet the needs of people.

Be people of hope and seek community that answers the needs of our spirits.

Break up the large parishes into smaller more invitational places.

OUR STORIES

Session II

The Future of the Priesthood

- Q1. Thinking about your own experience, what qualities are important in a priest? 1
- Q2. Many Catholics, including the Pope, have been fierce critics of the clericalism with its abuses of power and sexual abuse and crimes against children and vulnerable adults. Please share your response regarding clericalism. 48
- Q3. How do you envision lay and ordained working together? What could help make lay-ordained partnerships work better? 118
- Q4. Please add any other comments you may have regarding the future of the priesthood in the Catholic Church. 127

Q. Thinking of your own experience, what qualities are important in a priest? Pastoral qualities (compassion, listening, respect, etc.)

Pastoral capabilities; honesty and self-awareness; compassion; a deep understanding of the teachings of Jesus- spirit of the law vs. Letter of the law; understanding of what it is like to be a layperson living in the real world.

Compassion, empathy, seeing the real need of the people and not always follow the party line.

Compassionate, humble, aware of social justice

Compassion and respect for others, generosity of time and talent.

They must espouse to the Vatican II documents; accept all people, administer to the faithful in a human, caring, personal way.

Empathy

Clergy should be clergy. Not administrator. The head of my local parish actually has the title Parochial Administrator. Get an MBA to run the parish plant and staff. That person does not need to have the background in pastoral care; the pastoral team needs empathy and knowledge of church history and ritual. The person hiring a gardener does not need it.

Pastoral Companion

Being pastoral and understanding of various situations with flexibility and faithfulness to the gospel.

Pastor received pushback from conservative parishioners and listened to them and erased our efforts addressing social justice.

A pastoral person who is committed to social justice and environmental causes. Someone who listens and empowers others.

Spiritual, Compassionate.

Open to listen and reflect.

Compassion. Listening. No retribution to those who want change.

Priest called and reamed out my husband for his responses at a meeting. Sure, his attitude may have turned people off, but the priest did not deal with this in a pastoral way. My husband quit going to church.

Able to listen, pastoral, flexible, prayerful, funny.

Able to listen and identify with all, LGBT, etc.

Compassion and love of Christ.

Relational skills which I'm not sure are even taught in seminary. Maybe there should be various concentrations within seminary (Managerial Business, Pastoral Care, Liturgy, etc.)

The bishops are just authoritarian! Time to be pastoral!!

Time to get of the sense of obedience to the bishop!! They are VERY human as we have seen through the abuse crisis. They don't always have the best interest of the Body of Christ at heart. Some are just too Escobedo in civil politics!!

Love of the people who are being served; love of God seen in Jesus; care for issues that are before us; effective homilies that relate to real life and do not merely express bland platitudes.

Pastoral heart, listening skills, healthy sense of self, comfortable with own sexuality and able to work well with people different gender.

Health sense of self, psychological help for priests who are themselves wounded or have an unhealthy sense of their own sexuality, lay people who are able to meet priests as equals allowing the foibles of humanity, cooperation based on different gifts of the spirit regardless of ordination. A new definition of ordination to include consecration as a sacrament equal to ordination elevating nuns and religious men and women to equal status in the church with ordained priests.

Like the trinity be relational, spirit filled, pastoral and full of love. For administrative tasks get a business manager.

Non-judgmental, loving, willingness to share ministries and listen to the people.

Welcoming spirit, Prayerful, Courageous, Willing to Listen, Open to all cultures, Skilled at saying "No" without closing doors or hearts.

Pastoral, listening, compassionate, able to work with others in a communal fashion.

A parish where the talents and knowledge of members is encouraged, especially on issues that effect the well-being of members and participation in issues like racial inclusion, care for creation.

Pastoral - human - compassionate - believer in Jesus.

I like the model when a lay person can administer the parish, lay persons take on many other responsibilities and the priest is a pastoral presence.

Respects that we are all equal in God's eye. Is spiritual. Is kind and caring. Gives administrative duties to someone else in parish.

Not being willing to listen to suggestions, not accepting that we might have something

valuable to offer, rather than what they are looking for.

An overhaul of seminary formation badly needed. More study on human formation. Much more experience of studying, listening to lay persons needed, working with them as equals. Better opportunities for priests to receive feedback from those around them.

Compassion. Listening. Prayerfulness. Honesty.

Priests need preparation to be able to accept lay People as equals. Abolish seminaries. Let priests rise-up from the community because they have the gifts of reflection, compassion and service.

Empathy, humility, compassion, generosity of spirit, kindness...love of God and all humanity.

Pastoral, open minded that there are other non-ordained voices whose gifts are also important.

A priest is called to listen, to shepherd, to gather, to pray, to be a healing presence WITH the community.

Dr. Mercedes Iannone and her priest friends initiated and sustained the Institute of Pastoral Ministries which grew community leaders to address the HIV-AIDS epidemic, forced migration, natural disasters, and so many pastoral needs. Mercedes was the best of the best priest, although without the title.

Compassion, pastoral gifts, preaching gifts, leadership gifts, and not promoting a particular agenda but being mindful of the diversity of our people.

Deep spirituality him/herself - #1. Compassion. Deep understanding of theology/scripture.

I am not sure what is meant by "clericalism." I am taking that to mean that a priest cares more about administrative issues than spiritual. If

that is what is meant by clericalism, then by all means it needs to be dispensed with. I feel like too many of today's priests care more about "getting promoted" than being shepherds to the flock.

Pastoral approach, exegetical expertise, inclusivity, humility, availability, ability to foster community, welcoming attitude, downward mobility, non-possessiveness.

A listener, compassionate, honesty, respectful, caring, sensitive, open hearted.

A greater sharing in working with people closely and with sensitivity and compassion... an equal playing field of mature, caring adults sharing community with equal power and authority.

Holiness, humility, empathy, courage.

Pastoral, comfort with sharing management of parish, well trained.

We need to move away from clericalism. The Church must facilitate the ordination of women who are called to priesthood - not to do so is a sin against the Holy Spirit. Enforced celibacy is a crime against humanity. All God's children are created to love and to be loved - its in the very first book of the bible!

Compassionate, understanding, open to exceptions, one who can draw community together, one who encourages social justice (action and not just talk).

Lay ministers were able to pick up much of the administrative aspects of parish life, leaving the priest to be pastorally oriented....but also allowing the laity to work with him pastorally, sharing that role.

Openness, compassionate, a member of a circular church- able to welcome and delegate.

Selfless/generous/in love with God/compassionate/on fire for ministry.

Listening to each other and having difficult conversations with respect, remembering we are all part of the community. Just faith has a program that is called "Having Difficult Conversations" that I completed yesterday--a resource for the lay and ordained.

A deep and sincere love of God, the earth, and every living thing on the earth, compassion, good judgement, listening skills, openness, inclusivity, ability to oversee the action of others without micromanaging or judging, financial skills or a willingness to depend on those who do have them, the ability to network and get along with others of all faiths.

Giving lay ministers credit and respect for what they know and do. Not mistaking academic knowledge for human knowledge.

Pastoral, empathetic, wise

That they care about me and all their parishioners. That they "smell like their flock." That they represent Jesus without any kind of holier than thou presence.

If lay people feel needed, if their ideas are listened to and considered it would help a lot. If ordained people would take the time to listen and to dialogue with their lay people we'd have a better relationship that would make us better partners.

Being a good shepherd. Caring about the people more than the position, preaching centered upon building the kin-dom of God. Inclusivity and welcoming of all people and affirming their dignity.

I worked in the early implementation with a pastor who truly cared, listened and empowered my leadership.

Formation and training should be integrated. Stop putting young men in a seminary on a pedestal. Let them learn in a parish community setting. Theology, etc., should be in an integrated program. Teach them listening skills! Stop having priest formation directors who emphasize how special they are. Look to parishes to help discern who has qualities of leadership, a prayerful spirit, and an ability to listen and discern to the Holy Spirit, especially as the Spirit emanates from the laity.

The priest is directing us not serving the community not listening.

Listen and not be authoritative.

Be compassionate and understanding of their parishioners.

Priests should have open minds and truly LISTEN to we the people of the church.

Compassion, vision, humor, grace, seeking wisdom, humility, generosity, good with people, and ideally a love of donuts.

Understanding, kindness, ability to listen, preaching the words of Jesus not asking for money in homily.

Refusal to listen to congregations' needs... people left the church & joined the Episcopal Church.

Compassion, living and acting with the mind and heart of Jesus.

Hometown priest doing a start-up for community struggling. Jumping in as a partner to organize and rally support and help for the community. Meeting the people where they are, going to their homes and listening and being there to support and help in any way he could.

Being more fully human and not being afraid to talk about what is really happening in people's lives. Being open to walking beside the lay-

ordained and providing opportunities to be Christ.

Compassion, Gospel centered, ability to listen, ability to express clearly through preaching the Gospel message.

Gospel Living, Pastoral, Compassionate, Patient, Engaged in the community where the parish resides, open to encouraging formation and education of all people, faithful, sense of humor, able to balance self-care with care of a parish, able to share ministry with qualified staff, humility.

Many deacons seem to enjoy the "pomp and circumstance" of their positions more than following the biblical call to care for the "widows and orphans". Many of them are arrogant and out of touch with pastoral ministry and their role in supporting the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. Recently while attending Mass, during COVID a priest consecrated two cups, one for himself and one for the deacon who was assisting. It really struck me as clericalism, why was it ok for the deacon to receive a cup, when the rest of us were unable. It just really stood out as more about his "position" than about what is healthy and helpful for the believing community.

So many woman religious and others have stepped forward in churches to meet needs... pastoral, liturgical, social ministries. When well qualified, well educated people come together to serve the needs of the church community, with collegiality and humility, amazing things can happen. As a Catholic Chaplain, I have had the great honor to minister rather "freely" and have been affirmed and encouraged by local clergy especially during this time of COVID.

Belief in the reality of the Eucharist, compassion, logic, psychological training.

One of our parish's priests had a "clerical" attitude, i.e., "Oh, look at how nicely robed I am, sitting next to the altar of God!"

and “listen to me talk through my own psychological problems”. I stopped going to daily Mass to avoid this disheartening attitude. I’ve walked out of Sunday Masses where he was presiding.

Yes. At a regular parish where a Dominican nun was “allowed” to share pastoral responsibilities.

Pastoral, forgiving, knowledgeable of scripture and human nature, ability to be available and non-judgmental to the people of God.

Compassion, ability to listen to the laity and accept all God’s people--women, gay.

Love, peace, understanding , listening skills, leadership.

Being human, open, talk to the parishioners - not preach down to them. Get involved - not above.

Services at Mariandale retreat center and pastoral care at the hospital.

Following the current teaching and not professing political beliefs. They listen and love their people - whatever shape, size, color or sex.

Pastoral presence, empathy, creative liturgist, listener.

Early in my career, I worked in Development for a large Archdiocese in New Jersey. One day, the Director of Development (a priest) decided to fire the entire office staff because he felt he could no longer trust us. Eight men and women were fired. Another experience when our daughter was in 8th grade, I was one of many parents planning the graduation liturgy. We proposed a community blessing of the graduates realizing this would be for some their last time in a church. The pastor refused saying, “If anyone blesses the graduates, it will be me.”

For the past ten years, I have been a member of an intentional catholic community, St. Mary Magdalene in Drexel Hill, PA. The pastoral team is 3 ordained women (RCWP). The community includes married male priests and many lay people who minister as co-equals, creating and leading services.

To be vulnerable open human being with humility and wisdom to lead and shepherd the parishioners. To listen and be open to change and admit when wrong. Above all have Christ as a model, not political figures.

My current pastor is pre Vatican 2 with all that entails. “ i do you listen” instead of finding out what spiritually nourishes parishioners.

Dioceses should have a fund to subsidize some if not all of training to be educated in pastoral ministry, administration,etc.

For the well being of the world, we need to bring Christ to a hungry and needy world through Christlike and caring spirit filled people. We need real, authentic, and honest leadership--servant leaders.

Helping ME see that God speaks to me equally to a priest. A good listener who HEARS. A priest has integrity, openness, ability to be compassionate and loving to ALL. Knows and lives by Catholic Social Teachings-gospels!!!

Non ordained have to be recognized as having equal gifts and being sent by God into the world to make “THY KINGDOM COME”. A penis should not be a qualifying component of who gets listened to, gets permission to even just preach.

Kindness, loving, being able to relate to the everyday life of parishioners, caring, true sense of spirituality.

Priests live in an environment which hinders personal growth. Most are living by themselves with little human interaction and call to

personal responsibility. Priests should be married if they want to be. Women should be welcomed into the priesthood and diaconship. Parish administration should be separated from the role of the priesthood. Did Christ administer anything?

Faith of course, compassion, flexibility.

Compassionate, authentic spirituality, leadership skills, love of people, openness to scripture as the living word, relational, love of justice and regard for all peoples, awareness of creation as a manifestation of the divine. Kind.

Pastoral.

Able to listen to others.

Compassion.

Empathy.

How, how, how can we get a male priest to listen to our cry? It is hard to envision after being rejected and even scorned for trying to speak as a child of God.

Priests. The world is full of people to whom God speaks. The world is full of people who God calls. Let every human who hears God, have an opportunity to discern what their role is, regardless of gender. God speaks to women. Let them answer the call. God speaks to Gay people. Let them answer the call. God speaks to married and unmarried persons. Let them answer the call. Do not keep the private club of priesthood closed to those who yearn for God. Open the church doors wide- and let the servants in. Peace!

Compassion, Empathy, Good Homiletic, Be a good listener and a good example. Practice what you preach.

I was, in a former position as Director of Pastoral care, shoved up against a door by

a priest whom I supervised. He had been doing clearly sub-standard work. When I reported it to Administration, the priest had the backing of a retired Monsignor who happened to be living at the facility. The Monsignor went to Administration and convinced them, though he was not present when it happened, that I was at fault. The monsignor in question had previously complained to both Administration and the Archdiocese that I should not be in my position: I was a Sister but not wearing a habit or veil and not living in a convent. Besides, "a priest should not report to a woman". I was fired.

I believe the present "priest shortage" is not really a shortage but a lack of listening to the promptings of the Spirit to reimagine what priesthood could be.

My last work parish had a CSJ Sister as pastoral Associate who worked hand in hand with our Pastor. Their gifts complimented each other beautifully and that parish was a stellar place of light love and hope. She left when the new Bishop came in and disallowed the title of Pastoral Associate.

Personable, approachable, humble, good listener, intelligent, able to produce thoughtful and relatable homilies.

Ordained needs to listen to the lay voice! The arrogance of the ordained thinking they know more than any lay person is not only insulting, but wrong.

Pastoral, open to new thinking, inclusive, puts relationship over law.

When my parish had a woman pastoral assistant helping the pastor, it seemed as close to co-equal as I've ever experienced. However, in 2 years, he retired, then died, and she also retired. New priest is younger and I think could be open, but is under the thumb of a very conservative Bishop Vasa. So the present pastor is going along to get along, i.e. Not terribly

effective. He's trying to please everyone, especially the bishop. Who can blame him? The bishop is his boss and he wants the job.

A lay/ordained partnership could work great if the bishop would give them more freedom to listen to and enact, or at least try, new ideas that are not in the rule book. I'm thinking of Bishop McElroy in San Diego who sticks his neck out to be inclusive. The negative consequences are only to the bishop himself, so he has to be very committed and strong.

The Church needs much better seminary formation. Current seminary graduates are rigid, scared of making mistakes, can't embrace diversity, very attached to the Law.

Not listening; judgmental - makes one cautious - can't trust them to share one's story.

Spiritual leadership, servant to the pastoral needs of the parish. Symphony conductor who calls out the gifts of the local community.

Empathy (we are in this together), spiritual guidance in a loving and encouraging spirit (not judgmental), mutuality and trust engaging with laity.

A spirit of collaboration in helping each other more fully live the message of the gospel which calls us to love, to care for neighbor and the disadvantaged -- and not take an attitude of superiority where rules are more important than people

Possesses a deep spirituality. Someone who can relate to all people with true love and kindness. Someone who can lead and delegate. Someone who can work with a strong parish leadership board.

Priest ought to be a mentor, Councilor and a compassionate person. Not a dominator, dictator and power grabber.

Listener, Prayerful, not hungry to control, Open to being creative, willing to accept criticism.

Pastorally oriented, Listening, being among the flock, experiential hands-on knowledge, etc.

Ministry. Love God and others. Be a listener and minister to people who have needs, not only the people who have material wealth.

The newly ordained priests that I have met are extremely pre-Vatican and act very entitled. Listen and follow Jesus!

The priest should first be a person of deep prayer, be open, kind, and understanding.

The most important quality in a priest is compassion. Priests need to be trained in real world settings in order to relate to the struggles, joys and sorrows of their people.

Inner honesty so can hear and relate to others in their humanity (e.g. When seminarians took CPE during their formation); deep compassion; knowledge in human development, spiritual development and its complexity and individuality within people.

In the 80's after the council in my first experience as Pastoral Minister shared in Communal Penance service; In 2000s Pastor called me to preach "give a reflection" on weekdays; Minister: treated as peer with priests - even a room to see people during communal penance service. Felt respected and encourages. Much later (2000's) pastor who called me to preach ("give a reflection").

Our hearts are breaking for the pain of seeing the deep beauty and saving grace within the church being squandered thru clericalism, rigid holding on to archaic rules over real human needs. ASK people to tell their stories of their experience of church that led them away. We need ready alternatives for those who can no longer abide the old dying forms.

To me, the first thing I think of my own experience is the priests who have touched me with their caring and compassionate ways. And have been open to sharing their faith openly, letting everyone share their experiences and not just preaching.

Open-minded, respectful, educated, humble, kind, Faith-filled.

Being pastoral and accepting of ALL no matter race or sexual preference or gender identity.

The patriarchal hierarchy needs to be broken down. Fancy dress has no place in today's world. The Roman Catholic church is not the ruler of the world. Pastoral leadership is needed now.

Personable, warm, emotionally intelligent, pastoral.

The best priestly experience I experienced was a humble priest in a very small parish, who embraced Vatican II and welcomed lay pastoral support and contributions. The worst priestly experience I have experienced was in a large parish with a young pastor who was 'The Man', who scorned Vatican II and used lay contributors like servants. My adult children, growing up in the parish and raised in the hierarchical clerical model, have abandoned it, with fervor.

Well-balanced individual who can well represent the community of believers. Compassionate and understanding. Humble. Good listening skills. Psychologically healthy. Willing to learn.

Pastoral Administrator only ordained 3 yrs. Fired a music minister who was celebrating 25 years within our community. This was after ONLY being with us for 3 weeks. It devastated our community. Recently Parish Council members have resigned because of his inability to collaborate - he is in charge and makes unilateral decisions.

Love, respect and care for parishioners.

Pastoral, good.

Listeners, humble, deeply rooted in scripture and the catholic faith but open to the Holy Spirit, collegial with the lay leaders in the parish, guides to help the community grow into more mature discipleship.

It's the Bishop who holds the key to having the priests of the diocese treat all pastors with respect. Lay or ordained pastors. My experience with Sacramental ministers and our liturgical leadership as co-workers of the church was fantastic. The community responded with graciousness and with faith filled energy to be the catholic community in that town. After leaving that position as pastoral administrator I have found no parish priest who has allowed me to use my gift and my experience as I don't fit into the...

Pastoral, personable, knows how to work as a team member, open to questions and new ideas, compassionate, sense of humor, able to delegate

Pastoral, non-judgmental, supportive of the laity in their leadership in parishes.

As a pastoral minister I walk with folks in their illness and difficult issues. I am not able to anoint them, or preside at their funerals.

Priests acting like they are gods, brushing off or not really listening to opinions other than their own.

After 50 years of ministry, a newly ordained priest told me that he would fire me, if he could. I've studied and practiced non-violent communication so I removed from his judgement, but I also felt compassion for him. I have noticed now that he doesn't look me in the eye or speak to me. I wondered about the discernment process in the call to priesthood.

Did those who participated in his formation notice this tendency in him. He also told a parishioner that she should stop coming to daily Mass and work on 'her spiritual issues' at home. So saddened that those who entrust their spiritual lives to priests get that kind of response. And Jesus wept!! A priest friend often treats me like I know nothing of ecclesial issues instead of a partner. I've learned that it's issue of needing to prove himself. I guess ultimately, it's made me less likely to 'work with a cleric'.

Over 50 years, there are so many wonderful experiences of the laity serving others. Too many to count. Pastoral Care, RCIA, Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Social Justice - all laity attending to real issues that human being express, meeting them where they are and providing options for well-being. The Catholic Church is one of the great service organizations in the world both at local parishes and wider national and international levels.

Ability to listen.

Rational compassion.

Putting people first, listener, sense of how to build community, guided by the Gospel.

Prayerful, listening, leadership, companionship, observant, humility, courageous, willing to learn, love for the Church- the people of God, openness, ability to call forth people's gifts. Also an ability to see the needs of the local community.

I was a pastoral administrator of a mid-town church with an ordained associate pastor, as well as with a lay associate. The 3 of us worked together with the other 3 on the staff to form a team who worked together with others who helped lead the parish of about 500 households. At the time we were fortunate to have a diocesan training group who offered training and support for the various ministries.

Less ordering others and more listening to what members of the church feel about the parish.

Human....pastoral...sense of humor.... sense of relationship.. Grounded and rooted spiritually.....

Compassion, Supportive, Caring, Informed.

Listening to each other.

Compassionate, kind supportive, energetic to work for the need to make our world a more united, loving and compassionate world.

If we continue with an ordained priesthood, loving compassion, acceptance and equality need to be the strongest emphasis in their training.

Intellect, compassion, insight, deep spirituality, leadership, kindness, understanding, wisdom.

Listening, being as much Christ-like as possible. Caring, empathy, understanding mysticism, being able to interpret the Gospel, reaching out to marginalized people. I remember a priest no longer with us who was just like that. He really cared about everyone in the small parish. He is enjoying full union with God in heaven now. He had expressed concern where the church is going.

A parish I'd been in has a lay (woman) pastoral administrator with a Masters in Pastoral care (a program now defunct at the local seminary). She coordinates retired priests who live in the rectory or who come in. Laity are in charge of grounds, committees, etc. There are some other parish staff, but it's a small parish of 250 families. This laity-led model could be expanded elsewhere. Sadly, this parish may die in the present consolidation by the Cincinnati Archdiocese called "Beacons of Light."

Definitely need more lay people involved. No reason a priest needs to be doing all the administrative tasks. They could be done by

many others. I'd like to see lay people feel more included in decision-making processes, and in the liturgies themselves. I still remember how special it felt to stand around the altar in a circle with others during the Mass. I've seen this sometimes in Masses at different Orders of Sisters as well. I feel more included when I am with Sisters than in parishes. I think that nuns are the hope of the future. They already have been working hard in the field. They are not properly acknowledged now. They have the prayer skills, the pastoral skills, the "street-wise" experience on the ground and are steeped in Catholic Social Teaching. Women need to serve! There would not be a priest shortage if women, married men, all people could be ordained if they receive the call. At a minimum, women should be allowed to give homilies (sometimes couched as "reflections"). They have so much to say! So many insights. And women would be much better at hearing confessions with their empathy skills. I'd rather confess to a woman for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Women were the healers many centuries ago. I could see women administering the Sacrament of the Sick and other Sacraments. The way it is now, the clericalism prohibits any discussion even by parish priests. One was kicked out of being a pastor in the new "Family of parishes" because he was 66, and the AOC wanted priests under 65. He was doing a great job. Parishes and priests were never consulted. It's "my way or the highway" the way the Archbishop is handling it. And a lot of people, perhaps myself included, are taking "the highway" at this time. I feel marginalized and between parishes, perhaps between faiths too. Thank you, Future Church, for doing the synodality and for listening to us. Breakout rooms both weeks have been wonderful. Good people are in the meeting.

Those two are probably all that's really needed, as if the model of church were different, i.e., lay people run the church and the priest comes in for the sacraments that deacons cannot perform, then many of the qualities that would

be important, such as being good at empathic human relationships might not be as important.

Never coequals, as even when the priest works with the parish council etc., Its still been HIS decision TO work with us laypeople! There are simply lovely humble priests with amazing people skills and care for people, who are open and listening to their parishioners, who allow us laypeople to suggest and even guide decisions, such as when I was the RCIA leader, it was pretty much left to me and the RCIA team to decide how to teach, to interview candidates, and we would discuss each Rite of INITIATION with the priest and decide together how to do it etc.

We need more accountability from the priest. Every year or certain time it needs to be a community examination of the work of the priest on the community to improve his pastoral work. Sometimes lay people contribute to this clericalism culture when they are looking for special treatment from the priest and give them gifts and never say anything that might upset the priest.

The future priest should be involved with the everyday activities of his parishioners, should spent less time doing paperwork and more involve with his parishioners. The church should hire someone to do the administrative work and he should spend more time serving the poor, listening to them, giving the sacraments. The priest should listen to people of God and empower lay people. He should avoid being a orchestra man that tries to do everything at the parish.

Humility, openness, honesty, a sense of accountability, an understanding of servant leadership, sense of humor, compassion, empathy, deep personal relationship with God.

I was a pastoral associate for 18 years so I have had numerous experiences. A "joke" at the parish was that whatever negativity that was going on at any given time, it was my fault.

That little” joke” was what many priests and people truly believed.

I was actually given co-equal status by one pastor for about 8 years. It was wonderful for me and for most parishioners. The associate pastors were very much against me being considered their equal, even though I had more pastoral experience and far more education.

Relatable, compassionate, educated, and capable of teaching. Most parishioners don't actually know a lot about their faith and haven't had any instruction since they were children.

Kindly and able to communicate well the message of Jesus

Unapproachability and poor empathy.

I think it would be a grace for us all to be educated in calling forth from our communities, leaders who are truly faith-filled, human and able to grow in wisdom while journeying with each other.

For me, it is important to have a priest who is listening to the Spirit calling him to be holy and in relationship with the people with whom he shares the broader faith life of the Church. He/she should be a person who regularly prays with Scripture and who can relate the Word to the life of those living at this particular time in our history. He/she would be constantly open to new ways of understanding how God continues to move us. He/she would be one that would lift up the gifts of others in the community and be both affirming and loving.

Humility, compassion, love of god and his people, preaching the gospel, kindness, reverence.

I don't know if i have seen this but i have belonged to a spiritual group that met monthly and had masses in our homes and the priests were so loving and kind and knowledgeable and we were all treated as equals, men and women.

I am afraid if things don't change....if pastors and priests do not become more “pastoral” then we will not have people joining the catholic church. It pains me that so many of the children of people my age who grew up in the church and still attend

...their children do not attend catholic church or are going to other churches. They are not finding a welcome at the catholic church or meaning there. Many people have been hurt by the church by unkind, proud pastors and priests who do not

Understanding, empathy, good preacher.

I really think the main purpose of ‘church” is to help people be transformed and grow into the person they were born to be. Thus, the priest has to be someone who can meet people where they are and be a mentor and guide along the way. A priest has to be able to be truly reflective not only about themselves, but the institutional church. A priest has to be able to respond to the moving of the Holy Spirit. A priest, in the face of problems of any kind, has to take the stance of being curious instead of furious. A priest should inspire love and not shame.

They need to realize they are human, capable of making mistakes, that their way is not necessarily the only way, lay people are capable of leading, presenting a meaningful homily. The parishioners are not provided to only “grunt” work. It is our church and we care about it. Maybe in my lifetime I have experienced only 3 or 4 priests that could fit my standards, not any bishops.

Servant leadership, listening, a prayer life based on knowing one's identity as a beloved daughter/son of the

Priests should listen, care, empathize and be a good communicator

At one parish, where the parish pastoral council had real power, and when a major decision had to be made the people in the pews were encouraged to fill in survey forms. Also a multiplicity of ministries where the gifts of all were employed.

They must be empathetic, kind, caring, have a love for people, all people. They would need to be able to relate to every race, gender, etc. They would embrace God's people with love. They would be a prayerful person who loves God and daily connects to God as his source of strength and love. They would benefit by being trained in contemplative prayer practices.

If you are trained pre-Vatican, you would need to be re-trained. The people need care and mercy, not robots. Pope Francis' vision of the people of God connects with me: we are wounded, we are sinners, we need mercy, understanding, help. Married priests would be better equipped and have better understanding of their parishioners who are mainly married couples. They would better understand divorce, children, dynamics of family life. Priests would benefit from personal counseling so they know themselves well and they would need to be trained as counselors. They need to get into the homes of parishioners and get to know them in their environment. They need to be human and share how they grew up and share experiences from their own lives. Many priests in my experience don't know how to share their own experiences from life. The homilies in my experience are generalities, they leave people empty, not challenging. Oftentimes there is no concrete take-away and the homily could apply to 20 different topics. When will priests speak about Racism as sin, or speak about improving the character of our nation, or speak about marriage, divorce, money problems in life, communication between people, the homeless, the immigrants. Too much silence. They are fearful men; God have mercy on our priests. God have mercy on us.

What will make lay-ordained partnerships work better is to take a serious look at the priest formation and ONGOING formation including the embracing of sexuality as part of our wholeness. And have the Church seriously update their understanding of sexuality based on the evolution of our awareness of human development.

A pastoral heart, a person of deep prayer, community spirit, leadership that begins and ends with dialogue,

Listening - building relationships - relational - discernment - personal daily prayer - pondering scripture in light of reality... Using the gifts of the community to build the community... Inclusiveness -

First that they are NOT ego-power-centered and think they are more holy or exceptional than any of God's other children! Empathy, listening, companioning, most importantly loving, in other words all the qualities that Jesus displayed. Affirming others of their uniqueness and dignity as a child of God and helping them to share their gifts in the service of others and God's creation.

My church community stayed open even after the diocese closed it. We have an ordained priest who is our celebrant in good standing with the diocese/Church who lives and began a Catholic Worker house and soup kitchen for 47 years. In our small church community of about 45 (we are not recognized by our Diocese) people, everyone takes on a role that seems to suite them all the way from making coffee to music and altar care. We collect about 20,000 dollars/yr. Which is given back to different services/needs/charities in the community.

The capacity to relate, to listen, to hear and to have compassion and understanding recognizing that we are all humans created in the image and likeness of God and none of us live up to what we really are capable of being.

I did know a priest who treated people as co-equals and was very open to all of the body of Christ. His background was very unique in that he was ordained in his 50s. He had been married, divorced/annulled, had children he raised as a single Dad and grandchildren. He served in the military during Vietnam, worked in various types of employment and owned a business. He was working in the parish as an administrator when someone suggested he become a priest. He had real life experiences and was very pastoral. He was more a human being than a priest. He was real.

The priesthood at minimal needs major reform for it to be relevant to the entire body of Christ. I favor the elimination of ordination primarily because it signifies that some men are superior to all other humans simply because of ordination. No human is more loved by God than his love for all. God see all humans as worthy and important. We need people to exercise their gifts, talents and skills that God gave each of us to serve each other for the betterment of all.

Ability to listen, to relate, humility, a person dedicated to service especially to the poor and forgotten, to deeds of social and environmental justice, utter kindness and empathy, one of deep faith and expansive spirituality.

The laity should be invited to express their concerns and wishes, in all situations, be included in all parish decisions and activities, and be listened to seriously especially when pastors are to be appointed to their parish. When a parish is in need of a pastor, have parishioners come together, compile their vision, needs, etc. Of the parish community and what qualities they want in a pastor, make this known to the diocesan priest personnel board and then interview priests who apply to be their pastor. The parishioners who do the interviews would then rank their choices. The final appointment must be one of these choices.

Have all those discerning a call to priesthood--women, men, married persons, singles, LGBTQ--educated in well qualified universities with other ordinary students. Their university studies must align with Vatican II and new contemporary insights in theology, scripture, etc. Other programs focusing on preparation for pastoral service, community building, etc., should supplement the university studies and those to be ordained must have opportunities for pastoral service and personal evaluation by the people they are serving before ordination. Root out pre-Vatican II teaching and practices in seminary studies and training and in current parish practices. Overhaul the way bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals are chosen to allow grassroots participation in the selection process. Require bishops and other church officials to provide a lot more opportunities to hear the concerns and suggestions of the laity. Revise the Mass and sacramental rubrics and prayers to reflect a more communal and contemporary understanding of our faith and of scripture and to allow a lot more participation by folks in the pews. In this way the priest will be ONE with the people, not ABOVE the people.

I grew up in a socially active CFM family and was blessed to know some wonderful priests. I don't have that same experience in the Church now. Priests need to be in touch with people and the social issues and the theological etc. Knowledge humanity is gaining of /in our times as well as deeply respectful of the tremendous mystery of life.

I think the promotion of small communities within a parish which help people feel that they are known and they really belong to the community are crucial. These communities need to be connected by some kind of organized effort - maybe by a semi-annual meeting of small communities to celebrate Advent/Christmas season and then again Lent/Easter season could work. A community of communities, as Gabriel Moran suggests.

Someone knowledgeable with scripture, a leader with compassion, able to recognize talents of others and the ability to work with them.

Qualities of kindness, gentleness, joy, other-centeredness, respect for others.

Knowledgeable on faith, the Bible, human nature, history, mental illness and whatever else is needed to help people with their problems.

I saw an example of lay and ordained Catholics ministering together. In one parish in my diocese of which I was a member for about six years I saw the priest presiding at Mass with one of the lay pastoral ministers giving the homily. When the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick was administered during the Mass to all who desired to receive the sacrament. The priest anointed with holy oil the person receiving the sacrament and the pastoral ministers with the worshippers laid hands on the ill person. The priest and the two pastoral ministers together made up the pastoral team. The advantage of this organization chart was to remind the laity that women were the usual caregivers in the home and had life experiences that the large majority of Catholic priests have not had, such as making peace between family members, listening to a little child's concerns or dogging the path of an errant teenager until that person begins to straighten out his or her life.

I cannot get excited when I hear that the Catholic Church is promoting "The New Evangelization." I see many areas where the Catholic Church, for the sake of preserving the current clerical system, will not address the need for women to be ordained as priests. Maybe there exists a document somewhere which addresses all of the errors which some of the Church Fathers and other clerical writers created and/or promulgated about women. Women have been portrayed as inferior human beings, who lead others to do evil, who are weak, frail and stupid, and incompetent in

ruling or governing. I have never seen an official refutation by the Catholic Church of these false claims. The New Testament promotes the headship of the husband over the wife. Where are all of the accounts of women in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, who are strong, hard-working, capable, wise, holy and zealous for the Kingdom of God. They are also thrifty enough to support Jesus and the Apostles out of their own means. We do not hear about them. We hear about complementarity of women, who help make men better husbands, etc. Why isn't complementarity preached to men? It is a doctrine that would pigeonhole women in subservient roles while the men run the Catholic Church. Why do we not hear preaching on Genesis 1:27? "God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them." (The New American Bible).

Pastoral, compassionate, inclusive, seeks consensus, encourages diversity. Good listener

Pastoral abilities.

Listening.

Pastoral. Compassionate. Other-centered. Faith-filled.

Spiritual, Pastoral, caring, educated, skills in facilitation and counseling, comfortable partnering with a team of people to lead.

Open minded, empathetic, spiritually grounded, good listener and performs good liturgy and meaningful homilies.

Under the previous pastoral administration, I was valued as an alter server, trainer, sacristan and chorister.

Compassion, listening skills, deep faith - interpersonal skills - person of integrity - open to new ideas - non-clerical.

Self-awareness, good listener, open minded, kind, challenging.

Compassion.

Priest must be pastoral, concerned for the people s/he serves. Must be a true listener.

Compassion, humility, mercy, common good, faith.

Must be pastoral instead of clerical.

Compassion, humor, spiritual and intellectual depth, ability to break open the Gospel and speak inspiringly.

Letting go of the need to be better than. Living in humility with mercy for all. Following literally in the footprints of Jesus. Listening to wisdom people like Pope Francis and taking his example.

Human, relational, pastoral, deep faith, in search of the holy.

Ability to express humanity and humility.

Our pastor has been punished by our bishop. He has been treated inhumanely.

Kindness; Patience; Loving Presence; Compassion; Empathy.

LISTEN to each other. The church - Body of Christ - is in partnership and co-equals in living and preaching the Gospel. My talents and skills are every bit as important as the priest's ordination. I personally am not called to the priesthood, but I am to the diaconate.

Pastoral-knowing the teachings of "the Church" and knowing the needs of each person approaching

E.g. In Pastoral Presence to those in need of forgiveness, peace, unity, anointing, relationship...

Openness, compassion.

Pastoral, compassionate, non-legalistic.

When I was in a small parish in Appalachia. We were "family" together, appreciating the gifts of each person. In the past we had a creative, active parish with a lay woman as pastoral director.

Compassion, kindness, commitment, humility.

Humility, listening, caring. Love, Compassion, kindness, understanding.

Humility, compassion, able to relate well to people.

In the future priests having only pastoral responsibilities instead of administrative, financial, facilities management would be a positive. It would free priests to be more available to people and better balanced in their personal lives.

A priest must be true to self, able to listen to and work with others, have theological and biblical training, be a person of God, be humble.

Respect each others gifts, listen to each other and speak honestly ...being considered equal is a must...in "titles, salary, etc."

Pastoral, Christlike, caring, able to relate happily with all sorts of folks, in love with God, and recognizes the goodness in every person, non-judgmental.

Ability to listen, practice prayerful discernment.

With a retired priest as administrator in my parish for five months, I, as the pastoral associate for ministry to the sick, shut-in, and bereaved, experienced an ideal cooperative working together for the common good.

Inclusive, listener, Compassionate, Social-justice aware and oriented, Open to all - married priests, Women priests, LGBTQ community, Preaching related to Scripture and the real world.

Both groups have to listen and be open and transparent and honest and respectful.

Compassion.

Spiritual Compassionate Open not rigid Socially aware.

Compassion, Devotion to God, Love in action, social justice bent and yet a believer in contemplation. Lots of contemplation.

Respect, compassion, engagement at the same level.

A pastoral attitude. This requires good heart, good listening skills, respect for each person and each person's gifts. The priest should not be a judge but should be compassionate and loving toward the community and all God's people.

The ideal is what we spoke of at Old St. Pat's. It takes trust and respect for each person and a great deal of listening to each other, the signs of the times and the Holy Spirit.

Sister religious in the USA are more examples of "priesthood" than many male priests-- no patriarchy there! Generous of spirit and compassionate, loving!

The previous pastor valued my gifts and work for the parish (as a pastoral minister). The parish grew steadily during our time working together in ministry.

Clergy, are you listening to the Holy Spirit? Can you not read the signs of the times and see the ways the world has changed? Solutions for today are not found in yesterday's way of doing things.

Welcoming forgiving merciful approachable humble kind compassionate intelligent good homilist good listener.

Parish priest has an attitude of my way or the highway. Not open to listening to the community. Very rule oriented.

It certainly has to change. Growing up the priest could do no wrong. Now I realize they are human with same faults as all of us. They have to come down from their pedestals and be with us.

Pastoral, compassionate, good listener, humble.

In our parish, the pastor listens to anyone coming to him for suggestions & as initiated new programs as a result.

Compassion.

Compassion, humility, understanding, love for the Eucharist, fairness, ability to delegate in the mundane manners of the Parish.

Read and listen Richard Roth who will open you to thinking about the Way beyond the established church.

Humble, listening, smell like a sheep, faithful, be mindful of the people that are a part of the parish community.

Listening and discussion sessions would be helpful. Placing the needs of the poor and underprivileged first. Have the administrative needs of a parish be performed by a lay businessperson and not the pastor. Perhaps the community needs to interview the pastor-to-be, to assess if they are able to meet the needs of the community. Perhaps appointing by the bishop should be dismissed.

Compassion, respect for others, faith and pastoral role supersedes all else-smelling of

sheep, humility, intelligence, willingness to collaborate.

Compassion, the ability to listen, the courage to stand up for what is right in our political system, knowledge of many religions--not just the Catholic faith, knowledge of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd as a youth religious ed program--it is open, it is inviting, it is not about memorizing or coloring books---it's about children falling in love with Jesus

[There has been] absolute rigidity and lack of compassion--people left the church.

Being human, putting relationships ahead of the law.

Listens, communicates, empathy, knows Catholic teachings and the Bible, pro social action, open and welcome all races, LGBT etc., ecumenical, sense of humor, humility, wisdom.

Empathy. Willingness to face anything in her or his own life that limits their pastoral sensitivity to others. Skill and composure in leading public prayer. Humor.

Empathy, good listening skills, ability to empower and encourage; all the skills of being a parent, except the family is bigger.

Humility, compassion, open mindedness, courage.

I feel that anyone who leads the Church has to be compassionate and able to live out Jesus' command to LOVE ONE Another - in their life and relationships and actions.

In a small rural area in NM where there are limited resources - especially qualified people, I experienced an ordained Catholic who could see the gifts of the laity and used them in conjunction with his own gifts to have a very cohesive and caring community.

Listening, caring, humble.

Pastoral.

Have listening groups of priests to the laity so that they are trained by the laity.

A priest, whether a man/woman/ has to be Gospel oriented, up to date theology, understanding evolutionary consciousness about humanity, science and nature, Cosmic Christ.

A dedication to service in the name of Jesus; empathy; ability to work with the opposite sex.

Until recently my parish was a smooth-running community with shared ministry among priest, religious woman, 2 lay pastoral ministers. It worked very well then the pastor retired. The system has since collapsed.

Empathy, caring, personable, non-judgmental, ability to teach and preach faith through current situations, humility, collaborative.

Intelligence, empathy, communication, sincerity, integrity.

The Catholic Church needs to allow more of its loving, faithful, caring members priesthood. Women and non-celibate men per se should not be excluded.

Availability. Compassion.

The abilities to listen, to laugh, to inspire, to reflect back people's goodness to them. We need people of prayer who are not into power. I don't know how you find them.

Pastoral.

Listen to the call from the community.

Encourage a relationship with Christ, prayerful, humble, listen as well as preach, compassionate, non-judgmental.

Good Shepherd, compassionate, loving, honoring/cherishing all people; empowering all to be the best and make the best use of their gifts for the good of all

Must be pastoral first and foremost. Must be educated in more than just theology. Perhaps study of the human condition. But experience with people is important. It can't be all just theory and ritual.

To many to share. And they made me a better more compassionate person. I'm just glad I wasn't educated in a Catholic school because I was able to bypass them.

A couple of situations when I was a pastoral assistant. Also been involved in RCIA for over 25 years and have worked closely with priests and the relationship has always been good. I have not let them into the meeting rooms.

Acceptance, Appreciation, Attention, Caring for All, Forgiveness, Standing up for the Poor and those who are disenfranchised, a true calling and desire to follow and accept Jesus with their whole being.

Compassion, nonjudgmental, leader, knowledgeable, have realistic attitude, appreciative of differences of opinion or behavior, accepting of all God's creations.

Compassionate.

Something must be done because we are becoming a Church of elderly ministers (both lay & ordained). We have disenfranchised the youth & many older adults because of our unwillingness to listen to their concerns.

Compassion, a listening heart, a deep spirituality and prayer life, of course, physical strength. A truly good human being would be sufficient.

Mostly each recognizing the gifts of the other and working together to give a more complete pastoral action. Working with strengths better.

Good sound sense of personhood, openness, caring spirit, courage, good listener.

Compassionate, listening stance, servant model.

Be a listener, compassionate, open, be led by the Holy Spirit, be creative with the holy Spirit as a guide. Be able to minister intergenerationally.

Listening to each other and using the gifts of each person.

Compassion, friendliness, prayerfulness, spirituality, life-long learning, knowledge of real life and problems of ordinary people

Compassion, understanding, mercy and be able to be involved in the community

Attitudes of: Mercy, compassion, openness, care for the poor and suffering; ability to inspire spiritually; ability to collaborate.

I would like to have more of an understanding of the FORMATION of priests. Their studies; their pastoral experiences; the basic requirements of human development.

With integrity, deeply spiritual, pastoral, and service oriented.

Inclusive, participative, transparent and accountable in all aspects like in decision making and sharing responsibilities. Develop and train more the lay in the needed skills in pastoral work and in liberational feminist theologies. Use symbols and structures that are inclusive and encourage participation.

Compassion, Listening, Including EVERYONE. Caring for other needs, loving, an open heart.

Love of God and personal relationship with God, personality that relates to other people, a good listener, someone with empathy.

Lay people take care of the physical administrating such as bulletins, cleaning, in charge of music, parish council, running fish fries during lent, training altar servers and communion ministers. The priests guide some of this and administer the sacraments.

Pastoral presence and compassion Ability to be empathic.

Ability to listen, ability to relate gospel message to current reality, ability to be inclusionary, ability to inspire faith, hope, and kindness.

Compassion.

I never met an unkind or rigid priest in the military.

As a woman religious I have experienced the power of the priest during more than of 60 years of ministry even when I was the head of pastoral care in a health care facility for clergy and religious!

Pastoral belief to serve, nor to be served.

Inclusivity, compassion, deep personal friendship with Christ, outreaching to the furthest edge of the circle of community, knowledge of scripture which feeds his spirit and that of the people, commitment to justice, care of creation, compassion to the wounded and all who suffer, sense of celebration of the liturgy.

I work with both priest in my parish on social and peace issues and find them to be engaged and open to listening etc. I have also worked with priest who have been challenging but recognized that they had personnel issues which needed counseling help or therapy.

Compassionate, humble, willing to be of service, person who takes the time to pray, a good listener

Understanding, compassion friendship Jesus orientated.

If the hierarchy are sincere about the Church continuing to grow, then they really need to work closely with the laity, who have the option to vote with their feet and with a closed wallet. They need to listen to the needs of the young people and to those who feel most disenfranchised.

Compassion, good listener, life-long learner, spiritual.

Priests should not have to be bogged down with administrative tasks. They should allow lay people to take over care of the buildings, etc.

He/she must be servant-oriented, motivated to love and care for others. Does this have to exclude a spouse and children? There can no longer be the secret life, the choosing of a small inner circle, the declaration of celibacy which in the main part if not honored by many priests.

My not feeling comfortable asking questions about what is going on in the Church, not being able to have any kind of intellectual conversation concerning Pope Francis and his writings or even engaging commentary about this synodal movement. Our charisms not recognized or invited.

I have not had such an experience myself. Perhaps our priest and our Pastoral Council have such an experience. But who really knows the people on the Council or how they are talking about this synodal movement in our parish?

I want the leadership of a kindly pastor. I want time for open meetings when we

discuss together the concerns, the plans, the developments in our parish.

Friendly. Open to listen. Use their intelligence to live out Christ presence in the world and to be giving in their life to all.

Compassion, understanding the community being served, both parish and wider community, open-mindedness.

I think both bring gifts to the table and both should be respected. Lay people should be empowered to carry out ministries. If the ordained actually listen to the laity and together they can incorporate their goals into the mission, that would help. Priests shouldn't rule with an iron fist.

I think a priest must be pastoral, must want to be a part of the flock, not just the symbolic 'head' of the flock. The parish needs business managers, people to take care of the running of the plant, the priest needs to be who is willing to be there for the people when needed. Priest must be compassionate, willing to think outside of the box when needed, etc.

Welcoming... A person who relates well to people...compassionate not a rules and regulation person...a team member who shares responsibilities and welcomes dialogue.

Someone who is pastoral and challenges his community to prayer & social justice—option for the poor.

Having priests share homilies with the laity. Having laity assist with administrative duties so ordained person can use their time to be pastoral.

Grounded in theology and spirituality. Ability to teach and communicate the teachings in the Gospels and Old Testament readings. Being a good listener and guide for the parish. And finally the ability to be "priest" without

controlling the parish to his way of doing things.

Inability to have the kind of funeral service we wanted for my father; priests using the term "lay" or "layity" to separate the people of God from our priests Listening, compassion, attitude of service, openness, pastoral, able to work well with others.

Compassion.

A call of the heart and of vocation; a loving person that is inclusive and respectful of all human beings; a present person and a person that can be in active relationship with the parish community, but also with a broader spectrum of lay leadership supporting that ministry.

Passion about helping the poor and marginalized and ability to motivate others to live out our faith; ability to provide pastoral care; ability to help parishioners to grow and develop spiritually; leadership skills; empathy.

The ordained should focus on pastoral care, spiritual growth and development, building strong Christian communities; laymen should be responsible for administrative duties and organizing and facilitating focused subgroups working on needs.

Collaborative, Pastoral, good listener, open minded, flexible, joyful.

Young, newly ordained priest who couldn't minister with women and needed to do everything by the book. Arrogant with other members of the pastoral staff including the pastor.

Someone who is humble, loving, welcoming, intellectually curious, not hierarchical, with good people skills, can read, write and speak effectively, not necessarily, hard working., cares about social issues, does see the church as separate from but a part of the world.

I would like to see priests be able to marry. I think permanent women deacons is an urgent need. I am a convert and I feel very much that I just don't have enough exposure to the Church to weigh in on this meaningfully. I think the West is different from the rest of the world, and so perhaps changes will need to be hyper-localized. Germany will likely ordain a woman or 'out' LGBTQ person first. All I know is absolute power corrupts absolutely, and a passive laity in combination with the wrong personalities in the priesthood (combined with big donors behind the scenes, and a Catholic school system that gives trustees a lot of civic power ... In Ontario, the problems of the Catholic school system that is no longer Catholic is huge. I have no solutions. It seems like keeping assets safe is the major concern of every priest. Financial stability and avoiding being sued / risk management comes way, way before the care of persons. Politics has also become very important in Ontario, which in my experience has been toxic.

Holy, compassionate and available

The ability to listen and delegate and ask for help.

Two: A) Ash Wednesday. I went for ashes. The newly minted priest proceeded to do the blessing in Latin. I interrupted and said I wanted it in English. He told me that it was the same thing. I waited until I got it in English. Don't tell me you are close to parishioners if you can't be bothered to pray over them in a language they understand. B) I wrote to the priest overseeing the Diocesan Synod effort. A substantial and not antagonistic letter - E-mail. I got a reply in 7 minutes - not enough time for him to have read/thought about what I said. He didn't address anything I said. He didn't listen and he didn't care.

Compassion, believing people are more important than rules set up by men for control. A loving and giving nature (servant). Educated

in all religions and leadership skills. One who listens rather than dictates.

Important qualities that are important in a priest: bring out the priesthood of all the people in his/her parish...educate or obtains education for all about what that is and how one sees themselves in that light. And of course respect, kindness, gentleness all required of any good human.

One who is willing to listen to those in his parish, school, or whatever service. One who is inclusive of all he meets and is a good example as a priest of God. One who goes out of his way to search out those in need who are in his parish or organization.

Personality/sociability, compassion, openness, true humility, recognizing the dignity of all persons,

Pastoral, open and welcoming to diversity, have courses in psychology in addition to theology. Be in spiritual direction. Be secure in their relationships. Be a good LISTENER!

Deep faith, love of God, love of neighbor, ability to listen, to dialogue, to work collaboratively with others, integrity, regular prayer life,

Humility, holiness, trust in God, capacity to include everyone, kindness in speech, supportive and optimistic.

Listening, humility, pastoral, simple, good communicator, life-long learner, open, active outreach to parishioners, special care for the youth, welcoming.

Loving, pastoral, kind, healthy psychologically, willing to visit people in the hospital or wherever they are needed. Willing to continue their education.

**Genuine care for the people of God.
Recognition that pastoral care is service to those people of God.**

An interest in who I am as a person, what my experience is, what I think - how i am growing in faith. Someone with a larger vision of how to be human, how to be in community, how to heal spiritually.

Deep prayer life, compassionate, humble.

Compassion, humility, seek the common good, sense of wonder, sense of humor, appreciation of holiness of all persons and things.

Sincerity and prayerfulness. Balanced human being.

Ability to listen, to be objective, to love what he/she is doing, to be compassionate and kind, to have a good sense of self so one can serve others well, to be able to build community.

Compassion, spiritual, community minded, OPEN, accept people with different views, able to encourage people to share their gifts.

Deep faith and prayer life. Commitment to service. Respect for life, every life. Honest. Compassionate. Inclusive. Humble. Nonjudgmental.

I worked in East Africa for 33 years as a physician. I saw MANY men use women and children for their personal sexual pleasure. They had many women and children. They were not only priests but Bishops and Cardinals. They have ruined the lives of countless women and children and families. They misused the funds of the church for their own personal 'families' and gains. They have used witchcraft and corrupt business practices to manipulate people and become wealthy. Personally I have cared for the physical/ medical needs of some of these women and children who have been abused.

Being pastoral, open to diversity, equality and inclusion.

The inclusion of women and married priests in the organizational as well as the pastoral life of the church. Let's put a lay woman or religious women or a married couple in a rectory to lead a parish so it doesn't have to close.

Being a "people" person, caring, sense of humor, faith-filled, one who values ongoing education--not living in the past.

I had a wonderful relationship working with a priest in a parish. I am a sister and I was pastoral associate, and we worked so well together.

Holy not pious. Able to identify gifts and encourage their use. Great preaching. Open to listening. Consultive=working with others to come to consensus. Compassionate.

Servant leadership, compassion, strong relationship with God, awareness of and engagement with justice issues as well as personal holiness. Preaching steeped in prayer.

Be PASTORAL, caring for people more than worrying about rules & regulations. Be a TEACHER, helping people grow in faith, but also open to listen to others and learning from them! Be KIND and MERCIFUL, not overly rigid and judgmental.

It's already happening in various parts of the world and both lay and ordained are better human beings for the experience!

Just as I stand on the shoulders of those who were part of the suffrage movement and am grateful to them, I think others will say the same thing of us. The Holy Spirit is speaking; let us keep listening and acting on what we hear!

Listening, humility, recognition of their own humanity, compassion, able to build/maintain

healthy relationships with people of all ages and genders.

Living the gospel. Servanthood openness to Spirit in all humility compassionate merciful non judge mental.

Priests words are held with greater respect than lay peoples words discourages people in speaking or believing in the Spirit alive and active within their own being. Causes or stifles creativity, risk new ideas, and openness to a reality that might be lived by the ordinary human experience.

Mutual respect. Spirit alive in each l serving each other. Contemplative listening.

(In no order) Empathetic, good listener, strong relationship builder and keeper, humble, Christ-like, an advocate for justice, courageous.

I am deeply saddened by what I see as parts of our Church being like the Pharisees in Jesus's time. They are focused on the rules without regard to the heart and what Jesus would actually do. Yet I remain hopeful. The Holy Spirit is using this time - parish closings, priests shortages, people leaving the church, scandals, ridiculous law driven behavior of priests who deny the sacraments and hang on wording, the global focus on diversity - to bring about much needed and overdue change in our Church. I pray the Bishops listen to the people of God and to the Holy Spirit.

He should be pastoral, other-centered. His education should be grounded in Vatican II. He should be prayerful, able to preach in a way that makes people want to listen and reflect.

The lay people have the pulse of the parish. They know the community and its needs. The clergy are passing through and would do well to include and rely on the wisdom and energy of the laity, both men and women. Be open to their ideas and give them the support to follow through. The ordained could learn a lot from

cooperative efforts, and it would relieve them of some responsibilities that are not essential to pastoral work.

Better. Some even wear the pre-Vatican II vestments. They have not experienced a pastoral year in the real world and do not know how to visit hospitals, preside at a wake or be with people in need. God forbid that they are sent to a poor parish! I worry about our church if this is the future leadership. Some refer back to Benedict or JP II and ignore Francis.

One who carries our traditions, provides a meaningful homily that energizes the people to go forth as a disciple of Christ, and one who walks among the people and listens.

Pastoral and nurturing, listening, socially aware, theologically trained in the rich catholic social teachings and biblical awareness.

I was in Seattle after Archbishop Hunthausen and his implementation of Pastoral Life Directors. Our parish has a woman PLD and Jesuit priest from Seattle U and it was an incredibly rich partnership. She essentially met the pastoral needs of the church.

Valuing relationships, compassionate, genuine, humble (knowing him or herself) prayerful.

Be pastoral and concerned about the Folks Be out among the People.

Kindness, understanding, compassion, ability to offer spiritual guidance, empathy, sense of humor, leadership by action, ability to be relevant to today's world.

In hospitals there are chaplains of different and in the hospital where I worked there were also lay people certified as assistants to the Catholic chaplain and they were wonderful - compassionate, ability to listen and be in the moment with the patient and family whether it be before a surgery, just to visit, or when the patient was dying.

Much like was said in today's reflection by Fr. Newton, ordained ministers spend so much time on administrative decisions; ones that are not part of what I'll call the essential functions of a priest/ordained. A minister's prime work should be pastoral, so free them up to do that work.

I guess any "set apart-ness" of priests/ministers should come from something along the lines of my comments above - that their focus is always the pastoral well-being of their communities; and not how they are somehow spiritually/ontologically superior. That's killed/killing the church as we know it.

There is a tradition that's been communicated through an institution; and maybe an institution of some kind is needed to help preserve that tradition, the fundamentals of its theology, and how it's practiced. But the character of that institution (as we've known it) needs to change - to become more inclusive; and to work not out of a fear of loss (of power, wealth, influence; any form of loss) and more trusting of our purported faith in the Holy Spirit who will sustain that which is True of our tradition, theology, and practices; in whatever form an institution remains.

Sound and progressive theology training.
Compassion and ability to relate to the laity as among them, not above them.

Education is important! Create adult education classes to help the people develop gifts to be more Christlike. Then give them the latitude to go ahead and use their gifts. The MBTI is important to let them know their gifts and then such classes in pastoral ministry, finances, documents of Vatican II, etc. Can be used to give a solid background. Then provide space for them to use their knowledge and they will grow together. That is what happened in the above-mentioned parish. Most of all, be a good listener and observe relationships that give life.

Servant, pastoral, a good listener, kind, humble.

Compassionate, open and comfortable in relating to ALL people without judgement, humble.

Humble, Compassionate, in a deep and meaningful relationship with God and able to see God in all of the people he or she meets. It's also very helpful if they are able to share from their heart and their relationship with God when preaching. People connect best and hear best when listening to someone who has the ability to share their vulnerability.

For over 50 this community has worked as a caring, respectful, equal partnership.

Compassion, communication, personal knowledge of his community of believers.

A priest is the persona of Christ on the Altar. Therefore, we look at Christ - the healer, the institution of the sacraments, based in the scriptures and the tradition of the church and the ever evolving revelation of the Holy Spirit working in the world today. A priest must have the ability to develop healthy relationships and understand the role of healer, to be able to bring Christ to the world in transcendence as well as human.

Compassion, mercy, humility, understanding. Priests who can be open hearted with a focus on humanity first. Less about fundraising and building monuments.

It should be possible for lay and ordained to share in the role/work of administration as well as serving in pastoral ministry.

The qualities of Jesus: mercy, love, compassion, humility, and JOY in sharing the divine presence with the congregation.

Occasionally now or in the recent past, because it was expedient, some women religious became the pastoral administrators of local

parishes in collaboration with another parish led by an ordained priest and parishioners felt they were as well served organizationally and spiritually (welcomed the preaching greatly) and would have had no problem had the woman been officially ordained to serve them.

Basically a 'human being', who has compassion, wisdom, a sense of humor and strong sense of Liturgy and a fine preacher/homilist. A person who is not afraid of emotions!

No reason such forms couldn't succeed! Need the openness and willingness to be open, honest, flexible, committed to belief in the goodness and Divine Plan for created humanity!

It is wonderful and challenging that Missionaries are multiple and in the US more prevalent however, some very profound words are often missed when the speaker has a heavy accent. I realize this challenge is more common when the presider is from another country.... However, there are times when an 'eastern accent' is hard for westerners and visa-versa..... One works/prays hard to prepare a message of the Scripture to bring to the Congregation and when the words are not heard (audio system or language) it is a loss for all and the Spirit has a bigger 'job' to provide the listener with a thought to take home and reflect on during the following days!

Compassion, humility, good listening skills, openness to what is going on in the world

Open, Pastoral, Inclusive, compassionate, welcoming, kind.

Humility, acceptance, excellent communication skills, relationship builder, warmth, non-judgmental, community minded, good listener, check their ego, sense of humor, authentic, caring, show their humanity

Empathetic, teach scripture, be open to interpretation, inclusivity, Eucharist should be an invitation to Christ and not a right ONLY for those who have received the sacrament, Catholic Social teaching should be central or at least a greater part of homilies. We have a lot of work to do with understanding institutional and structural racism that our church has been a part of. A priest should be LOVE and human and be willing to ask forgiveness of a parish when mistakes are made. Infallibility only exists with God and no one else, even the ordained. Priests need to be brave enough to stand for justice even if a bishop doesn't agree and the Pope should have your back to help you stand up.

Humility and deep humanity.

Freedom from administrative work (every parish should have a separate lay administrator). The priest should be strictly pastoral and responsible for a reasonably sized community able to know everyone personally (smaller church communities, not mega churches). Priests, whether male or female, should not live in isolation but rather in community or family. (Too many isolated priests become depressed or alcoholic).

Ability to make people feel welcome, to listen; to be a person of integrity willing to speak and act to make God's love real; a sense of humor!

Have updated theology, Vatican II and a pastoral sense (see the people as the church and to call forth the gifts of the people).

Prayerful, compassionate, a listener, loves the Church and is open to the Spirit guiding the direction of his ministry as well as the Church at large. Love of God and the people of God.

Attempts to re-energize pre Vatican climate; acting as if it never happened. Impact was confusion among the folks. Preaching the conservative, failing to be faithful to Pope

Francis, failing to even listen to the Pope and to voices in the pews.

Listening.

Accompaniment. Compassion.

Non authoritarian, listens to the people, shares in his homilies ideas and beliefs about God that were promulgated at Vatican II but never shared with the people so their faith and beliefs do not match the theology that has developed. Much more need to be taught to bring our people into a faith for the 21st century.

The seminary in my archdiocese is sending out priests in cassocks. The priest in my former parish has told the parishioners that they may not raise their hands during the Our Father, as only the priests are allowed to do that. I am scared about the future of the priesthood in my archdiocese. From what I heard during my break-out session, I am scared about the future of the priesthood in my country. One member stated that we need to go way back to the time when we were church gathered around my kitchen table and your kitchen table. Another member stated that we have been praying for vocations for decades and that maybe God's response to us is, "I have answered your prayer. I have sent vocations many people. You are just not listening to anything except "celibate (but not really celibate) male."

I left pastoral ministry because of the pastor who would not respond to my request for him to visit parishioners who wanted to be anointed. When they died, they were not buried from the church because they felt the church had abandoned them. The pastor wanted an ordained associate who could ordain rather than me who could not. When he told me that, I was demoralized and left the ministry and had to go for therapy.

Their humanity must be stable and mature. I believe they need ongoing education and spiritual direction. They need to have

community and good friends. They need pastoral care training. I like to think of the church as a LOST and FOUND Institution.

The men coming out of seminaries are very conservative and not acquainted with Vatican II. This was the basis of the Synod. We must be pastoral care persons as family members, lay people, and priests and deacons.

He said, "Listen! This is YOUR church. You need to make know what YOU want at all levels. We are in service to YOU on all levels."

Ability to work with people effectively - acknowledging individual gifts of those seeking to actively serve; a mature sense of self and gender identity and an understanding of own personal strengths and vulnerabilities; ability to delegate and lead by consensus among those chosen to work within the community in professional level career positions.

Someone who follows Jesus and who listens to individuals. One who is willing to be open to ways that the processes of institutional church can be challenged.

Humility. Integrity. A listening heart. An openness to learn from others. Human maturity and healthy relationships with both genders. Collaborative skills.

The ability to minister to the people of God. Strong pastoral gifts and a much better understanding of the spirit of the Gospel. As one priest was known to say, the Church is one, holy, apostolic and very funny. An appreciation that sexuality is a gift from the Creator not merely a means of procreation.

The needs of the people of God can best be met when the official leaders of worship have strong pastoral training in the spirit of the Gospels and the Beatitudes. When lay people are encouraged and supported in leading the needs of the community that they Identify, churches flourish.

Unless women lead worship services and offer pastoral care the church will remain deprived of the gifts of women. I remember the first time I heard a women minister preach. I had heard of women who felt called to priesthood and believed that they should be allowed to preside at the Eucharist. But hearing the sermon by a pastor of another faith, I was struck by how impoverished the Catholic Church is by denying the gifts of women who are often the backbone of parishes.

Listening, caring, empathy, involved in social justice, strength as preacher and spiritual director, open, inclusive, welcoming.

I think that when I listen to Catholic Women Preach every weekend - it gives me hope. I hear such prophetic preaching there that I never hear in my own parish. I think that allowing qualified women, lay and vowed, to preach at Mass is an essential first step in changing the future of the priesthood. I think that pursuing vigorously the ordination of women as deacons is another essential step that can be taken. As far as women being ordained as priests, if the beginning changes are made, the Holy Spirit will guide us in this area that maybe we can't see as yet. Some say that women do not receive the call or vocation to priesthood - that that cannot be. Yet, I have known women who truly feel called to the priesthood and have prayerfully pondered this for years. Has the Holy Spirit made a mistake with these women? We need to rely much more on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and less on the rules and decrees of the Institutional Church - especially doing things just because of Tradition and that it's always been done this way. The Spirit blows where she wills! Priests, women or men, need to be chosen from communities because of their Christ-like lives and qualities and their instincts to be Good Shepherds and deeply prayerful people, not because they will obey all the rules or would be good administrators. We need priests, women

or men, who are steeped in the mercy and love of God as it pertains to ALL.

Compassion, humility, commitment to serve, love of God and of people, a sense of humor helps regardless of gender.

Good listener. Humility. Compassionate. Open to discussion. Ability to speak clearly and distinctly. Knows how to use a microphone!

Ability to listen, to collaborate, to learn—and a pastoral heart that sees the person first, not the rules.

Decision making should be shared, not always defaulting to "Father." We need to get past the idea of ordination conferring "special powers" and privileges, and respect and honor the gifts and experiences of each person. And listen to each other!

Understanding of people -patience with them-call to service-sufficient intelligence-willingness to learn - ability to really listen.

At EPRH actively working with and listening to each other and seeing each others strengths and celebrating these.

Active Faith, Compassionate service, humility and radical openness to all others as images of God.

Listening, empathy, compassion. These are not always qualities present in our priests. I prefer a pastoral approach not an clericalist approach. Much of this could be from the directive of our Bishop who thinks that lay people are stupid.

Listening, humility.

A good listener who doesn't judge but leads people to grow in faith & make good decisions. A sincere enthusiasm about being a priest. Bravely speak of social justice issues from the pulpit, again not judging but offering food for thought.

Compassion, empathy, being present, loving the people of God and placing himself above others--be spiritual and HUMAN!

Maturity, well rounded education, including sexuality; good listening skills & a degree of humbleness. Some priests who have done mission work do become more open to the poor and vulnerable & interfaith dialogue with other faith traditions can also facilitate a bonded community and respect for other ways of seeing Scripture, rituals and Pastoral ministry.

I feel we had an inkling of the right of it in the 70's. I attended house Masses in Lindsay Ontario by priests of the Scarboro Foreign Missions that were open and welcoming to all the neighbors and friends, and they came. They were joy filled and followed by an evening of food and music. These priests laughed more that scowled and were seen a human by those that attended. Our new crop are sour and serious, the take themselves too seriously and hold others to a burdensome degree of disapproval and legalism.

Love of God, all people, humility, compassion, Person of prayer, able to listen and learn, understand that the priest is called to serve.

Ability to listen.

Need to change Canon law that gives ordained ministers a privileged status above the laity (like a feudal lord). Priests and laity must be on equal footing - totally collaborative - in exercising pastoral leadership in parishes.

Empathy, compassion, intelligence, an ability to see the church as a expression of Christ's love in all matters...the letter of the law at the service of the spirit of the law.

Young people complain to me that all the priest cares about is being in charge, telling others what is right and wrong, collecting money to "keep the church operating" - they don't

want us to express our questions, our sense of sexuality/ humanity's priest in my Chicago parish was clearly not feeling well, so I went up to read and the told him we could continue with a communion service and we'd pray he felt better. He said thank you and we proceeded with the service.

My experience is that many younger priests are bound to the law not to the spirit and they offer people the right and wrong , not the love and compassion of the Lord.

Compassion, A passion for service to those in need, regardless of the need, a desire to be the Christ who serves in the world today.

I have been in several situations in which religious women of equal academic and pastoral experience were not heard, but the opinion, the voices of the priests who were present were attended to. Patriarchy reigns, and when it is named; one sees blank stares.

When pastors, assistants and pastoral lay leaders know each other and respect the gifts of each one as they serve the Community of faith, what they demonstrate is working effectively together. Love one another. Lived is essential!

The formation of young men needs a serious infusion of the realities that are the consequence of systemic abuse, of sexism, of racism, and of systemic injustice. Leaders of communities need to understand the WHOLE picture, not simply the one-on-one relationship of pastor and member which should be a compassionate one; but in terms of their role as a leader in a societal context. Like all of us, they need humility, to recognize their limitations and remain grateful to a God who loves us all.

Transparency and compassion.

Compassionate, empathetic, a team player, down to earth, responsible, humble,

dependable, knowledgeable, spiritual, relational.

Actually listening to the ordained and honoring their gifts and callings.

Kindness, ability to listen to all, resourceful.

My wife and I were blessed to belong for a while to a Spirit-filled parish in St. Louis, Mo, named Resurrection of Our Lord. We were parishioners there from 1978 till about 2005 when the parish was suppressed. As new parishioners, we were blessed to enjoy the pastoring of Fr. Charles Forst, who humbly encouraged folks to live and worship as the People of God. He used to ask parishioners to assume positions on various parish committees or undertake some apostolate by saying “the Holy Spirit has a job for you.” Fr. Forst made sure that people knew that the parish was THEIR or OUR parish, and not his parish. Later pastors had a difficult act to follow and didn’t work so hard to convey the same message as “Charlie Forst.” Later, after Resurrection closed, we enjoyed another lively parish in St. Louis, St. Stephen Protomartyr’s. The pastor...there were two during our years there..., the pastoral associate, Mary Regan, the various parish organizations and groups, and the parish staff all evidenced a parish that embodied a truly Pilgrim Church on Earth.

Parishes today, at least in America, typically employ at least one or two lay employees, and many parishes may have a large lay staff composed of both professionally trained and credentialed lay pastoral associates and/or permanent lay deacons, along with several lay support staff members...many of whom are making a pittance for a salary and may or may not have some sort of health benefits and retirement plan. Even more so, much of the grunt work of running a parish falls upon the volunteering by members of the parish community. Without the hours and energy donated by parishioners, not to mention their financial support, there would be no

community. And there would be little ministry by the community to its own members, to the larger local community, or to the wider world in need. I envision a parish team of lay and ordained working together, with the division of labor somewhat fluid, depending upon the parish’s unique situation, the talents of the individual team members, and the resources available to the parish and the team. What works for a while in a parish may not work 5-10 years later. What works in one parish might not work in another parish. The sine que non for a successful parish team ministry is that it is the model required by the local bishop...and also by his successor. Every parish must have a functioning parish council which advises the pastor as to how to lead the parish as the local Pilgrim Church on Earth.

I am concerned that a number of newly ordained priests have little lived experience outside of usually enclosed seminary walls, except perhaps for a semester of pastoral experience. It seems that a number of young men are grouped together rather early in their lives to live, pray, and study together in a setting that little resembles the world at large, the world in which they will be expected to minister to an increasingly diverse population. Luckily, the admission of boys of high school age into the minor seminary has largely been abandoned. However, even the admission of men of college age into a seminary is too early in my opinion. Young men of that age are usually still struggling, at least to some degree, with their identity, their sexuality, and their beliefs. I believe that men need to be at least 25-30 years old before they are accepted into a seminary, into a program that explores a possible vocation to serve the people of God as a priest. If women ever get the “official okay” to enter the priesthood...and they should’ve long ago..., they perhaps would perhaps not have to wait until after their college years, since women mature sooner than men, by and large. Also, I would recommend that bishops send their men...and women...to seminarians located on urban Catholic colleges, not to remote

monastic rural seminaries. I also liked the idea that the local Catholic community itself invite men and women to explore a possible call to ordination. Vocation today seems to have a very individualistic flavor, between God and the individual man...or woman...only. The local Church community should have more voice in their seminarians suitability and vocation. How exactly to effect that I'm not exactly sure. Perhaps our non-Roman but Catholic sisters and brothers might have some experience which we could consult.

A priest should try to connect with everyone in the parish in a genuine way. Being pastoral is very important. Priests earn people's respect by their actions in the parish community - not by their rank.

Another priest who was on the liturgy committee made all of us feel we were equal members of the committee. Our ideas were listened to and considered.

Humility and the ability to listen to all the believers in the parish. The role of the priest is not to be a rule keeper but a humble guide, one that will wash your feet and demonstrate how much you are truly loved. They should smell like their sheep.

I believe that the priesthood plays a valuable role in the life of the church if we believe in a sacramental church. However, we need to address the understanding of who is called to priesthood. To image Christ one needs to be human but not necessarily exclusively male or celebrate. We will be a more human and complete church if priests can marry and the requirement is not gender specific!

In the earlier days, there were many priests who worked well with lay people. We were blessed to preside at communion services, share in the reflections in the gospel, we came together to listen to each other. There was so much respect for our priests as well.

Non judge mental. Approachable kind. Willingness to share and respect others prayerful and follower of Jesus.

Listening to one another. Mindful of the presence of Jesus and the spirit. Acknowledgment of racism, greed and need for prayer and education concerning these issues. It has to change or it will die. Awareness and efforts regarding climate change and care of earth.

Sincere belief in Jesus' teachings, deep love and concern for other people, flexible/ accepting of individual differences and needs, model of caring moral behavior toward others, intellectual as well as spiritual strength.

Striving for wholeness and holiness. Open to learning from others and listening to others. Humility. Believing and preaching a theology of inclusion and relationships.

Compassion, ability to translate liturgy into meaningful and highly inspirational messages, excellent communication skills, ability to relate well to parishioners, good sense of humor.

I attended a church where the deacon would occasionally give the homily while the priest sat and listened.

Speaking ability; kindness, openness, acceptance of all, knowledge of the Bible and church teachings, knowledge of justice and outreach programs in the wider church, inclusion of other faiths.

Empathy, compassion, fluency in the Bible and other theological texts.

Compassion. The ability to listen. Deep and abiding faith in Christ's teachings.

Authenticity, prayerful listening heart, shaped by scripture, open to the movements of the Spirit.

Compassion. Prayerful. Knowledge sense of justice as proclaimed in Social Teaching share leadership open to listen.

A person of compassion, empathy, willing to listen from the heart and not make judgements.

Certain Bishops and priests are very good at involving lay people and encouraging formation then respecting the suggestions I have made. My home pastor, Fr. Edward Upton, was one of those. He listened to my ideas and offered support as to how to execute them. He encouraged me to be formed. Other encouraging people have included Bishop Gerald Kicanas, Bishop Conway, Bishop Frank Caggiano, Bishop Gustavo Garcia Siller.

Selflessness, friendly, enthusiastic, caring, spiritual, outgoing.

Integrity, honesty, self-awareness, spiritually robust, creative, aware of privilege, and PASTORAL!

Compassion, willing to listen, cooperation.

I worked in a parish in SC as Pastoral Associate. I was a religious woman BUT all the lay ministers cooperated to make our parish a visible unique parish. This was in GA.

I have spoken above of a parish in which I experienced working together. It means the ordained minister needs to be able to listen and accept the fact that they as ordained ministers might not have all the experience required to make CHURCH in that congregation.

Holy, prayerful, wise, compassionate, understanding, relevant, open.

Compassion, integrity, and the ability to preach homilies which Jesus would approve.

Pastoral, a Community Builder, a Connector.

Compassion, wisdom, humility, humor, optimism.

Listening to “poor priests” homilies during the height of the sexual abuse revelations. Little concern for the actual victims. Caused a friend to leave Mass, having a panic attack.

Discerning, good listener.

Gentle.

Love of humanity, peace, and the marginalized.

Prayerfulness, humility, openness to listening to others, adaptable to situations, understanding of human nature with its good and its weak points.

Empathy, engagement, ecumenical theological reading, ability to relate well to women and appreciate their gifts --as well as to men. A commitment to good preaching.

Compassion, understanding, ability to listen to a variety of viewpoints, works for the common good, invites others to participate in the liturgy, not high-minded.

If priests are strictly for giving sacraments - which is what they should be - they should be prayerful, humble, gentle and generous. Other people should do all the other jobs!!

Uppermost in today’s world, a priest should be either gender. Beyond that, qualities of intelligence, empathy, intuitiveness, humbleness, and dedication.

A person who is caring, compassionate, humble and with a very deep relationship with Christ and His Church.

Compassion, courage, commitment to social justice, work toward end to racism, homophobia and equality of women in administration and service humility.

Compassion, empathy, intelligence, knowledge, humility, sense of humor.

A different kind of priest is needed. Confident, well-educated people, male and female, married or not, LGBTQ, or not, who embrace life and the world. Who want to be in the world and make it better. Not timid, or worse, over-confident righteous zealots who have an agenda to make the world conform to their rigid views.

When I reflect on the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, I see two persons with different calls encountering each other, sharing stories, listening intently to each other respecting the brilliance of the other, acting with deep humility and working together to spread the Good News. Encounter, humility, respect, wisdom, appreciation that ALL are called, etc. Suggests that partnerships is the platform from which all men and women can fulfill their vocation.

A parish in Cleve that has a team of members that work together with the Priest in most areas of care equally (Blessed Trinity).

Being open to all members, sharing the talents of many members, showing kindness, encouragement.

Good listener, culturally sensitive, servant leader.

Listening without judgement, caring for all, humility, wisdom, dedication to Jesus' teachings.

New pastors have moved the parish "back to the 50s" without even listening to all parishioner and have summarily fired staff who don't go along.

Integrity, caring for people. Open to the Spirit in ALL.

Service-minded, Pastoral, Compassionate, Contemplative, and able to listen and dialogue with community.

Compassion, communication, kindness, leadership- for parish or other pastoral ministry.

Training must change from the 1964-1970 experience I had & involve more pastoral areas. Screenings should weed out those without a pastoral spirit. Some very dysfunctional men are ordained

The ability to truly listen and have compassion for all they encounter. Maturity, education, and shared leadership skills which need to be addressed in seminary education and continuing education.

Being at home in their own skin of a human being instead of hiding behind the armor of a cleric. Acceptance of themselves for who they are, their strengths, and challenges. Not fearing vulnerability. Having the mindset of a "learner," not a "knower."

Ministering wholeheartedly, with empathy, mindful of the people with whom he humbly walks, embracing the gifts of lay people, and the place of women in the Church. Puts compassion and collaboration before dogma and doctrine. Follows the spirit of the law rather than the letter of the law.

Emulates spiritual hospitality, being a listener. "Listening means paying attention, wanting to understand, to value, to respect and to ponder what the other person says. Knowing how to listen is an immense grace, it is a gift which we need to ask for and then make every effort to practice." (Pope Francis on World Communication Day, 8th May 2016.)

This scenario follows the installation of a new pastor for a downtown Co-Cathedral over 100 years old. Within three months of the new pastor's arrival, a large number of parishioners have left because of his overbearing leadership

style and pre-Vatican II liturgical spirituality. The new pastor began his residence by insisting on purchasing a mansion as a rectory to the tune of a million dollars. His horizon overlooked the present flux of change in demographics. His vision was seeing the parish grow with more young adults or young families in the future. However, at this point, about 75% of the parishioners are 60 and above, many of whom have fixed incomes. The majority of members on the Finance and Pastoral Councils were seeing another horizon. They were more concerned with the present, short-term situation. Besides fixed incomes, there were employment struggles, and younger adults opting for the great resignation. Families are just trying to get by keeping up with yearly expenses. The Councils realized the dilemma of raising money for a new rectory while still maintaining an older church building and ministry programs in the areas of music, liturgy, faith formation and building security/maintenance. The conflict was put on hold when the Diocese nixed the purchase of a new rectory unless the parish could prove they could maintain an income that would both maintain present parish expenses and raise a substantial amount money for the new rectory while considering its upkeep. One would not recognize this parish from nine months ago. Seven of the original eight staff persons have resigned. The longtime, outstanding cathedral choir no longer exists and there are only two children in the sacramental class. There are no female altar servers. The parish is austere in comparison to the former parish where hospitality, inspiring homilies and uplifting liturgical music were hallmarks. The assembly has been informed that one should not receive communion unless they have gone to confession even for venial sins and have fasted for a complete hour and not one minute less. Giving Communion on the tongue is his preference. Where once a team met with bereaved families preparing funerals, choosing readings etc., the pastor now chooses the readings etc. Baptism preparation is a video with no personal interaction of parents. The

RCIA is a catechism class led by a priest, rather than a journey of sharing faith experiences with team members and opening the Word. Wedding preparation involves more academic reading than addressing catechetical moments. Very controlling, ministries headed by lay women and a sister are almost now exclusively done by priests. People who remain are for the most part longtime parishioners who refuse to let this priest push them away, thus the celebration of their faith is really a test of their forbearance. Fortunately, the diaspora of this Co-Cathedral can find spiritual nourishment in four other city parishes. It is into this setting that our Bishop has assigned a newly ordained priest; a young man with much potential, now being mentored by this new pastor. This pastor has insinuated in several homilies that the previous pastor did everything wrong including offering more confession times in a week. The previous pastor was not well, however, besides weekly confessions, he was always available for private confession at any time. After ministering in the coal mines of parish life for nearly 60 years, I'm struggling with a "dark night of the soul."

Priests are human and sometimes need an intervention for therapy. This must be done sooner rather than later, not only for alcoholism, but also other dysfunctional behavioral tendencies resulting from pride, e.g., an inflated ego, fear of relating, of being vulnerable, or a sense of empowerment.

Pastoral, one with the people, welcoming of all people's gifts, a listening spirit, able to invite and encourage participation, all have a voice in decision making, and has a current theology and justice minded.

Appreciation for community, empathy, commitment to social justice, a willingness to meet people where they are.

Listening, relating readings to local life, more ecumenical involvement.

Compassion, justice, humility, concerned for poor.

Not listen to, dictating what needs to be done. I was disempowered.

Priestly qualities include compassion, sensitivity, warm friendliness. And understanding of today's families. Essential is finance management of parishes. The ability to include all parishioners in decisions affecting their parishes, agreeing on the outcomes without taking control. Keeping the church Christ Centered and open to all without judgement.

Authenticity, integrity, humility, pastorality, wisdom, articulate, theological, moral, justice and service oriented.

How about humility? Recognize the gifts of each other in an equitable partnership committed to the service of God's people? This idea that male priests are somehow. More than human and therefore to be adored and unquestionable has got to go. They are human, they are fallible, they need help.

Compassion, good listener, respect, co-responsible with the community, openness, humility, inclusive.

Priests do not need to be handling the "running" of a parish, for which they were not trained. Let them do their pastoral work.

They should not be the "final say" in everything having to do with the community, everyone else being advisors. There needs to be a consensus among the community members, especially those who actually care.

Compassion and empathy. Strong personal faith. Desire and willingness to help parish in creating community and being part of it (not distancing him or herself).

I have had the privilege of knowing and working with a self-described Vatican II priest who builds community wherever he goes. He starts or participates in food banks, marriage encounters, university classes, dinners. He has been ecumenical in communities. He is humble loving and compassionate.

A priest needs to have a deep love and reverence for the Eucharist. Daily Mass should not be cancelled for the convenience of the priest. A priest should want to serve the people, to be caring, concerned for them, reaching out to them and helping them grow in their faith.

To be personally holy, have a good relationship with God, be a good listener, to care about his flock and visit them regularly.

Compassion.

Our archdiocese knows nothing but clericalism. It has pervaded the total parish climate so that parishioners don't know how to become spiritually mature and are rarely included in any decisions. Perhaps this is a direct result of their opinion that, in America at least, the ignorant immigrants needed to listen to the clerics since they were the only educated ones. However, I believe this pretty much happened all over the world. It is still very strong in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. They seem to have lost sight of the fact the lay people are as educated and, in many instances, even more educated than they are. They opened up all those schools. They should know better.

Listening to one another, accepting that another person may have more/better experience and can shift responsibility to said person.

While this comment is a bit off topic, I believe the Catholic church needs to greatly improve on how they treat and care for our nuns. They are committed and assist the community/church greatly but left to 'fend' for themselves, esp. As they age/retire.

Feels loved and forgiven, experienced suffering and mercy, thus able to BE with others in their suffering and forgiving experiences. The priest does NOT have to be savvy with finance, fund raising, or executive skills. The person needs to know how to gather. “the team”, live the gospel, preach it well (and lovingly so) have compassion and be willing to ask forgiveness, learn from others, laugh, drink. And dance with abandon yet moderation. The person need be concerned about our earth, the difficult, hurting persons, the radical joyous persons. And all those in between who live on the planet. A lot I know but hopefully 50 60 years of priesthood can incorporate it at some level.

Compassion, good communication skills, willing to be a part of the community...not just taking part, bringing out the gifts of others and using them for the good of all.

Patient, compassionate, filled with joy, proclaiming the Word of God with fervor, generous to the needs of the poor, prayerful and innovative.

A priest needs to be a prayerful kind person who is grounded in the vision of the documents of Vat II. They would need the skills to work with people they serve and yet maintain their own personhood.

It would help for some lay people to have seminary preparation. But the kind of preparation is key. It must be with a vision of Vat II.

We need priests. All kinds of priests to serve all of God's people.

Love, mercy, compassion, HUMILITY.

Humility; open-mindedness; compassion/mercy.

Humility, compassion, availability, openness to listen and to learn from parishioners.

Prayerful, reflective, outreach to others, inclusivity, compassion, gatherer of community, collaboration and openness to listen.

A sense of his own parish. Pastoral outreach, compassionate heart, preaching that speaks to the needs of the people connecting the Scriptures to everyday experience.

I was a Pastoral Associate at my parish from 1987-92 and the pastor and I worked well together sharing ministry. On his day off, I led a communion service at which I preached.

Having a servant mindset, listening, responding to the needs of the parish and community, not having an agenda or expectation of what a parish should be.

Humility, patience, compassion, leadership.

The ability to be pastoral. Business and administration should be left to lay leaders with the necessary expertise.

Is collaborative, compassionate, listens deeply.

Is pastoral, “smells like the sheep”, can relate to the community, and is personal. Sees the gifts in others, preaches well.

A pastoral team working together - staff, lay leaders and priest.

Listening!!! Not acting like a ruler, a king. Helping with ordinary things around the parish. Great homilies, especially regarding social justice.

Leadership skills that are pastoral. Continuing education. Maturity.

Pastoral. Interested in the laity and are willing to be a part enhancing the people of God.

Compassionate, intelligent, excellent communicator, Christ centered, honest, empathetic, etc.

Listening, humor, good preaching, compassion.

Faithfulness, humility, compassion, empathic listening skills, willingness to work with others, lay and ordained, women and men.

Compassion, empathy, a heart for service.

Provide seminarians with training in human development, counseling and diversity/inclusion.

Prayerful, selfless, genuine, loving, pastoral.

Priesthood is a human invention that is no longer working as it is currently done. Priests and laity both are not served well. I don't think the institution of priesthood can be reformed from within since power never gives up power voluntarily in human history. Reform will have to come mostly from the demands of laity.

Empathy, friendliness, educated, kindness, openness.

Milwaukee Archbishop's declaration on trans folks is a document that is not based on love and empathy.

Ability to listen to each other's vision and set ground rules when working as a team. Understanding team leadership behavioral science.

The ability to deliver genuine pastoral support to the member of the congregation rather than exerting their power to prove "I'm the man - my way or the highway!"

Openness to full laity participation, pastoral, honest and devoted to the people.

Overpowering, in total charge, not open to listening.

Listening to one another, open to other's opinions, education for working together

Best education for priests in all areas. How to work with women and respect them. Lay leadership. Pastoral

Listening, prayerful (open to God's Spirit and people), able to relate and have excellent people skills, flexibility. Knowledge of Catholicism and Liturgy, creativity, openness.

I was on staff that worked hard to be a pastoral team in concert with the pastor.

Be pastoral viz. Practicing Catholic, a good listener, caring, compassionate, open to quality people and lay leadership.

There has to be some kind of contract/agreement with the parties concerned.

Able to listen, be collaborative, authentic, up to date and be humble.

Openness....compassion.....collaborative.....humility.

Kindness.

More than one pastor I worked with only treated me as working for him. I could only bear this a short time. I was able to move on. People in the pews will either put up with them, find another parish, or find a different church. Pastors really should not move into a parish and make all kinds of changes, so that people no longer know the community they have been.

Build a common vision of what they want their parish to be and keep revising the way forward. This requires a "synodal" parish process. It takes lots of time listening. All need to read good materials, too.

We need well educated persons of deep faith in God, love of God and love of neighbor who

are kind, caring, and who have a call to serve others. Human beings have various gifts, but we need priests who can share their love of God, love of neighbor and help nurture, invite and challenge the community in loving ways to grow in our faith and our response to God's call to us as individuals and as communities of faith. We need priests who are open to shared leadership with lay ministers, parish councils and community members. Canonically priests have the power, so if they cling to power and are not open to the gifts and abilities and wisdom of lay ministers, parish council members, etc., the church will continue to suffer from clericalism.

Kindness, flexible in regard to person's formation, needs, life experiences, truthful --rules are not concrete.

Compassion, integrity, holiness.

A priest should be a good communicator and good listener. A priest should feel committed to serving the Church and be able to engage people in a community.

Educated in world religions; awareness of Creation as first Incarnation; inclusive approach; pastoral skills; good homilist; humility.

Having a parish council group with equal say on how the community runs. Listening sessions among the community; use of questionnaires for community participation; all the things our parish used to do before the archdiocese appointed a pastor who reversed all the programs we had built over 50 years. This "spiritual abuse" was the height of clericalism and rendered us a virtual faith community with no regular home after decades of being a church family of openness and inclusion.

Pastoral mind set - not clerical mind set; willingness to learn and work with a variety of Catholics.

Not listening to or valuing women.

A deep prayer life, ability to listen, a deep love of all creation and enough love and knowledge of self to actualize that love and a love for and confidence in the Church to adapt to what is needed.

Initially (40 years ago) when I ministered at the OSU Newman Center, we shared ministry equally both liturgically and in pastoral responsibilities, even to the point that if I or another woman on staff heard confessional material, and the person wanted to celebrate Reconciliation, one of the priests would come to my office, ascertain the penitents' sorrow and intention not to repeat the sin, and would then offer absolution. That was shared ministry!

I have experienced the mutual respect and support of shared ministry. Priesthood simply cannot be exclusively for men, excluding the life experiences of more than half the church. But women should not simply make ourselves fit into clericalism. By assuming additional responsibilities of leadership in every level of church life, women can bring our own wisdom to what is currently a rigid and ineffective style of leadership. Priests may be folks who take A role of priesthood while also being in a career or job that helps with their own, and the local community's financial needs and generosity. Priests need to come from the communities that nominate them. Melchizedek may have been a priest forever, but that doesn't necessarily describe the needs of faith communities in the 21st C.

A priest should be humble, a listener and a learner, seek to understand family life, the community to which s/he is assigned, including the ecumenical, interfaith, and public community outside of the parish, give as much attention to public schooled children as to the Catholic school, if the parish has one. A priest should be compassionate. A lay council and other lay movements in the parish should be valued and respected, considered

important to the decisions of the parish. The parish does not belong to the priest, it belongs to the community. Outreach and social justice must be important to the priest. Inclusive sacraments must be important to the priest. Vatican Council II must be essential to the priest's understanding of the People of God and of the community in which the priest serves.

Respect. Collaboration. Listening to the voices of the local needs. Common education.

Dedicated to serving God by serving the laity. Honesty. Collegial. Compassionate.

Prayerful, compassionate, and pastoral with integrity and deep belief that all people are equally loved children of God.

Leadership, a good speaker with a sense of humor, a great listener, knowledge of the readings, compassion for those in need, understanding and learning about the constant changes in our surroundings. Able to adapt to changes in our world.

When you have the right people working with an ordained the ordained has to be willing to listen to their ideas and give things a try. It worked at St John Fisher for years!!!!!!

Self-recognition as being no different than the rest of humanity. Accepting that many of their parishioners are capable of carrying out many parish tasks and in some cases better able than a priest. Accepting advice from parishioners and not being autocratic making all decisions themselves. Being more focused on pastoral activities. Not showing disdain for women. Not saying that clergy do not want parishioners thinking or telling them what religious media they should subscribe to.

Kindness, understanding, reverence, imagination, love for all,

Ability to listen to others and respect what they say

Listen, recognize and encourage meaningful liturgies, have the smell of the sheep.

Be human. Live the gospel message. Respect the education of your people.

Inclusive, compassionate, loving, wise and welcoming, strong understanding of self and ability to find healing for what is broken, focus on 'what would Jesus do' and not give way to bias against those they do not understand because they different from themselves.

Humility, a sense of compassionate presence with people, good speaker, leader, commitment to social justice.

Christlike, Compassionate, Sensitive to his/her community, Inclusive, Personable, Spiritual/ Prayerful Celebrant, One who empowers and affirms the Gifts of the People, Challenges with Respect and Dignity, Person of Conviction who can Listen with her/his heart, One immersed in V.C.II, and each year makes a Retreat, and is involved in Continuing Education, On who uses the ambo Well (speaks insightfully, clearly, loudly, and is a bridge from Sacred Scripture to Life Experiences and the signs of the times, One who in seminary has had qualified women and men Professors seeped in Traditional and Current Theology, One who can relate well with folks of all sexes, colors, and creeds.

People-oriented; authenticity, sincerity, listening. Most of all, able to AFFIRM any and all parishioners, not setting oneself apart in a little circle of confidants; too many men have been "vetted" for the priesthood for whom ordination has been an escape from the reality of life, who are emotionally and psychologically unbalanced.

Open meetings that concern important decisions for the well-being of the parish; not merely reporting done from the ambo

at the end of weekend Mass. A prepared-in-advance agenda prepared and circulated among the parishioners. Dialogue and discussion, concerns, opinions given respectful consideration. In some cases, perhaps the process of voting on certain issues; clergy respected for their knowledge and experience in leading congregations, with an eye on the experiences of other parishes' experiences. Listening, listening, respecting, respecting each other. Example in my parish: a big church renovation and the need to choose a statue of Mary to be prominently set in the area of the sanctuary. A large modern sculpture of Mary was done by an artist-friend of the head liturgies, a large statue of Mary depicted in a very motherly, middle-age time of her life, so life-like and inviting. I love it; she speaks to me in this pose. Yet, many parishioners do not like it, and there is any undertone of disgruntlement. What a perfect issue this could have been for a synodal process of decision-making! Most people do not know how the piece of art was selected, or where it came from!! The rumor is that a wealthy member totally paid for the work. That's great for our worrisome finances, but how was the sheepfold shown any respect? It hurts to think how we smelly sheep have been content to take a back seat.

Without a major change of the ecclesial culture, we will have more men using the vocation of the Catholic priesthood as a means of escaping real life, or as a means of hiding out. How is it that leading members of our hierarchy are still preaching celibacy? What has been taught in our seminaries about human sexuality? Changes must be made. Women must be on an equal footing and respected by male clergy. Marriage and family life must be encouraged, but not at all required. Male and female clergy must reflect very authentically racial and cultural diversity. Their calling by the Holy Spirit must be honored. Why must it take so long for these changes to be implemented. These decisions do not hinge on doctrine and dogma. Or on Biblical exegeses!!

Faith, humility, genuine calling to a life following Jesus and his word, fortitude, strength, empathy, lack of ego, intelligence, maturity, emotional and mental stability, life experience, self-awareness - note none of these is the sole domain of men or single men.

The Presbyterian church is across the street from the Catholic Church in our town. The married couple who serves there are just as pastoral as any priest who has served in the Catholic Church. It's about service and devotion to God and neighbor.

A traveling priest made his rounds to several villages every month. He could never have managed so many parishes on his own sisters and parishioners managed the day to day affairs in each community. He also generally had to stay overnight between villages and would lodge with families. He always earned his keep, mixing in with family chores and entertainment as needed. Another priest created an open pastoral council. Meetings were announced public ally and anyone could participate who was called to attend. All voices were heard and valued.

The priesthood is a human service job. In addition to theological studies, they need training as missionaries, social workers, and counseling.

Pastoral sensitivity and on-going theological formation

LOVE, compassion, openness, commitment to community building, being non-judgmental, acceptance, friendliness, welcoming.

I try to think back to what made those experiences so comfortable and fulfilling. I think we were working more in a partnership. We figured out what was important by listening to each other, we respected each other and how each of us could help accomplish our goals. We actually were taught some of these

skills in training in the diocese. This makes me wonder what has happened over the last 20-25 years. Control was never an issue. We were in this for the greater good of the church & it's people. We had Life in the Spirit Seminars and prayer groups, we were nourished in Faith by goodness in our leaders(priests) & trusted each other I guess. We welcomed everyone to our church. We need to be welcoming again. We don't need to hear how sinful everyone is. We need to hear about the Joy of the Lord and begin to recognize it in our lives. I haven't thought about this for a long time but Joy is missed when we start being exclusive rather than inclusive. I remember now there were always people who wanted to be exclusive but I think they used to be outnumbered. First they were confused by Vatican 11 which I think was never positively explained or welcomed within our parishes by the regular priests which to me means their Bishops neglected educating the local priests. Then it seemed that many of the more welcoming priests began to leave the priesthood. What a shame we lost them to social work, psychology and other helping professions. Then as things got more inclusive parishioners started leaving the church. I remained. Always hopeful that change could occur from within -never from outside. I've done a lot of reading and praying during these Covid years. It's hard to go back but still it is where my core faith is centered so I will still try to work from within.

They must be kind and listeners. They must lead by example and conduct themselves morally and ethically.

Compassion, understanding of the issues of our current society, the ability to listen and discern, relate the gospel to today's issues, trust of lay leadership, inspire our youth of today as they are the future of the church.

Homophobic attitude towards Gay people, witnessing the pain caused to good, loving human beings as a result and broken

relationships between Catholic parents and their children as a result.

Good listening, good preaching, welcoming and pastoral approach - involved some at all levels open to the laity.

Humility, openness, listener, able to accept criticism and take the good from what's offered, comfortable working with women, able to delegate, mature enough to allow others to take responsibility for using their gifts for the benefit of the parish.

Compassion, intelligence, patience.

Listening to all the voices!

Pastoral qualities; compassion; humility; finding ways to better understand what challenges parishioners face; commitment to the people they serve and not to their clerical careers.

Willingness to listen and not disparage the speaker.

Compassion, faith, self-control, multi-culturalism, inclusivity, inter-personal skills, ability to manage healthy relationships, tact, effective communication, honesty, reliability, adaptability, deep knowledge of church history and theology, forgiveness, perseverance, ability to trust others (laity), continuing education of self, staff, and church/school-goers.

I was a daily mass-goer, active in parish work and this guy could not listen to any but his way. He was off-putting and my children, husband, and I avoided him.

Ability to engage with parishioners; good listener; ability to know his congregation, by name. A decent homilist; willing to become available for counseling. **HUMILITY**

Someone who will listen.

Our diocese is undergoing a gigantic merger process because of a priest “shortage” (sic). The process is so clerical with abundant arrogance and entitlement. This leads to lack of transparency which leads to lack of accountability. Our bishop has made promises that he has not kept. For example, he told a parish that they would have to close their school because of financial reasons but that if the parishioners could raise \$150k they could stay open another year. The parish raised \$175k but the bishop closed the school. I have not been able to find out what happened to the money.

2. I have been an adult catechist for 20 years in our RCIA program. Our Pastoral Associate retired and I was approached to take over running the RCIA program. This had been part of the Pastoral Associate’s responsibilities for over 30 years. I was told that I was expected to do this on a volunteer basis and was not a team player if I wanted to be compensated for my time and skill sets. I believe this is at least in part because I am a woman.

Servitude, compassion, devotion to one’s call.

Genuine compassion & concern for individuals in the parish - whether or not the priest has a “solution” to the person’s dilemma. A person of GENUINE PRAYER not empty ritual.

An Orthodox Russian trained priest was put into our Catholic Church due to a lack of male Catholic priests and he did several horrible things in Christ’s name: 1) he told the students that girls and women should not step up on the altar or serve as altar-servers, Eucharistic ministers, or readers, b/c the altar is for males b/c Jesus was male and God is male, 2) he literally tore off my niece’s baptism dress b/c he insisted that the baby should be naked to be baptized -- it was shocking and we/godparents & parents didn’t know what to do other than say it was never a problem w/ other babies before (he arrived) -- it seemed sexual him staring at her naked body and it was violent in his taking off her dress while she screamed and we felt helpless b/c priests are

given too much power in the Church. There are several more examples, but that will do for now. Besides accepting more conservative / Orthodox priests, the Catholic Church has hurt women and girls from my first-hand experiences growing up in the Church. I can say several more, but I will touch upon one that some Catholic priests started to harp on constantly: abortion. As if nothing else matters and to suggest that women/teen-girls are murderers who have an abortion -- no compassion, no fighting rape culture, no fighting domestic violence, etc. Basically, abortion seems to be a way for misogynist or ego-centric male religious to justify their subordination of women despite most violence in the world being perpetrated by men against men, women, children, animals, ... To claim to be Christ-like and followers of Jesus and yet to set up a patriarchal institution that allows men to get away with sex abuse and verbal abuse/ etc. Against females is FAR FROM JESUS CHRIST. Shame on any religious who are complicit in this institution that has harmed my and many self-esteem, self-image (created in God’s image?!), etc.

A loving and compassionate person; one who recognizes the talents in their community and invites their complete participation. Someone who knows that women are invaluable to a working community, not only by teaching, cleaning, washing linens, etc., but also by delivering homilies at mass and leading other services.

Collaborative abilities.

I (a lay woman) served for many years as the RCIA coordinator in my parish, where our previous pastor welcomed that as a collaborative effort.

Someone who can work collaboratively.

Qualities include collaborative, prayerful, fluent English language ability.

The strengths and gifts of each person need to be utilized to their maximum capacity. The marriage of lay and ordained persons should call forth the best each has to offer. These groups must be schooled in collaborative methods that maintain level ground and the dignity of each person. The use of power and dominance should never be used.

Retreat ministry.....most positive..... collaborative ministry!

I have experience on retreat teams and liturgical teams that worked collaboratively

The new pastor fired me because I did not like his way of establishing himself as the ONE in charge of everything, not being collaborative at all.

Collaborative ministry will involve more meetings, rather than autocratic decisions being made, but a circular model of ministry, where leaders are elected for short times.

Empathy, caring, personable, non-judgmental, ability to teach and preach faith through current situations, humility, collaborative

Working collaboratively and not being dictated by parish priest or bishop in all aspects of the church community and the wider church.

I see that it would be a network of leadership in a community with persons taking on different roles through an inclusive and collaborative structure. We need to model a respectful, loving and inclusive community of faith that includes ordained and lay persons in a shared collaborative model. Anyone ordained should be of any gender, married/single, any sexuality. The leadership of communities should be complementary to each other's skills and gifts to support the needs of the actual communities served. By working in a de-centralized and shared servant leadership structure, we can better live out the Gospel message in the institutional Church.

Collaborative, Pastoral, good listener, open minded, flexible, joyful

As a pastoral associate in my parish our staff is collaborative, thanks to the leadership of the pastor.

Acceptance of essential equality and complementarity. Formation and training in collaborative leadership.

Deep faith, love of God, love of neighbor, ability to listen, to dialogue, to work collaboratively with others, integrity, regular prayer life.

My parish in Ottawa where the Oblates of Mary Immaculate who were appointed pastors worked collaboratively with laity, promoted Vatican II liturgy, adult faith education, ministry to the marginalized.

I worked as a Maryknoll Lay Missioner in Tanzania, Sudan and Kenya with other missionaries. The work I did with the St. Patrick Missionaries in Sudan was always very collaborative, respectful, supportive and our teams included priests, Sisters, Brothers and lay people including lay missioners.

Collaborative.

Humility. Integrity. A listening heart. An openness to learn from others. Human maturity and healthy relationships with both genders. Collaborative skills.

Collaborative leadership between lay and ordained is the way to go if we want to have not only healthy parishes but also healthy leaders. Building good relationships is key.

Love of people, demonstrates servant leadership, has a collaborative style and models the ability to delegate.

Collaborative & synodal

New pastor unilaterally imposed his very own traditionalist style on the parish, dismissed several key lay leaders - basically undoing the collaborative environment of the previous pastor. On the parish, dismissed many of the lay leadership.

I currently belong to a “non-canonical” parish - under the radar screen of the archdiocese. The priest and lay ministers are totally collaborative in decision making.

Need to change Canon law that gives ordained ministers a privileged status above the laity (like a feudal lord). Priests and laity must be on equal footing - totally collaborative - in exercising pastoral leadership in parishes.

In the Congregation of St. Peter which is considered by some a “break-away church, but was really a “throw-away community by Bishop Lennon”, the current pastor and assistant work collaboratively with lay people who provide ministry to members of the community. Mutual respect is obvious.

I have participated on many national committees, including lay ministry certification, youth ministry and religious education. We have had clergy working with us and I believe that, since the ordained wanted to be on those committees and realized the need for lay men and women in the Church they were very collaborative. I hear too many pastors say, “we need vocations (to the priesthood)”, but never promote lay vocations. When we respect and support each other’s vocations, we will have more in our Catholic Church. The lack of respect, in too many cases, has given the non-Catholic Christian Church many vocations.

Collaborative.

Listener; delegator; humble; wise; truth-teller; courageous; honest; collaborative; learner.

It needs to start with mutual respect for one another’s talents. Finding the right person for each job and working collaboratively. I believe the Protestant churches have shown good examples of this.

Is collaborative, compassionate, listens deeply.

Humility. Preaching and presiding skills. Know all your people. Build a collaborative staff and expect broad involvement in parish life.

Able to listen, be collaborative, authentic, up to date and be humble.

When the local clergy goes through the motions of being collaborative but a plan & a decision has already be made about the closing of a parish.

Openness.....compassion.....collaborative..... humility.

With a different priest we worked collaboratively, and decisions were either joint or he deferred to my experience.

Collaborative, being inclusive, prayerful, honest.

It is collaborative - a realization that they need and support one another- have strategies to solve differences.

Personal faith qualities.

Able to listen, pastoral, flexible, prayerful, funny.

Welcoming spirit, Prayerful, Courageous, Willing to Listen, Open to all cultures, Skilled at saying “No” without closing doors or hearts.

Inclusive, prayerful/mystical, justice oriented.

A priest is called to listen, to shepherd, to gather, to pray, to be a healing presence WITH the community.

Authenticity, humility, congruence, holiness (being the person God made them to be), a person of deep faith and prayer, excellent leadership qualities.

Relationability, conversant, humble, creative, courageous.

Deep prayer life.

Ability to lead prayer.

Listener, Prayerful, not hungry to control, Open to being creative, willing to accept criticism.

The priest should first be a person of deep prayer, be open, kind, and understanding.

Open-minded, respectful, educated, humble, kind, Faith-filled.

Listeners, humble, deeply rooted in scripture and the catholic faith but open to the Holy Spirit, collegial with the lay leaders in the parish, guides to help the community grow into more mature discipleship.

Personable whether introvert or extrovert; has a robust prayer life and spiritual practices; free from administration of parish or organization; knows God; has insights into the God-life and what we are all called to in God.

Prayerful, listening, leadership, companionship, observant, humility, courageous, willing to learn, love for the Church- the people of God, openness, ability to call forth people's gifts. Also an ability to see the needs of the local community.

Openness, courage, prayerful, adult lay life before priesthood.

For me, It is important to have a priest who is listening to the Spirit calling him to be holy and in relationship with the people with whom

he shares the broader faith life of the Church. He/she should be a person who regularly prays with Scripture and who can relate the Word to the life of those living at this particularly time in our history. He/she would be constantly open to new ways of understanding how God continues to move us. He/she would be one that would lift up the gifts of others in the community and be both affirming and loving.

Servant leadership, listening, a prayer life based on knowing one's identity as a beloved daughter/son of the

They must be empathetic, kind, caring, have a love for people, all people. They would need to be able to relate to every race, gender, etc. They would embrace God's people with love. They would be a prayerful person who loves God and daily connects to God as his source of strength and love. They would benefit by being trained in contemplative prayer practices.

Considers self as "we," part of the community of faith, walking side-by-side with the community, prayerful, embrace the mystics.

A pastoral heart, a person of deep prayer, community spirit, leadership that begins and ends with dialogue,

Listening - building relationships - relational - discernment - personal daily prayer - pondering scripture in light of reality... Using the gifts of the community to build the community... Inclusiveness.

Humble.

Prayerful, called by God, trained, respectful of all people, unbiased, lives strong Christian values.

A priest must be true to self, able to listen to and work with others, have theological and biblical training, be a person of God, be humble.

Ability to listen. practice prayerful discernment.

Desire to establish healthy and helpful relationships with others, be a life-long learner, humble.

Welcoming forgiving merciful approachable humble kind compassionate intelligent good homilist good listener.

Pastoral, compassionate, good listener, humble.

Humble, listening, smell like a sheep, faithful, be mindful of the people that are a part of the parish community.

Empathy. Willingness to face anything in her or his own life that limits their pastoral sensitivity to others. Skill and composure in leading public prayer. Humor.

Listening, caring, humble.

The abilities to listen, to laugh, to inspire, to reflect back people's goodness to them. We need people of prayer who are not into power. I don't know how you find them.

Encourage a relationship with Christ, prayerful, humble, listen as well as preach, compassionate, non-judgmental.

Prayerful.

Compassion, a listening heart, a deep spirituality and prayer life, of course, physical strength. A truly good human being would be sufficient.

Compassionate, humble, willing to be of service, person who takes the time to pray, a good listener.

Someone who is pastoral and challenges his community to prayer & social justice—option for the poor. Knows how to pray.

Someone who is humble, loving, welcoming, intellectually curious, not hierarchical, with good people skills, can read, write and speak effectively, not necessarily, hard working., cares about social issues, does see the church as separate from but a part of the world.

Humility, ability to enable and empower others to ministry and prayer, experience of married life as a spouse, femininity and masculinity (i.e. We need the feminine experience of women to move beyond the current constrictions), sound Vatican II theological formation, positivity, optimism and hopefulness.

A priest should be loving, open, non-judgmental and humble. Many priests have learned to us "we" instead of "you" when preaching. That should be taught!

Deep faith, love of God, love of neighbor, ability to listen, to dialogue, to work collaboratively with others, integrity, regular prayer life.

Deep prayer life, compassionate, humble.

Deep faith and prayer life. Commitment to service. Respect for life, every life. Honest. Compassionate. Inclusive. Humble. Nonjudgmental.

Be a person of prayer.

Servant leadership, compassion, strong relationship with God, awareness of and engagement with justice issues as well as personal holiness. Preaching steeped in prayer.

She/he must be a humble servant leader who reflects the mind and heart of Jesus.

(in no order) Empathetic, good listener, strong relationship builder and keeper, humble, Christ-like, an advocate for justice, courageous.

He should be pastoral, other-centered. His education should be grounded in Vatican II.

He should be prayerful, able to preach in a way that makes people want to listen and reflect.

Valuing relationships, compassionate, genuine, humble (knowing him or herself,) prayerful.

Be a prayerful person and development your own personality to its greatest potential. Then gather for education to become what is needed in society today. A priest needs to step into the background -- discover the gifts of parishioners and bring the best out of them. NEVER should a priest feel better or more important than anyone else but stand in solidarity with others and work to bring out the best in everyone, forgetting her/his ideas -- not completely but in a way that does not indicate in any way that a priest is at the top of the pyramid.

Priests should be holy, prayerful, open to the Spirit and be able to accompany and journey with the people of God.

Humble, open-minded, discerning, thoughtful, hospitable, out-going, patient.

Prayerful, compassionate, a listener, loves the Church and is open to the Spirit guiding the direction of his ministry as well as the Church at large. Love of God and the people of God.

Prayer and spirituality as a basis for a vibrant relationship with Jesus. The spiritual life of the priest is in the priest's public prayer, celebration of the sacraments, preaching and personal connection with, and availability to, the people. Active in justice, exercises a prophetic voice.

Love for Christ and love for people. Call. A life of prayer.

A priest should be one for the people, called from a particular community. A priest should value and show the mercy of Jesus and truly live Jesus's words and follow His actions in all ways possible. A priest should be a person with a deep spiritual and prayer life.

Prayerful discernment and distributive leadership of the sacraments. An ability to learn from their congregation and humble themselves as a servant.

Humility and the ability to listen to all the believers in the parish. The role of the priest is not to be a rule keeper but a humble guide, one that will wash your feet and demonstrate how much you are truly loved. They should smell like their sheep.

To be a humble servant to God's people.

Non judge mental. Approachable kind. Willingness to share and respect others prayerful and follower of Jesus.

Authenticity, prayerful listening heart, shaped by scripture, open to the movements of the Spirit.

Person of strong faith, continuous prayer, has strong and appropriate relationships with groups and individuals in the community, is available to others- especially to those in need. Most importantly, sees Christ in all persons and creation.

Holy, prayerful, wise, compassionate, understanding, relevant, open.

Humble.

A person needs to have a strong educated faith, a true relationship with God through prayer and study, and a strong desire to assist people in their faith journeys.

If priests are strictly for giving sacraments - which is what they should be - they should be prayerful, humble, gentle and generous. Other people should do all the other jobs!!

A person who is caring, compassionate, humble and with a very deep relationship with Christ and His Church.

Service and availability based on a daily prayer life with the community.

Patient, compassionate, filled with joy, proclaiming the Word of God with fervor, generous to the needs of the poor, prayerful and innovative.

A priest needs to be a prayerful kind person who is grounded in the vision of the documents of Vat II. They would need the skills to work with people they serve and yet maintain their own personhood.

Prayerful, selfless, genuine, loving, pastoral.

Listening, prayerful (open to God's Spirit and people), able to relate and have excellent people skills, flexibility. Knowledge of Catholicism and Liturgy, creativity, openness.

Able to listen, be collaborative, authentic, up to date and be humble.

Humility, genuineness, healthful integration as person of their gender, humility, person in relationship with Christ and a prayer life that shows it.

Humble servant; love for God's people.

A deep prayer life, ability to listen, a deep love of all creation and enough love and knowledge of self to actualize that love and a love for and confidence in the Church to adapt to what is needed.

A priest should be humble, a listener and a learner, seek to understand family life, the community to which s/he is assigned, including the ecumenical, interfaith, and public community outside of the parish, give as much attention to public schooled children as to the Catholic school, if the parish has

one. A priest should be compassionate. A lay council and other lay movements in the parish should be valued and respected, considered important to the decisions of the parish. The parish does not belong to the priest, it belongs to the community. Outreach and social justice must be important to the priest. Inclusive sacraments must be important to the priest. Vatican Council II must be essential to the priest's understanding of the People of God and of the community in which the priest serves.

Prayerful, compassionate, and pastoral with integrity and deep belief that all people are equally loved children of God.

Collaborative, being inclusive, prayerful, honest.

Christlike, Compassionate, Sensitive to his/her community, Inclusive, Personable, Spiritual/ Prayerful Celebrant, One who empowers and affirms the Gifts of the People, Challenges with Respect and Dignity, Person of Conviction who can Listen with her/his heart, One immersed in V.C.II, and each year makes a Retreat, and is involved in Continuing Education, On who uses the ambo Well (speaks insightfully, clearly, loudly, and is a bridge from Sacred Scripture to Life Experiences and the signs of the times, One who in seminary has had qualified women and men Professors seeped in Traditional and Current Theology, One who can relate well with folks of all sexes, colors, and creeds.

Prays throughout the hours of the day.

Serious prayer life, friendly to men and women, open to conversation with other viewpoints, curious.

Genuine compassion & concern for individuals in the parish - whether or not the priest has a "solution" to the person's dilemma. A person of GENUINE PRAYER not empty ritual.

Q: Many Catholics, including the Pope, have been fierce critics of the clericalism with its abuses of power and sexual abuse and crimes against children and vulnerable adults. Please share your response regarding clericalism. Share an experience you have had with clericalism and explain its effects on you or someone you know or share an experience you have had or seen of lay and ordained Catholics ministering together as co-equals.

Sexual abuse.

My grandchildren could not be Baptized because their mother is a married lesbian.

Feeling not called by God, when I feel I was. I am a woman so God cannot choose me.

A priest fired a nun who was the backbone of the parish with no warning.

Not attending end life due to busy schedule & rejecting family who now reject the institution.

My children are no longer Catholics because they ran into priests who thought they and their rules were more important than any other consideration.

Pastor received pushback from conservative parishioners and listened to them and erased our efforts addressing social justice.

When I (woman) was conducting a class, the priest always had to come in and put me down.

I have been “fired “by some, & yet I have learned from some.

Priest called and reamed out my husband for his responses at a meeting. Sure, his attitude may have turned people off, but the priest did not deal with this in a pastoral way. My husband quit going to church.

I've been forbidden to use a song in church because it referred to “bringing a new church into being” I was told the church is just fine the way it is!

I recently heard about a young priest who doesn't want to see women in the parish council

The archbishop forbidding my all girls school from addressing the idea of female priests. We did it anyway.

The I know it all syndrome in which as a well read person I knew more than the priest and was disregarded as I am a woman

While I have had mainly positive experiences with priests, I believe as a priest continues his path in the priesthood he further isolates himself from real issues that impact the parishioners. This leads to him having a hard time relating to his parish needs. Power becomes another issue, for many priests. While they don't start off with wanting power, the title and the encouragement from others that they have the final word gives them the sense of superiority. You see this with politicians, athletes and well known news media. The drive for attention becomes addictive

Pastor appointed council that included a sex offender which the priest felt had all rights to parish database

The bishops are just authoritarian! Time to be pastoral!!

I asked in a multi-parish session a few years ago if there were a link between sexual abuse in the church and clerical privilege. The bishop who was responding to our questions did not know what clerical privilege was.

Priests and bishops who do not allow others to assemble with them at important moments.

Domination does not sit well with most people, no matter the venue.

Bishops who rule through fear.

Through it out.

Our bishop stated that he did not feel that I was credible as a victim of abuse and would not allow me to address the diocesan abuse board even though I was a member of that board.

I experienced being shut out by Diocesan officials when I questioned spending priorities. I felt shaken. Yet I drew strength from those who supported my stance--including the ordained.

Priests who have been taught and embody that they are the only authority in the church are often destructive of community.

I am a consultant. When I was working with a parish and a new pastor was appointed, he "fired" me and said he could do it himself! He did not respect the professional gifts of others either.

2.5 years ago a new pastor came in and shut down every ministry in a vibrant parish. Over 500 of us are left without a home.

Not being willing to listen to suggestions, not accepting that we might have something valuable to offer, rather than what they are looking for.

Clericalism encourages a closed attitude. Priesthood is not a private club. It requires openness to the Holy Spirit.

The aura of separate-ness that surrounds some priests saddens me.

For those priests who are unevolved, the misogyny is terrible. Frustration expands!

Sex abuse scandals have turned people away. Also lack of a voice. Poor experiences regarding Confession.

My pastor asked me what it was...could not see it in himself or other priests.

This is a bit of a stupid and leading question. The people of God are so because they are made in the image of God, priests are not 'higher', the misogyny that leads these to a celibate priesthood is toxic and damaging for the people. Clericalism is obviously bad and undesirable and I am on the side of the angels.

My pastor has removed all women from leadership roles (Pastoral Assoc, DRE, music ministry). All of these roles were filled with highly qualified, formed women. The Bishop also discontinued the lay ecclesial institute. This program was subsequently picked up by other dioceses and is a national model-but not here.

It is very sad to say that I feel the majority of priests are stuck in a clerical system. They were trained and think according to this system.

With only a sense of vocation to inform and enforce dogmatic certainty, the faith community will lose young people and good leaders.

I developed a national council of Restorative Justice professionals to address clergy abuse with priests and nuns. Most dioceses were not receptive because they were too concerned with discovery and legal liability. The religious orders were more agreeable to engage in the process and make things right for the victims.

I am not sure what is meant by "clericalism." I am taking that to mean that a priest cares more about administrative issues than spiritual. If

that is what is meant by clericalism, then by all means it needs to be dispensed with. I feel like too many of today's priests care more about "getting promoted" than being shepherds to the flock.

Listening to homilies that have nothing to do with my life/

The use of the pulpit to promote discriminatory ideology has prompted the person I know to leave the church.

MY Pastor says, "the buck stops here!" and indeed I feel he doesn't listen to our input

CCD - taught students who were not involved in the church since baptism and needed more time to learn the faith and was told I make the decision. My friend was told to stay in an abusive marriage - or commit sin.

Newly ordained priest patting me on head and saying "dear" after Mass, years ago, when I was young mother of 4. Mi or but yikes!

Clericalism leads to abuse of all sorts, including the sexual abuse of children. The three greatest temptations, as put forward last Sunday by Fr. John Unni at Ct. Cecilia Parish in Boston are: self=preservation, power and presumption. That seems to me to sum it up well.

Had to help folks who were divorce be turned away from receiving the host. Trauma caused by non-pastoral rules.

Women and children have been abused by the priests in our church.

I offered my gifts when I returned to my parish, in a way in which I had been involved previously. That offer was rejected out of hand with no recourse to dialogue or even explanation. Gifts crushed. Moral nose-dived.

One pastor (alcoholic) was allowed to remain after having his assistant and DRE's fired..... people were up in arms, but the bishop did not remove him. Church community fell apart.

The cover ups have affected us all / sin is sin no mater who commits it.

My brother was abused by the pastor. We didn't find out until forty years had passed.

No institution has hurt me more as a woman of faith than has the church and clericalism.

New pastor has destroyed our community spirit; the first week he fired the music director because he used gender neutral language. We have formed a group, Upper Room, to enhance our faith. We have not lost our faith, but we have lost our church.

In making suggested changes.

Males making the decisions about women's role in the Church. Yes that includes Pope Francis.

I think my whole experience in the church is hinged on clericalism.

We used to have a Liturgy Commission who were asked for input on environment and community celebrations. New priest, all is dissolved, new objects appear, no one is asked about anything, all suggestions are ignored. It is disheartening.

Our parish council, with the priest present, decided to do something during one of the masses, and then when the time came, the priest didn't do it because "really it's up to me."

I invited a new transitional deacon to lead an RCIA session, telling him that a BRIEF reflection on the subject should be followed by length discussion. He proceeded to talk about how he would lead people to Jesus through the Eucharist and when one participant dared to

interrupt with a question, he said stop it, just accept the salvation than I am offering.

The priest is directing us not serving the community not listening.

My wife.

My high school principal, a priest, abused many of the young men there and it hurt the whole community. Too many deferred to him and were told to respect him simply due to title and collar. It disempowered the youth with tragic, horrifying consequences.

Refusal to listen to congregations' needs... people left the church & joined the Episcopal Church.

As an administrator in 2 different dioceses, I was always treated as an outsider.

Not being open to allowing members to bring issues to the larger community parish.

My husband, and ordained Episcopal priest, asked the bishop for permission to receive the sacraments with me and my children when they received their First Communion and Confirmation. He was told NO, that he was too well known (???) And could not be accepted at the Eucharistic table.

Many deacons seem to enjoy the "pomp and circumstance" of their positions more than following the biblical call to care for the "widows and orphans". Many of them are arrogant and out of touch with pastoral ministry and their role in supporting the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. Recently while attending Mass, during COVID a priest consecrated two cups, one for himself and one for the deacon who was assisting. It really struck me as clericalism, why was it ok for the deacon to receive a cup, when the rest of us were unable. It just really stood out as more about his "position" than about what is healthy and helpful for the believing community.

One of our parish's priests had a "clerical" attitude, i.e., "Oh, look at how nicely robed I am, sitting next to the altar of God!", and "listen to me talk through my own psychological problems". I stopped going to daily Mass to avoid this disheartening attitude. I've walked out of Sunday Masses where he was presiding.

Arrogant, dogmatic "following the rules without concern for the people of God. EG, not allowing a child to receive communion without reconciliation and all associated CCD Classes. Recognition of those who have left religious life for the talents they still have to offer the church.

The situation regarding baptisms in Phoenix has been upsetting. The priest baptized using we baptize instead of I baptize...so the bishop decided that hundreds of baptisms were invalid. Really??? Here he is so concerned about the law and not about the spirit that baptizes us.

Power over.

The archbishop of Cincinnati has a closed mind when it comes to women. Women who have lay positions in parishes were not invited to Beacon of Light meetings where parishes are put into families.

Our young pre-Vatican priest has shattered our spirit-filled community.

Teaching after Vatican II from Phillips Translation of Bible. Parish priest come in and tells me I cannot use this translation. Same priest turns out to be a molester of grade schoolboys.

No direct experience.

After having Franciscans for over 30 years, we now have diocesan priests, and the clericalism is driving some of us crazy. They are not

separate and apart from us, they should be one with us.

Early in my career, I worked in Development for a large Archdiocese in New Jersey. One day, the Director of Development (a priest) decided to fire the entire office staff because he felt he could no longer trust us. Eight men and women were fired. Another experience when our daughter was in 8th grade, I was one of many parents planning the graduation liturgy. We proposed a community blessing of the graduates realizing this would be for some their last time in a church. The pastor refused saying, "If anyone blesses the graduates, it will be me."

My current pastor is pre-Vatican 2 with all that entails. "i do you listen" instead of finding out what spiritually nourishes parishioners.

I had wanted to start a Climate ministry and was not allowed.

Being demeaned at Parish council Meetings: rudeness: I quit Parish council.

A young priest, 5 years ordained, who is so "full of himself" as to border on arrogance has wrapped many older parishioners around his little finger! He is not from my diocese but I have connections to him and his parish.

The priest who preach at Christmas mass that our task was to convert Jews. My new Jewish daughter-in-law attending my with us said she would have expected this; my son left church for good.

It is very hard for those formed in male seminaries NOT to be clerical.

Experienced clerics who were not a team player and not open to input from others.

I have seen an ex-seminarian who was abused in our Archdiocese weep, and his words..." all

I wanted was to serve God"...still echo with his pain.

I was, in a former position as Director of Pastoral care, shoved up against a door by a priest whom I supervised. He had been doing clearly sub-standard work. When I reported it to Administration, the priest had the backing of a retired Monsignor who happened to be living at the facility. The Monsignor went to Administration and convinced them, though he was not present when it happened, that I was at fault. The monsignor in question had previously complained to both Administration and the Archdiocese that I should not be in my position: I was a Sister but not wearing a habit or veil and not living in a convent. Besides, "a priest should not report to a woman". I was fired.

I overheard our Bishop who was posing for pictures with our newly Confirmed 8th graders say to our Deacon, "Hurry this up I want to get to dinner."

I used to be on a church counsel. I resigned because of the way my church's pastor treated me as a woman. He would treat men on the counsel as equals, but when women would speak, the clericalism would rear its ugly head.

No direct experience.

Not listening; judgmental - makes one cautious - can't trust them to share one's story.

Misuse of power is degrading to the dignity of each person.

Lack of respect toward parishioners has alienated many -- not able to relate to parishioners, assuming a "holier than thou" attitude.

A bishop who is so conservative that all growth is impossibly brother was related to a priest.

There is dwindling of Spirituality in clerics, they are not close to Jesus. Performing rituals like drama without touching the hearts of the community.

MY grandchild couldn't be baptized until my daughter attended Baptismal classes, which she attended 2 years before. The new baby was having many medical problems that made it impossible to attend the scheduled classes. So her baptism was delayed for months.

The huge issue with Cardinal Law, (Boston) and what happened to the 84 priests in diocese who addressed openly what was going on, they were removed as pastors and given very hard times.

Power of the bishop, all male domination in sanctuary.

"I heard a new paster say: "I am the boss". Left me with feeling of "OK, if you say so, but....."

Priests who acted like they were better than their congregation. Made me not respect them or what they had to say.

I have had friends who have been sexually abused by priests. Another priest took advantage of an elderly woman by trying to have her give him her new car.

As a principal of a Catholic School I had to endure the trauma of forced closing. Parents were willing to accept higher tuition and efforts were made but it was in the diocese plan to close small schools. It was very difficult to attend Eucharistic celebrations when the parents and children had a real problem with the pastor who was involved in the closing. Dealing at the diocesan level was even more difficult when the Secretary of Education, a priest, berated the Assistant Secretary, a religious woman in front of those gathered. To add fuel to the fire principals were forbidden to use school funds to attend the NCEA session

when Sr. Joan Chittister was the keynote speaker.

Our thriving parish has been hurt by a new pastor, who has a very autocratic style of leadership. He makes decisions without consultation.

Being told my theology was not correct and being forced to redo a program in a certain way; as educators we had to find ways to get around it for the sake of the children.

I have had pastors who have put me down, ignoring that I may have experiences they don't want to look at. I left ministries that I loved because of their closed mindedness.

A priest (in Confession) said what else? And he handed me a list of the Ten Commandments. After I got over the shock. I started studying the Beatitudes. In a way it helped to clarify many things for me.

When you were ordained you did not become GOD. You are not the ruler of me.

The best priestly experience I experienced was a humble priest in a very small parish, who embraced Vatican II and welcomed lay pastoral support and contributions. The worst priestly experience I have experienced was in a large parish with a young pastor who was The Man, who scorned Vatican II and used lay contributors like servants. My adult children, growing up in the parish and raised in the hierarchical clerical model, have abandoned it, with fervor.

Pastoral Administrator only ordained 3 yrs. Fired a music minister who was celebrating 25 years within our community. This was after ONLY being with us for 3 weeks. It devastated our community. Recently Parish Council members have resigned because of his inability to collaborate - he is in charge and makes unilateral decisions.

I became a seminary professor because of the ways women were treated in the parishes, though women were doing most of the ministry.

Cutting out Mass to just one when we have two full time priest and one part time. Denying people of going to mass daily.

Clericalism has caused so much hurt and people to permanently leave the Catholic Church.

As a pastoral minister I walk with folks in their illness and difficult issues. I am not able to anoint them, or preside at their funerals. Y.

Priests acting like they are gods, brushing off or not really listening to opinions other than their own.

Two associate pastors at my parish refuse to consider inclusive language changes in the lectionary. Really? Even though a translation may be flawed or misunderstood, because it's printed, it's law? Really? The position that Father knows best is just flawed thinking.

I was fired as principal of Catholic school because the pastor was angry that people were donating money to the school instead of the parish. It took several years for me to recover from the devastation I felt for myself and the people. Pastor closed the school the following year.

My nephew, a priest in his mid-40's and a member of a conservative congregation once told me that the first thing he does when he gives a mission at a parish is make the people feel guilty.

After 50 years of ministry, a newly ordained priest told me that he would fire me, if he could. I've studied and practiced non-violent communication so I removed from his judgement but I also felt compassion for him. I have noticed now that he doesn't look me in

the eye or speak to me. I wondered about the discernment process in the call to priesthood. Did those who participated in his formation notice this tendency in him. He also told a parishioner that she should stop coming to daily Mass and work on 'her spiritual issues' at home. So saddened that those who entrust their spiritual lives to priests get that kind of response. And Jesus wept!! A priest friend often treats me like I know nothing of ecclesial issues instead of a partner. I've learned that it's issue of needing to prove himself. I guess ultimately it's made me less likely to 'work with a cleric'.

In two different parishes to which we belonged; pastors were assigned to come in acting as if they owned the parish. They bashed the former pastors, instituted liturgical reforms which positioned them above the laity, and made decisions with little or no consultation with parishioners. In both instances, we moved to other parishes.

I did not get married in a Catholic church in 1996 because of the disgust I felt with the scandals. I was sickened that there was not universal acknowledgement and reparation when the residential school issue was exposed.

One thing that has always concerned me is the teaching that the ordained priest is above all non-ordained, and thus many abuses arise and are so often ignored or hidden.

The inability to listen to people whom they are serving, especially those on the margins, have cut some of those people off, causing them to seek out other more welcoming communities.

Prior parish-Priest catered to wealthy. Only 1 person on parish council not wealthy. Only 5 percent of people given voice.

Final decisions regarding parish life/outreach. Priest makes the final decision.

Have not had a personal experience

I got up and walked out of Mass when, Cardinal Mahoney in Los Angeles, required each parish on a given Sunday to play a recording he made urging those present to assist the church financially by offering donations to help pay the legal expenses incurred by those who have been accused of being a pedophile. I got up and walked out.

I experienced arrogance and denial of any problems with clergy

The Patriarchy is intrinsically evil because it disenfranchises women from shepherding God's people. It excludes them from true leadership opportunities in the church, and this extends then to sexism that is endemic and pervasive in our society. It is all sinful. Thou shalt not kill.

In every parish, when a new priest is assigned, he is able to just make all sweeping changes according to what he wants and to ignore what the parish has built. This happened in my church, the new priest did not apparently need to listen to parish council or liturgy committee...he could end programs that were working well, and like a new king, could just decide what he wanted to do, and do it

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati required all contracted employees including musicians to take the "Virtus" training, even though we had no parish school. I quit being a contractor and became a volunteer so I didn't have to waste my time. Another friend was principal of a Catholic school and got fired for not raising enough money. I won't give that diocese a dime!

I think I have the vocation to be a priest that comes from God, but I think I was not allowed to continue at seminary because I defy the clericalism mentality. There was no way to do any objection to the decision of the provincial because he has the last word, it does not matter what lay people say about me and the way I serve them. Classmates who always obey and

did not voice their opinions are the ones that were ordained.

I am a trained Facilitator (unpaid of course) for the Diocese in "Protecting God's Children" A program to reduce child abuse. I had a student; 5th grade report an abuse situation which I promptly reported to the authorities as per the protocol. I informed the pastor afterwards. He told my Dir Rel Ed that I should have come to him first which is completely wrong. He took the training himself, so he knows that protocol. I only informed him as a courtesy in case it got back to him by another means.

I was a pastoral associate for 18 years so I have had numerous experiences. A "joke" at the parish was that whatever negativity that was going on at any given time, it was my fault. That little "joke" was what many priests and people truly believed.

We have a brand new priest (since rotations took place last summer). After being here for 2 months he asked people to donate money to buy statues because this is how he wants to "make his mark"!! He doesn't even know his parishioners yet, or what they would desire. Of course, people donated, and the statues have now arrived. What is most frustrating is that people just automatically do what their priest asks, and don't even recognize this as clericalism.

Unapproachability and poor empathy.

Sense of superiority and power only available to priests.

Clericalism can shut down the work of the Spirit within a community. It can be devastating to parish growth.

I hate it. It separates the priest from the people. It is hurtful to the church. It is anti-Christ. It is full of pride. It makes me want to cry when I see it done in the name of Christ.

The archbishop in Portland destroyed our liberal Catholic parish. He said that all parishes should have the same liturgies and music so that any priest could say mass there.

Being fired from teaching Laudat Si' because it referred to words such as moon and stars and mother Earth.

The most glaring example, of course, is the sex abuse scandal. I think the effects of that goes without saying. The fact that the institutional church is still protecting itself from that is really an unspeakable affront to all people. The main thing that happens in many parishes is that the priest/pastor has the final word. That means that there can be a nod to having some democracy in a parish council, but if the priest doesn't like what the council decides, it's simply over ridden. Lately, the news about the priest in the southwest US, who didn't use the proper words for baptism: Are you kidding me!!!!???? How many people has THAT effected?

A priest who later was accused of child molestation was teaching Confirmation class. I removed my son from his instruction. He is 50 now and still has not been confirmed. Another priest is in jail for sexual acts with minors. He tried to seduce my adult girlfriend.

Our Religious director was very involved in the Parish, she was encouraged to lead, allowed to preach, and had she been a man she would have definitely been a deacon. When the priest was replaced all that ended by the new one. Big mistake.

Before I was fired after 15 years of service in that parish, I was told by the Delegate for Religious Life that the pastor was afraid of me, yet the Cardinal did not answer by request for a meeting, and I was offered an NDA forbidding me to speak about the pastor. When my Congregational Leader told the archdiocese we were not signing, the first question was, did we want more money?

When priests dismiss women's ideas and contributions they feel less worthy, less important.

Dismissed, disempowered, belittled.

From a man I currently know his life has been a crucifixion due to abuse by a high school priest? Or deacon who was his teacher. It affects his family of origin. His Mom never believed his story of abuse. His current marriage is affected.

I had a cousin who was abused. My Mom went to the bishop to share what was happening and the priest was assigned elsewhere. There needs to be more accountability.

The patriarchal, clerical attitude of our parish priest has driven me and many of our small parish members away from our church. The priest has an attitude and behavior with which he sets himself up as the only decision maker. He eliminated all the parish councils and commissions (except finance), made a great many physical changes to the church interior without consultation with the members. I along with many others have lost our parish community because we do not choose to remain in an unhealthy environment.

For 9 years myself and two other Religious Sisters were asked by the Bishop to 'coordinate' the parish: a large area of 2 counties, both urban and rural. We visited all, worked to build faith communities in every area. Gave scripture classes, trained laity to celebrate liturgy, worked with youth, catechists, as well as addressing social needs of the people. We administered Baptism, witnessed marriages, brought the Eucharist to the outlying chapels in the Communities. Gradually we formed 80 "Base Christian Communities" throughout the parish. After 8 years a new bishop arrived and placed a priest, transferred from another diocese, as the Parish Priest. He didn't like to work with women; took control of all, and, after fruitless negotiation and trying to dialogue,

we left because the conflict was tearing apart the parish. Gradually the people were left unsupported in their Communities. During the next decade, 1990-2000 the Church basically stopped supporting small base communities, and large parishes became the norm.

Clericalism is evil. I have had a nephew that was a victim of clergy sex abuse! He has so many emotional and mental problems now. The whole family has been affected and the Church has never apologized or taken responsibility. Everyone in our extended family of 40 (young and old) has left the Catholic church.

Clericalism is toxic masculinity that exercises control over others. I have been in and out of the catholic church my whole life because of this toxicity. I am catholic and I always will be. Attendance at Mass is no longer a requirement for my Catholicism. I have found community of people that feed my soul and nourish my body in ways that the church building never could provide. Most parishes are more about the buildings that need to be maintained and available, however these buildings are empty most of the time. Parishioners spend at most less than 2 hours a week in them. Maybe we need to learn how relate to the body of Christ in the real world they live in. In communities that are small enough for people to actually know each other.

I was told publicly several times by a pastor to stop talking when I was trying to share, at a parish council and in another public group setting, my ideas and experience. I pretty much lost respect for this pastor and decided to leave that parish.

A long time ago when I was a first-year teacher, I was assigned to prepare parents for their children to go to their first communion at a time when the recommendation was to postpone first confession until after first communion. The session with parents went well until the very end when the old pastor spoke up to say he did not agree with this

change. There was a bit of chaos. At that point I decided that I did not want to work ever in a parish structure.

It's usually their way or the highway, secretive, leaving one unappreciated. I ran a Scripture study for 10 years, the only adult education in the parish. The Pastor never came to hear what we were studying after being invited several times. Knowing if they had been heard, unresponsive.

I think that the Roman collar supplies an invisible shield to those who wear it, giving them the feeling that they can do what they want, because they are ordained priests. When the laity see the Roman collar they can ascribe an aura of innocence, goodness and beneficence to the wearer. When my sister was in high school, her best friend and her friend's brother, who was a year older, were invited to go water skiing with a priest from our parish. My mom said "No" to this and my sister did not go. Later, my sister found out that the priest pulled her friend onto his lap in the boat. The fact that they were out on the water, making escape impossible, unless her friend was a good swimmer. I also want to say that it was drummed into our heads in Catholic elementary school that the priest was higher than an angel because he was acting in the person of Christ. Who would believe young kids who say that the priest did something wrong to them? The kids are speaking heresy! How does this system of abuse by clergy continue? It continues because clericalism is an elite system, which at all levels of the Church is supported by other clerics who keep the lid on any scandal, so that individual clerics will not tarnish the public's image of the priest. It is a merit system by which keeping silence is of paramount importance so that impression is reinforced that the children were mistaken or lying. Instead of protecting the least of God's disciples they allow clericalism to flourish by saying nothing to the public, transferring the erring priest and paying families to keep quiet. The hush money that is paid is the money

that would have been used to keep parishes in minority neighborhoods alive. How dare an adult in a high position of authority in the Catholic Church throw the children under the bus while the miscreants are protected? Jesus envisioned these authorities in the Catholic Church with millstones around their necks! The incident I related regarding my sister's friend had a deleterious effect on my sister. I was one more nail in the coffin of my sister's dying belief in the Catholic Faith!

Priest from the pulpit criticizing those who were divorced or had left religious life. In his view they had not tried harder enough. I had been in the convent for 8 yrs. And had been married for 9 yrs. I had tried harder all those years!!

Dictatorial priest who drove many away from what had once been a life-giving family

Rules and law trump.

Our whole life was like that.

I've been made to feel insignificant as if my ideas and theology don't matter because they don't match the official theology of the Church

It distances people.

Loss of hope and lack of trust in priests.

Oof. An abusive pastor. Did not attend to his inner demons. Had a very difficult time with strong women. He was a nightmare.

**Controlling - wanting done his way!
Emotionally Abusive tone of voice.**

I was told I would he never could be considered an equal!

My experience is that I was relieved of my ministerial position as altar server trainer and resigned the other as sacristan both of which have broken my heart.

Working as a Vocation Director in my Community with the Diocese.

I have known many priests who were arrogant and filled with their own importance.

Unfortunately, there are too many to mention.

I have many experiences of men who think they have all the answers and the people they serve have none.

Priests are trained to do funerals, but not to be present to the bereaved.

A Cardinal I met in Rome. When I asked what he wanted to be called he said: Please call me Your Excellency.

3 months ago a priest in Toledo removed for trafficking children. How can this still be happening.

The parish can become the special domain of the priest instead of a community of the baptized following the impulse of Hoy Spirit.

Too many of our newly ordained are so clerical in dress, attitudes, ability to work with lay people, esp. Women.

Priest urging people to kneel and receive communion on the tongue, as though the parish is his to rule.

Our pastor has been punished by our bishop. He has been treated inhumanely.

Dismissal of all lay and women directors of diocesan offices when the retiring bishop (thank God!). It was heartbreaking to experience and watch those faithful women lose their livelihoods and ministries with a vile brush stroke. (This was the Covington, KY diocese.)

With others who have been hurt. Personally with priest in parish ministry.

Too many to mention: maybe the regular exclusion as a lay person, and a woman, being dismissed— ever having one's gifts and labor recognized or validated. Just taken for granted.

When my suggestions and opinions are not respected. Final decisions always being made by the priest.

Need to get rid of it.

I have had priests tell me that they have decided and that is the end of the discussion.

A pastor who made all the decisions about the parish whose attitude turned many parishioners away from that parish, myself included.

Pastors who think they know it all and make decisions without all the information.

A priest who preached, at a Holy Saturday liturgy, that Mary Magdalene was a whore. When I spoke with him about it, he refused to shake my hand at Mass and wouldn't even distribute communion to the side of the church on which I was sitting. His comment to me was, "Would you say that to your son?" I responded that if my son shared false information I would do so.

The priest was considered the director even though I had many years experience in campus ministry.

Having women dismissed as lay leaders in small parishes.

As a lay woman clinical social worker in the counseling dept. Of the Pontifical College Josephinum, my referrals dried up with the change in administration.

I was abused as a young nun in the confessional by a renowned priest - and not believed when I reported it.

Clericalism strongly enabled the horror of sexual abuse which impacted each of us as it eroded trust which is fundamental to the health of all relationships.

Archbishop LA in Oct 2021 calling out President Biden for his abortion stance thus politicizing the Eucharist; he's chair of USCCB- how did this happen? Judgmental, abuse of power.

Not personally but reported through another in matters of marriage, sexual identity and birth control.

I do not think I would know a clericalism experience.

I was told I couldn't serve in the parish in helping with wake services because I was a woman. Made me feel very sad and angry.

Young men coming out of the seminary tend to be closed minded and feel that they have the truth. This is not Vatican II truth and is a cause of concern for many and actually has caused people to leave the Church.

I am not paid. I know how this has affected so many people, especially women!

The new pastor fired me because I did not like his way of establishing himself as the ONE in charge of everything, not being collaborative at all.

Parish priest has an attitude of my way or the highway. Not open to listening to the community. Very rule oriented.

With our new bishop, primarily priests alone are involved with anything involving priests.

Judgementalism has hurt so many folks I know.

Very intimidating and autocratic pastor.

When we lived in Delaware we had a bishop who denied our parish having a Parish Life Coordinator when there were no priests available to serve our parish.

A new parish pastor being nasty to the previous pastor saying that the parish was now his and not allowing the former pastor to be a part of funerals.

Changed parish-priest very glum, moved parish to a Pre-Vatican II stance.

I was a 3-4 X/week, 50 year plus, cradle Roman Catholic watching the pedophile crisis in horror, especially when the previous entity in possession of the Vatican compared women who want to be priests to pedophiles. Then the PA bishops ordered all the priests to blatantly lie about PA Bill 1947 which extended the statute of limitations on pedophiles. I complained to my local priest, who handed out the "Catholic" League's Essay "Women's Moral Descent" with its theme that men have the right and moral obligation to decide which women deserve to be raped. I called my daughter at college, crying, saying that the priests were depraved morons totally dedicated to worshipping their d*cks. Her response, "Duh, Mom! I'm sorry you had to figure it out in such a painful way.

Absolute rigidity and lack of compassion-- people left the church.

I never gave in to any priest who was overbearing.

Disrespect, not heard, judgmental.

I was groomed by a priest for an inappropriate relationship as an adult. I managed to get out of the situation but at great risk for my job and my reputation.

Cancellation of my grandson's full class of CONFIRMATION because parents didn't attend the one meeting, of which inadequate notice was given for working parents. Flatly refused to allow the parish school to go ahead with confirmation for these children even when the Parish Council appealed to him - they had to travel to a neighboring parish for the sacrament.

Reaction to child abuse with attempts to protect the priest and the Church. Effects on victims - Horrible!

Loss of personal autonomy and Resurrection power.

I have found that women are considered to be second class Christians, with the possibility of serving as janitors or custodians, not full members of the community of believers.

Working for justice and peace. Some priest does not allow the parishioner to be involved in it because of politics.

As a volunteer lay woman I have been the object of severe criticism and rejection from the chancery to my parish. It radicalized me.

Not personally applicable - but have read about it.

The lack of tolerance by the priest in confession during a difficult time expressing myself.

Personally know those who have left the church after the sexual abuse scandal.

Empowering the laity to choose priests and bishops might end, or at least, diminish clericalism.

I worked successfully at a parish for 17 years as a Director of Religious Education, through 3 pastors. The 4th pastor decided to make life so

uncomfortable for me that I decided to leave.
Two other staff members left the same month.

Pastor acting like a tyrant/associates and people leave.

Clericalism focuses on man-made rules and regulations rather than the Gospel message.

I have very good friends whose parish life was devastated by a young cleric

To many to share. And they made me a better more compassionate person. I'm just glad I wasn't educated in a Catholic school because I was able to bypass them.

Divorce and having to get an annulment seems very clerical. Who and who cannot take communion.

I was once asked to leave church when attempting to go to confession after the birth of my third child. I was wearing jeans.

When I was in Catholic school (7th or 8th grade), I went to confession and had a priest yell at me because I said I hated my father. He said I was wrong and didn't ask why I hated him. My father was sexually abusing me. Because of this experience of confession, it was nearly 20 years before I honestly went to confession again.

That the sacraments are the "property" of the priests. That grace is only available through a cleric. And even ordained deacons can't do the Sacrament of the Sick because of the forgiveness of sin - who does the forgiving anyway?

Turns me off...is unreal.

Inviting church to pray by: Pray BROTHERS - which turns of the women.

A bishop who outwardly told those of us who were Parish life Coordinators that it was his intent to diminish our numbers. It was done.

For me, it has been more of a spirit or an attitude of distance.

It is a death experience; demoralizing because not only did the priest continue his faculties his Bishop didn't act on the abuse even if the victim spoke and told the truth.

Too much feeling that They alone are special and all others are sinners who need their guidance.

I worked with a priest who disregarded how more progressive people felt about having more meaningful and approved ways of celebrating the Liturgy completely disregarded, because he wanted it the way it was done when he was a growing boy.

A recent Father knows best approach to a major parish decision.

Parish council was established with primarily like-minded people, then shut down citing no need to continue.

My Monsignor excommunicated me over the phone when he heard I was pregnant before marriage I went to church not receiving until I talked a priest in the military.

As a woman religious I have experienced the power of the priest during more than of 60 years of ministry even when I was the head of pastoral care in a health care facility for clergy and religious!

Decision making reduced to clerics or a small few around them.

Only positive experiences but I know many who have not and I know priest who have done very disturbing things to parishioners and also do not live a spiritual life.

I've seen it but my mind is blank at present (Sorry).

A young priest criticized those attending a synod for suggesting that women assume larger roles in the church.

I was a lay leader in my parish and served happily under three wonderful pastors who were consultative with the laity in the parish. When the latest one came in before I felt forced to leave, he made it very clear that he was the pastor and that there would not be any real input from the laity. He drove away anyone with experience or a sense of history and wound up with a small clique of followers.

I have had no direct experience nor do I know anyone who has. However, I am appalled about the abuse of power and sexual abuse and crimes so it has had the effect of making me furious and looking for venues to voice my concern and call for changes to be made.

My not feeling comfortable asking questions about what is going on in the Church, not being able to have any kind of intellectual conversation concerning Pope Francis and his writings or even engaging commentary about this synodal movement. Our charisms not recognized or invited.

We had a young man who offered to proclaim the word at the Eucharist and this very conservative priest said he could not because he was homosexual. The next priest who came, allowed the young man to proclaim the word.

Was working with many ministries in the church which served our community. A priest was sent from the Diocese. He dismantled all of the service ministries which were serving the needy and marginalized. It had taken years to establish these things and they were dismantled in a matter of days.

I think there have been times when a new pastor has been assigned and changes the tenor of the parish and goes against what the congregation has spent years building up.

I was fired by a priest from my position in the Parish because I would not turn my head when he was overstepping his boundaries of ministry.

“Preached at” from the pulpit every week... not life giving...when I have been invited to do mission appeals in parishes some priests would only give me 2 minutes at the end of Mass from the lectern...even if I explained that I had prepared my talk with the readings...since I was a woman they would not allow me to give the homily

Refusal of having women participate in eucharistic celebration—reading, communion ministers, preaching.

Inability to have the kind of funeral service we wanted for my father; priests using the term “lay” or “laity” to separate the people of God from our priests.

Power, control, privilege - as an adult refuse to play the game.

We had a wonderful bishop in our diocese who was forced to leave his parish because he wanted the survivors of sexual abuse in our church to be able to bring their cases to court despite statutes of limitation.

I have worked in a parish as a youth minister lay person and witnessed emotional abuse by the parish priest against sisters working in that same parish. The sister and I had to leave the parish community as it was a mentally destructive workplace.

The “male” language is very dangerous... It keeps the myth going that God is male! Father is right.... Knows best... Is the only voice that counts... It is the cause of suffering.

Priests who are not flexible to circumstances.

Young, newly ordained priest who couldn't minister with women and needed to do everything by the book. Arrogant with other members of the pastoral staff including the pastor.

The new parish priest who said he wasn't a Jesuit but a real priest. The priest who said if you vote Democratic you have to go to confession, said from the pulpit on Sunday.

I was baptized in an extremely clericalist Diocese. It was brutal, horrific, worst possible outcome -- I was CHARGED with a crime when a Bishop from the national level intervened on my behalf, outed wrong-doing by my Bishop and priests and they decided I would bear that cross. Charges were withdrawn but even now, the small-town courts are misrepresenting the outcome. Totally corrupt and criminal is my experience of clericalism. This is not the Sault Diocese; I was baptized in the Peterborough, Ontario Diocese.

My son-in-law was an organist for many years. Took a job in parish he grew up in. Had illness and when he was ready to start again, priest told him they got someone else. My son-in-law was gay, married to one of my sons.

Priests expecting to be called Father when there is not a single reason why that title fits except its common ill-advised usage.

Leading question. Not desire to answer it.

Two: A) Ash Wednesday. I went for ashes. The newly minted priest proceeded to do the blessing in Latin. I interrupted and said I wanted it in English. He told me that it was the same thing. I waited until I got it in English. Don't tell me you are close to parishioners if you can't be bothered to pray over them in a language they understand. B) I wrote to the priest overseeing the Diocesan Synod effort. A substantial and not antagonistic letter - E-mail.

I got a reply in 7 minutes - not enough time for him to have read/thought about what I said. He didn't address anything I said. He didn't listen and he didn't care.

There have been so many negative experiences that I don't associate with clergy.

Denying sacraments and communion to self-identifying Catholics for 'breaking protocol'; contradicting medical advice without a canonical/theological basis.

Prior to the 2016 election our associate pastor, in his homily, told us we weren't good Catholics if we didn't vote for the anti-abortion candidate.

It was the bishops who enabled priests who were sick with diseases that brought them to molest kids-- pedophilia . Unfortunately, some blame the whole church for the sin and not the cover-up. No one was served by the cover-up.

Until the church apologizes and deals with the sex abuse , it cannot move forward. Cardinal Mahony of LA spent millions for 38 lawyers to make sure the abuse crisis was not addressed.

The terrible fallout of the scandal at Fairfield University with Fr. Paul Carrier and Doug Perlitz and the abuse of children in Haiti through Project Pierre Toussaint. It's a long story, but it reflects the massive abuse of power that can take place when priests are worshipped in almost cultic fashion and gain control in ways that are manipulative and ultimately for abusive ends.

No experience.

No excuse! Unless he is mentally ill! We are ashamed of the hundreds and thousands who have taken advantage of their priesthood-- therefore taken advantage of many especially the young. I do not know anyone who has been abused but what I have read and what has been

reported in shameful and should be condemned in the eyes of all in the church.

I was working as a pastoral associate in a parish when the priest pastor left to get married. I was responsible for everything, including finding a priest for sacramental ministry, but the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago did not recognize me even as an interim administrator. All the communications from the Archdiocese went to an appointed priest from another parish who was appointed administrator. He never visited or involved himself with us.

I have heard many priests make statements from the pulpit condemning certain politicians, or groups of people. I know of priests who have overstepped boundaries in relationships. The young seminarians are coming up as “Little Lord Fontalroys” full of pomp and circumstance...and living out of ridged ideologies.

Priests telling people from the pulpit who to vote for in the upcoming election and saying they will commit a mortal sin if they vote for a particular person.

A priest publicly shamed a man when he walked out of church as the priest was ranting about the LBGTQ issue. What a bad taste he left in everyone’s mind and soul.

A parish where the pastor ran everything, did not have a pastoral council or finance council. In one instance the pastor was found to have taken church funds for his own use and was eventually dismissed and prosecuted. When the pastor ‘does not empower the parishioners to participate, they eventually lose interest.

At a liturgy, the priest talked to us as if we were children; the feeling of being patronized took away any possibility of sharing the liturgy with joy.

A priest using position power to demote and/or fire employees. Felt angry and saw injustice that was not corrected.

Our previous pastor a year ago stopped giving Communion at funerals because he was afraid receive or people might be in the state of sin. Parishioners were so distraught by this.

After the death of our pastor several priests who were assigned in succession first of all changed all the locks on the church so no one had access to enter the church or the rectory where before the church and rectory were open to the people. Eucharistic ministers were stopped with no dialogue or explanation. Altar servers also were stopped. There was no more Parish Council. Etc. Queries to Arch diocese about the problems were ignored.

Several years ago, in my parish, lay Eucharistic ministers were forbidden to take the Eucharist from the tabernacle. They had to have a priest put the Eucharist in a pyx. This happened without any explanation. The change was offensive, illogical and made bringing the sacrament to the homebound more difficult. It saddened me, as a Eucharistic Minister, to be told that I was unworthy of... What? Of touching the tabernacle? Of handling the key?

My mother’s fear of “going to hell” for something she did against what she was taught as a child.

Once a priest knows I support Equality of women including in ministry, leadership and decision making, they simply turn their backs. No openness, no curiosity.

My pastor changing the topic he was to teach in RCIA without even informing me as the RCIA coordinator.

When sexual abuse was first uncovered and the church instituted programs like the protecting God’s children program. Instead of sending priests for the training the principals and

teachers were the ones who were required to attend.

Generally my experiences have been good, it is shocking therefore to know the abuses that have taken place, and the attitudes of some of the clergy to current events -- blatantly supporting nepotism and racism.

Closed thinking to the working of the Spirit in others.

I was told by a Bishop that because of canon law he had to let me go from a parish and not the pastor who was clearly unfit for leadership in the parish

I worked in East Africa for 33 years as a physician. I saw MANY men use women and children for their personal sexual pleasure. They had many women and children. They were not only priests but Bishops and Cardinals. They have ruined the lives of countless women and children and families. They misused the funds of the church for their own personal 'families' and gains. They have used witchcraft and corrupt business practices to manipulate people and become wealthy. Personally I have cared for the physical/medical needs of some of these women and children who have been abused.

Refusing communion to the LGBTQ parishioners. This is not what Christ would have done.

Clericalism is also a problem with some lay ministers.

I was thrown out of a church by a priest because I was talking to a colleague of mine after Mass in church.

Feeling shut out of ministry. Hearing the injunction that only Catholics in a state of grace are welcome to Holy Communion.

I have women friends and acquaintances who feel called to the priesthood. Their call continues to be ignored and de-valued.

Anyone with power, or "in charge," can be "clerical" - including women or lay men. Some lay women have been overly controlling in my parish.

A man once told me his pastor refused to let him be a godfather because he had had a vasectomy.

I was a youth minister, pushed out by a new pastor who wanted to be a 'hero' to the parish young people, but totally lacked the people skills to attract them.

Priests words are held with greater respect than lay peoples words discourages people in speaking or believing in the Spirit alive and active within their own being. Causes or stifles creativity, risk new ideas, and openness to a reality that might be lived by the ordinary human experience.

Not allowing someone who was transgender serve on a Catholic retreat.

When I wanted to discuss women's ordination with a priest I liked I was surprised that he just shut down the conversation. He told me that the "Church isn't IBM" meaning it doesn't have to consider gender equity.

I have held some responsible positions in our diocese, yet major decisions were made without my input, or that of other women, in areas that affected us.

I don't have many first hand experience of the worst sins of clericalism, although like all Catholic laity I have been told times that my gifts and talents were not needed. But I have teetered on the brink of leaving the Church for much of the past 20 years. I struggle with whether staying makes me complicit in the

crimes that have been committed by priests and especially the coverup by the hierarchy.

The pastor of a local parish had completed his service in the parish but would not leave the parish. This became a public tragedy between himself and the bishop with the result that the parish became divided in its support of the priest vs the bishop. A significant financial contribution was collected in support of the priest. A tragic situation.

Clericalism has been stifling. I have seen so many Catholics walk away from the church. This loss is tragic. The intolerance and exclusionism of the clericalism has turned away so many of its people.

Just moves by Bishops which seem completely out of touch with the needs of people and parishes. Our beloved pastor was moved on Easter Sunday in a move I interpreted as punishment for our parish which was known for being inclusive and socially engaged.

Being the one who prepared a class for confirmation and not being invited to celebrate with Bishop and priests after the ceremony

Where the Priest takes too much control of all that goes on in the Parish

The attitude toward the LGBTQ community, divorced, single, the recognition of the wealthier parishioners and leaving out others who could also serve. There are many cliques in parishes and many talented people are never given a chance to be a part of parish activities.

I was taken advantage of by a priest and I was pulled in by his rationalizations built on God's love- a love that was warped. It took me a long time to look at it as his problem and that I needed to be freed of guilt and depression. I was afraid to report him because I feared people looking at me and condemning me.

I was a Jesuit novice, who left the novitiate. A big part of the reason I left was that I believed my novice director would have dismissed me if I didn't ask. There was NO opportunity for redress/appeal. Part of that is due to the unique makeup of the structure of the novitiate I was in; but there again is the problem with hierarchy.

I have been disappointed with the scandals. And I know that even with those, I struggle not to judge.

A pastor refused to pay the sisters' salaries so he could put on a new roof. He said it was more important that the rectory have a. Sound roof!!!

I have seen more than one Pastor be un-collegiate and simply disrespectful to competent women in the staff, in particular the director of music. There seems to always be a competition between the priests and the music ministers. The Pastors I have known fail to realize we are all on the same team. Just recently we experienced the painful resignation of our wonderful Pastoral Associate for Liturgy and Worship simply because she has, for 30 years, always insisted on revealing the beauty and sacredness of liturgy. I had been a music minister under her direction for 28 years, and the damage and destruction to our music ministry community is irreparable. All due to clericalism.

Put downs must never be a part of relating to people in a parish. Look for the good in others, affirm it, call it forth and let people together make important decisions in a parish setting. I was an administrator in parishes that did not have a priest, and with one where I was for 17 years, there is now a "cleric" who has done everything he can to stop anything the people were doing in the name of Jesus to become Christ in their daily lives.

In 1990's a new rule came out that Eucharistic Ministers could not ascend the steps to the altar

or touch the altar or touch the tabernacle. I resigned as a EM in protest.

My sister's pastor would not allow the Knights of Columbus to donate to her sewing ministry which did a lot for various groups in the parish. If something was not his idea it was not accepted.

At a parish in Sauk City, WI, only the priests can distribute the Eucharist. They have one priest hearing Confessions during the Mass. I was stunned when this man kept his light on to hear Confessions until it was time for Communion, when he turned off his light and went up to the altar to distribute Communion. Yes, during the Consecration, he expected someone to be in the confessional.

From when I was 6 years old I felt called to ordination-and when I was still saying that as an adult, I was no longer a partner in the parish but someone to be avoided because I was a woman

Our present parish priest is young, clerical, with a pre-Vatican II theology on women and all the sacraments! The liturgies are awful now, and I seem to get more from liturgies online, without community unfortunately!

I once was told by a priest that if I didn't like what was happening in the local church (regarding the sexual abuse scandal and not holding the bishop and priests accountable) that I should leave the church. I told the priest I was the Church and was not going to leave!

I was concerned for one of my sons when he worked as a teen in the rectory on weekend. A priest, formally convicted as child molester, served as our pastor at that time. I've wondered about my son (now in his 40's) who never said anything and claims, at this time, that he was not molested...though I still worry.

Working at the parish level and the diocesan level there have been many experiences. I

was involved with the priest scandal in the archdiocese as well. I know many who have left the church because of the sex scandal. Today, sexual abuse is still active, in the refusal to use inclusive language, who can serve at the altar, who can preach. I had faculties to preach until the parish got a resident pastor for example. Spiritual abuse abounds as we are told women have to be contrite to their husbands and the church has the right to tell them what they can and cannot do with their bodies, based on the letters of Paul.

A pastor who has not been open to views of the laity and too constrained with access to sacramentals.

Lay ministers at one of our local parishes were told that the pastor is the BOSS (all caps) and his vision for the parish should be followed. Lay ministers were given a dress code that barred Birkenstock sandals and black jeans. The Birkenstock & black jeans people know who they are, and no longer feel welcomed.

Clericalism values the letter of the law, and the preservation of the institution more than it values the spiritual good of the individual. I know persons who experienced rigid decision making of the local priest that alienated them from the church for good.

Clericalism is a form of 'Caste' which needs to be purged!

Asking for parish involvement in a local ministry and being told the parish already has enough to handle and I should pray about it

Clericalism is destroying the Church and denying the people of a genuine relationship with a God who sees all as Children of God. I was a principal in a small parish school in a very poor part of Pennsylvania. The bishop moved a priest from a parish less than 10 miles away that had no school to our parish with a school. When the PA sexual abuse report came out, this pastor was listed first and was

an horrific predator. His story was on the front page of the local newspaper. Why he was ever sent to a school is beyond my understanding. He was there for four years. I have examined my days there to see if i ever missed anything that may have happened while he was there.

Serving in a parish where when pastor died unexpectedly, there was lack of sensitivity in naming a new pastor.

Constant feeling of a sense of power when in their presence, difficult to open up to them for fear of judgement.

A pastor at my parish (now closed) insisted on doing everything himself, even though many lay people ran various committees. Turned people off. We lost half the parish in his first year.

Ruth Kolpack, my aunt, was fired for not renouncing her thesis on Women's Ordination and Inclusivity yet did so much more than the bishop who fired her, to bring Jesus to college, black/Hispanic communities, youth were excited to know Christ.....many relatives/friends left the church because of this.

A pp who subtly needed to be in Control of the parish, even notices that went on the notice board. People were traumatized, disempowered, and did not receive a sense of the love of God and the way a parish really should reflect Community

I can't think of anything personally; just other people's stories.

Generally many priests reject people who have unresolved issues regarding the rules of canon law and cut those people off.

All are created equal. I anyone wants to be a priest with good morals and a good conscious let them.

My experience is friends have left the church because of their experiences.

Attempts to re-energize pre-Vatican climate; acting as if it never happened. Impact was confusion among the folks. Preaching the conservative, failing to be faithful to Pope Francis, failing to even listen to the Pope and to voices in the pews.

Just recently voiced concerns about media resource in parish bulletin and shared concerns in email to pastor. His reply was in effect to shut up and don't bother him. Find out he also doing many other dictatorial actions like no parish council, finance council removed elderly from lecturing. Clericalism in one small area means most likely it is also present in all aspects of leadership. A big clericalism is we had a new Archbishop replace archdiocesan synod priorities that had been developed by the whole Church with his personal priorities.

When teaching anything in the parish the book and subject must be approved, and I am directed not to bring any other information into the classroom or state personal knowledge about the topic of the book.

My former parish priest was accused of abuse. The Archdiocese sent out a representative to speak at the parish. As a former teacher in this archdiocese, I challenged him that the program in place to prevent abuse was CYA and until there was a better program, the abuse would continue. He did not address my comment.

I left pastoral ministry because of the pastor who would not respond to my request for him to visit parishioners who wanted to be anointed. When they died, they were not buried from the church because they felt the church had abandoned them. The pastor wanted an ordained associate who could ordain rather than me who could not. When he told me that, I was demoralized and left the ministry and had to go for therapy.

Clericalism makes me crazy, most don't present themselves as servants but as someone who is better than me and wants to save anyone who doesn't have the proper respect for the priest.

I was accepted by the government and the chaplaincy division as a R.C. penitentiary chaplain. This was never acknowledged by the church. I was able to be one because of the shortage of priests.

My brother and his friends who were in minor seminary and either abused, or made vulnerable to it, in their teenage years. And an attitude of legalism and duty: like in the return to Mass. "You must come back to Mass because the Eucharist is the source and summit..." what average Catholic has a clue of what that means.

When the priest expresses the view that he is closer to God or on a different level than I am I totally turned off and actually wonder what he is thinking.

I know several boys/men who were abused by priests many years ago. It's taken a mighty toll on their lives and relationships--especially until it could be 'talked' about/admitted it happened. Unfortunately, several didn't live long lives.

Father always has the last word.

Not addressing current issues and focusing instead on church functioning.

As a female endorsed lay leader in my archdiocese, I am still blocked from living out my calling by some clericalist priests who seem to feel threatened by my being lay and a woman. Ultimately no matter my calling or training, it is the priests that have the final say.

The reports of abuse are horrific and fostered by clericalism. My grandfather, a loyal Catholic never wanted his son to get too involved with the Church. He noted that people who die are going to be surprised by how few priests

are there. A sad commentary that such abuse is not a recent occurrence. Think of the castration of choir boys in the medieval churches.

At age 18, I went to a priest I had known since childhood for counseling. I was in a vulnerable space and he took advantage of me, emotionally and physically with inappropriate touching. I was scared and did not go back to see him. In the 1990's the diocese put out a call asking for anyone abused by a priest to come forward to tell their story. I did. I asked that the priest not be told my name and he was. I was interrogated by a psychiatrist when told me that what happened was not serious. I felt abused again.

The sexual abuse crisis was fueled in large part by clericalism. A cradle Catholic woman that I know left the Church to join the Episcopalian Church because of this issue.

Very good men with wonderful ministerial skills who have abused children in the distant past are not forgiven and counselled but dismissed. We end up with pencil pushers, not ministers.

An alcoholic pastor, whose religious order and whose bishop kept him in control of the parish without any kind of intervention. Meanwhile, two vowed religious woman and a layman basically kept the parish above water. But the priest still had control, especially of funds. When he finally was removed, stacks of undeposited/uncashed checks were found all over his bedroom.

Refusal of priests to use inclusive language in homilies, in presentations. Causes anger.

Clericalism has led the church to alienating large numbers of Catholics. The only real diversity in the priesthood is ethnicity. The hierarchical structure is solely unmarried men. This severely limits the ability for them to truly relate to many in their community. Further in many cases it alienates many who view do not

feel accepted or understood by the church and its leaders.

In my teenage years a priest who was son of one of my father's friends leaned over and mouthed me while my parents in kitchen.

Being sexually abused by a priest.

New pastor who waves his hand, dismisses all suggestions of the laity and just does whatever he wants.

At an RCIA meeting one priest embarrassed another person espousing to express his thoughts about the church.

When asked for support for undocumented from ICE, our bishop said right to life was the only issue and refused. The group went on to witness ICE activity without church support.

Control over a recognized outdated traditional practice.

When I was 29, I had an affair & got pregnant. There was no chance of marriage. I brought my problem to a priest, asking for some practical help i.e. Counselling services. He asked if I was ready to confess my guilt & no, I wasn't there yet. He got red in the face, started screaming & condemned me to hell. It was about three years before I was ready to go to Confession. He had no clue what I needed in a real-life scenario.

While helping my father, who was ill, up to communion, the priest saw my father as his knee collapsed and I had to hold him up. I asked the priest to step toward my father. He did not, so I said, "Move your ass up!" He was later made a bishop. He held the host up, like come and get it. We did have words after Mass and he said he would pray for me. I said I would pray he learned what it meant to minister to others.

I've been able to detect clericalism in some priests & stay away from them. One annoying priest spoke over us as he preached. I choose not to hear his sermons anymore.

I only just found out that when my son and daughter were baptized, one of the priests (who I thought a friend), quietly told my non-Catholic Mother in law not to come up on the altar. She didn't say anything but she and my wife were cut to the quick and to date hold animosity toward the Church. I never knew.

New pastor unilaterally imposed his very own traditionalist style on the parish, dismissed several key lay leaders - basically undoing the collaborative environment of the previous pastor. On the parish, dismissed many of the lay leadership.

It is toxic and justifies the actions of clerics that are abusive in relationship to the non ordained in persons be it sexually or attitudinally.

New pastor changed a Vatican II parish into pre-Vatican II by deleting all committees or changing their purposes(s).

Young people complain to me that all the priest cares about is being in charge, telling others what is right and wrong, collecting money to "keep the church operating" - they don't want us to express our questions, our sense of sexuality/ humanity's priest in my Chicago parish was clearly not feeling well, so I went up to read and the told him we could continue with a communion service and we'd pray he felt better. He said thank you and we proceeded with the service.

I have been in several situations in which religious women of equal academic and pastoral experience were not heard, but the opinion, the voices of the priests who were present were attended to. Patriarchy reigns, and when it is named; one sees blank stares.

Parish council members have to be appointed by the pastor.

As a female minister in the church, I was never given equal pay nor were my skills, education, or calling recognized. It was demoralizing and demeaning and made me feel less.

Some treat you with disrespect.

Verbal Abuse- emotional, mental, spiritual--one on one and in a group. Complete harassment Toxicity.

My younger brother, now dead, was a priest for 30+ years. He once told me that when one becomes a priest, one relinquishes his right to his own opinion or beliefs in obedience to his bishop. That renunciation of personal conscience seems to me to smack of overweening clerical power, or clericalism.

A priest I worked with on a liturgy committee considered the members of the committee there to be his workers. He did not value the ideas of the committee members, mostly women. I resigned from the committee.

Subtle. It creeps in. For at the changes to the liturgy the priest said 'I know you won't like it but you'll have to get used to it'. Felt like being spoken to as a child.

In our parish the priests priest are all about Rules and evangelism. They defer to the bishop.

I have had the great fortune of having had wonderful priests in my life who have been true guides in my journey, this stands in great contrast when one has to deal with a priest who in his actions defines clericalism. We have had a young priest come into our parish about three years ago and early on in his tenure announced to various groups that he couldn't find God in our church. He has since made it his mission to divide and conquer. Our parish is in a resort community and hence the

congregation is rather diverse and our priest used that diversity as a way to drive a wedge between various groups. He has removed significant art pieces without any parish consultation and at the same time will inform artisans and designers and architects that they are wrong in their understanding of church art and is on a mission to bring back choir lofts and communion rails and wants to rebuild the church without windows so that one can no longer see beauty of nature surrounding the church. His desire to try to remake the people of the parish into his image of what the church should be has been the most divine thing that the church has experienced in 40 years.

A priest in our parish who felt that I had no to talk about alcoholism. I was involved in the Bishop Council on Alcoholism and I was going into parishes etc. He would yell at me in meetings. The diocese told me it would be better to leave the parish so I don't get hurt. He was later arrested at a rest stop for engaging in sexual behavior. He was also the chaplain at the Catholic High School our daughters attended. It was devastating.

I was refused ordination as a Deacon because God created me female. After the death of my husband, I met a man who was Methodist & divorced. Catholic clerics refused to bless our marriage His Methodist Pastor married us! My Sister 'left the church' due to a divorce.

Strong opinion about homosexuality. Very hurtful to gay and lesbian.

My mother was denied sacraments because my father, a Protestant, refused to promise their children would be raised Catholic. This caused irreparable harm to my mother's mental health, to the marriage and family, and to my own psychological development. My mother loved the Church, and the local priest denied it to her. This was almost 80 years ago and would not happen today. What a terrible use of clerical position power and cruelty of the church.

The Godfather of my youngest brother eventually became a priest who remained a positive force in my brother's life until he died.

As a young woman and mother of four young children I was part of a children's liturgy planning group. On one occasions myself and the other women in the group did planning and needed the approval of the priests who worked with us. We struggled to find a time when we could all meet and presented this to the priests. It turned out the only time we could meet was on this priest's day off. We were told he could not meet with us for just one hour because this was his day off. The effect this had on me was "we mothers don't get a day off, and he couldn't spare an hour for us to complete this work!"

Our seminarians wear cassocks and separate themselves as "special" who "understand what Vatican 2 was REALLY about" putting themselves on a pedestal, wanting to speak Latin; at altar having priest back facing the people

Our newly ordained priest will not allow lay people to go to the tabernacle or bring the gifts up into the sanctuary. Many don't notice but I have spoken to him about this. I know it is a real choice to keep a distance between clergy and laity. This may seem minor but in my opinion it is indicative of the broader mindset.

The church has not done a good job of policing itself with regard to the removal and punishment of abusive priests.

Overseas a priest declined to do the kiss of peace, instituted much Latin (because Jesus spoke Latin NOT), stopped the practice of sending and welcoming back soldiers as part of the Mass and with communal prayer. Didn't have female alter boys. Women were asked to do the linens.

I know women who have been deeply wounded and cannot continue to participate in the

eucharist because of the sexual abuse they suffered and the fact that the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report was released without first notifying her of its publication.

Experiences where lay persons are not respected.

A friend left the priesthood in protest.

A pastor who overstepped his boundaries and moved my bedroom from one area in the parish house to another without my knowledge or input.

I have felt called from a young age, but have been told only men can be priests. Jesus didn't ordain women, heck Jesus didn't ordain!

As a lay women that was called as a Lay Ecclesial Minister, I am respected by the people in the pews and by many priests. However, some people in the pews and some priests/pastors would defer to a deacon or even another male church leader with less formation to lead or to get advice from. I do not advocate another layer of clericalism, but there should be recognition of lay people who have been formed and committed to the Church's mission. Rather, it has been my experience that lay people are all lumped together in a class below the ordained and even those who have formation are usually not considered first.

When I was in seminary at BC for my M.Div. (as a lay Catholic woman) I was refused entry in the "Rites" class with my male seminarian, non-ordained (yet) peers. This was horrible. The priest professor told me he would come up with "Special Projects" for me. I wanted to learn the "Rites" and felt that since my peers were not yet ordained, we all had the same status, and I ought to be allowed to learn too. I felt, yet again, that I was being punished for my gender.

My sister wanted to bring Eucharist to the sick but the pastor said 'NO' because she also

needed to give out Communion on Sunday but was not able to go up on the altar which was required.

Disenchantment with seminarians and young priests. They seem to be caught up in the superficial and acting as young school boys. [Seems to me] they are longing for a time-gone-by, a nostalgia for things they did not experience - pre-Vatican II. Recently a woman said she had a conversation with a young priest who dismissed her “radical” ideas of church, saying their generation is waiting for ours to die off.

Clerics reserve all decision making to themselves even when they have no competence in the matter. A woman friend was most capable and got marginalized.

Relationships are key and clericalism does not enhance relationships with God, others and ourselves.

Listening to “poor priests” homilies during the height of the sexual abuse revelations. Little concern for the actual victims. Caused a friend to leave Mass, having a panic attack.

During my sophomore year of college, we had a priest give a homily with a harmful, toxic message that blamed victims of sexual abuse. My campus minister stood up at the end of the service to say that this was not okay. The next thing we knew, the diocese got involved and banned our campus minister from being at Mass the next two weeks. He was denied Eucharist and the ability to minister in church, because as a deacon, he spoke up to a priest. This was a painful moment for me as a student, in which I recognized the abuse of power.

I recently learned that two of my brothers were sexually assaulted by a priest we all trusted, who my parents have worked with in a church camp. So he likely abused many other boys. It has affected their mental health and their feelings about the Church.

Too many to cite but the general attitude of “I am in charge!”

Atmospheric change when clergy enters the space. I am frustrated when everyone is not respected equally.

Serving as chair on a Catholic school board, I was repeatedly ‘corrected’ by the bishop. I was devastated and had to force myself to chair future meetings.

The young priest who came to our parish complete with fancy vestments from Rome, who announced, “I’m Father ____ and I’m here to help you get to heaven.” He was condescending, made it clear that lay ministers were a lower form of life, and probably wore his cassock to bed. I left the parish after six months of his neotrad maunderings.

No sensitivity to divorced Catholics.

Too many times having a new pastor utterly disrupt a parish he is assigned to.

I do not have firsthand experience regarding abuses of power, sexual abuse, etc. My concerns evolve from learning of these abuses through different venues, such as the news, and personal stories shared by churchgoers during meetings at church.

Several years ago, my niece brought her daughter to her parish for Baptism. She had a beautiful, small seashell and asked the pastor if he would use it to baptize her daughter. The priest replied with a firm, “No”. This was a great disappointment to all of us because we felt the shell was such a lovely symbol. Many paintings of St. John the Baptist show him using a shell to baptize. In fact, in my diocesan

When I stopped giving weekly checks my parish because of backward pastor with theology homilies that were judgmental non-

inclusive and disrespectful to other viewpoints .. He called me aside after Mass and said if I was in an accident he couldn't send an ambulance because I was no longer covered by church insurance!! He also sent 3 letters to 2 nursing homes and a psychiatric hospital that I did not represent the church when I visited patients. I had sat with dying people during the night (not as representative of the parish ministry)

A young, new priest, not from the US, with little higher education than seminary abroad, telling first generation American girls that they should stay home and take care of their families -- from the pulpit, in a homily. All I could do, with my four kids in tow, was to express my opposition to his damaging sermon by walking out of Mass. I spoke with him later, he was adamant in the correctness of his limiting views on women.

Generally, my experience of clericalism involves priests and pastors behaving autocratically while invoking the man-made rules of the Church as if they were written in stone by God; when it was clear that the newly assigned pastor did not favor the work I had been doing as a staff person in the parish, it was obvious I should resign -- although he never asked for that resignation but seemed pleased to have me out from underfoot! :)) Within 12 months almost all staff also resigned to take other positions in other parishes or community organizations.

Parish council members not being allowed to function in their capacity but shut down by the pastor.

I was a parish administrator for five years under one bishop and the next bishop have me and other removed. Women erased was the goal. Painful. The next bishop had me and other women removed. I am educated and capable and the only reason me and others were removed were because we were women. The patriarchal church abuses women because it

can and this is an unhealthy and tragic time for the church in the 21st century. I am saddened for the men, women and children who have this model of church today.

New pastors have moved the parish "back to the 50s" without even listening to all parishioners and have summarily fired staff who don't go along.

My wanting to be a Woman of the church and realizing as I spoke with pastor, he wanted me to be a woman of HIS church. Need for power made clear.

Lay person missing call to ministry received at Baptism. It's Fathers job to do it.

We joined St. Matthew Parish Champaign, Illinois in 1974. Fr. Wm Feeny was pastor from 1972 until his death in 1992. Canon John Flattery became pastor and aggressively started to change how the parish functioned. In response to his actions the parish formed Concerned Parishioners of St. Matthew. They requested a change of pastors from Bishop John J Myers, but that was denied. During the negotiations the leaders of Concerned Parishioners of St. Matthew formed a tax exempt 501c3 alternative way for parishioners to continue to financially support the parish while negotiations were on going. The bishop threatened a lawsuit. However, Canon Flattery "decided" to retire, and Fr Terrence O'Brien became pastor. Parishioners were tired of the conflict and just wanted peace. While this seemed to return things to normal it was the beginning of a dismantling of a Vatican II parish to a Pre-Vatican II parish. The reason for giving you this information is the Catholic Church in Champaign-Urbana is a microcosm of the throwback to a pre-Vatican II Church that is now dominated by EWTN its affiliates and Opus Dei. This includes all the Catholic parishes in C-U, St. Matthew, Holy Cross, St Mary's, St Patrick's , and St. John's Newman Center on the University of Illinois campus. There has been a complete exclusion in this

community of “valid” voices from Catholic theologians, religious communities, and Catholic Universities. Reflecting on what has happened in this community over the last 30 years could be helpful to the Synod to make needed changes in moving the church forward. I do have the documents relating to Concerned Parishioners. I did share with the small group last night a few incidents such as seminarians disposing of 25 years of religious education material and the abusive treatment of a Franciscan religious who was head of Religious Education. There is much more to this story than I could possibly provide in a short response to your question. It is very divisive and hurtful to the Catholic community in C-U. I am providing you with three links that reflect this reversal. (1) a St Matthew Bulletin from 2013 where the Pastor of St. Matthew announces he successfully invited Cardinal Burke to speak at the “Priests Assembly Days”. Attachment <cardinal burke bulletin.pdf> (2) A link to a video of the March 6, 2022 Mass at St. Matthew with the priest saying Mass with his back to the people and using Latin in the Mass. https://www.youtube.com/watch?V=zortrue_0zu&t=2441s (3) A bulletin from January 30, 2022 from the Pastor’s Desk, endorsing the Youth for Christ movement. Attachment <St Matthew Bulletin 1-30.22> We changed to St. Patrick Parish , Urbana, Illinois in 1998. In 2004 Fr. George Remm retired and Fr. Joseph Hogan became pastor and the move back to a Pre-Vatican II church began, but more stealthily. This situation is very divisive to the Catholic Community. People are going to other denominations or leaving the churches altogether.

This scenario follows the installation of a new pastor for a downtown Co-Cathedral over 100 years old. Within three months of the new pastor’s arrival, a large number of parishioners have left because of his overbearing leadership style and pre-Vatican II liturgical spirituality. The new pastor began his residence by insisting on purchasing a mansion as a rectory to the tune of a million dollars. His horizon

overlooked the present flux of change in demographics. His vision was seeing the parish grow with more young adults or young families in the future. However, at this point, about 75% of the parishioners are 60 and above, many of whom have fixed incomes. The majority of members on the Finance and Pastoral Councils were seeing another horizon. They were more concerned with the present, short-term situation. Besides fixed incomes, there were employment struggles, and younger adults opting for the great resignation. Families are just trying to get by keeping up with yearly expenses. The Councils realized the dilemma of raising money for a new rectory while still maintaining an older church building and ministry programs in the areas of music, liturgy, faith formation and building security/maintenance. The conflict was put on hold when the Diocese nixed the purchase of a new rectory unless the parish could prove they could maintain an income that would both maintain present parish expenses and raise a substantial amount money for the new rectory while considering its upkeep. One would not recognize this parish from nine months ago. Seven of the original eight staff persons have resigned. The longtime, outstanding cathedral choir no longer exists and there are only two children in the sacramental class. There are no female altar servers. The parish is austere in comparison to the former parish where hospitality, inspiring homilies and uplifting liturgical music were hallmarks. The assembly has been informed that one should not receive communion unless they have gone to confession even for venial sins and have fasted for a complete hour and not one minute less. Giving Communion on the tongue is his preference. Where once a team met with bereaved families preparing funerals, choosing readings etc., the pastor now chooses the readings etc. Baptism preparation is a video with no personal interaction of parents. The RCIA is a catechism class led by a priest, rather than a journey of sharing faith experiences with team members and opening the Word. Wedding preparation involves more academic reading

than addressing catechetical moments. Very controlling, ministries headed by lay women and a sister are almost now exclusively done by priests. People who remain are for the most part longtime parishioners who refuse to let this priest push them away, thus the celebration of their faith is really a test of their forbearance. Fortunately, the diaspora of this Co-Cathedral can find spiritual nourishment in four other city parishes. It is into this setting that our Bishop has assigned a newly ordained priest; a young man with much potential, now being mentored by this new pastor. This pastor has insinuated in several homilies that the previous pastor did everything wrong including offering more confession times in a week. The previous pastor was not well, however, besides weekly confessions, he was always available for private confession at any time. After ministering in the coal mines of parish life for nearly 60 years, I'm struggling with a "dark night of the soul."

Priests or sacramental ministers have chosen to be on pedestals and so negligent of being with the poor or with the people who are culturally different than he is. The people were told that and these hands were made for chalices and not callouses. This was a Mission parish with first generation Catholics. The people never felt they were welcomed though they continued to grow in their faith even without this "pastor."

I have 2 friends that were victims of clergy abuse. It makes me suspect of any power-wielding priest or deacon

Not listened to, dictating what needs to be done. I was disempowered

A priest's decision to ignore Parish council's conciliation advise resulted in Catholic parents leaving the Parish and vowing never to return.

It's a common story, unfortunately, that all it takes is for a new priest with opposing (and clerical) ideas to swoop in, take over and destroy what was formerly an inclusive, vibrant, diverse and justice-seeking faith community.

There are too many to mention, but I know many heart-broken, disenfranchised Catholics who have had this experience. Many no longer belong to a traditional parish and have found home churches or churches of other denominations to attend.

I know of several people who were abused by priests. They, in the second half of their lives, are still affected by the trauma as a child. They continue to try to live with this. I was personally verbally abused by a priest and, after apologies, I still have the memory of the trauma I felt at the time.

A priest chased down (literally) a high school student who had received eucharist but was not Catholic. I was embarrassed to be part of such a small, minded church.

Our pastor shows no respect for the time and talents of his parishioners. He assigns duties and the time at which they should be done. Then he shows up early and does it himself. When the person assigned comes on time they find that there is no reason for them to have made an effort to arrive 30 minutes before Mass. Parishioners make sacrifices to be on time and then find that he did the assigned task. This happened to me several times including times that I left family events early because I was assigned and then found there was nothing for me to do. I felt that he didn't respect me and that my time did not matter. I took my name off the list so that I wouldn't be assigned again.

Being told by a priest that he knows best, when I was preparing to read the prayers of the faithful before mass and thought that a particular line was an antiabortion comment.

Our archdiocese knows nothing but clericalism. It has pervaded the total parish climate so that parishioners don't know how to become spiritually mature and are rarely included in any decisions. Perhaps this is a direct result of their opinion that, in America at least, the

ignorant immigrants needed to listen to the clerics since they were the only educated ones. However, I believe this pretty much happened all over the world. It is still very strong in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. They seem to have lost sight of the fact the lay people are as educated and in many instances, even more educated than they are. They opened up all those schools. They should know better.

In middle school I was deemed 'bad influence' by pastor - I wanted to play on CYO basketball team, the only team my church sponsored was 'boys' team. The pastor and many parents were very against this, despite bylaws not mentioning gender and fact I played street ball with most of the other players and was as good or better. Obviously being considered a trouble-maker when I was standing for what I believed in never sat well with me. Academically I was #2 in my class but my choice to attempt to play on the 'boys' team was held more in his eyes, as well as all my other accomplishments.

Wow so many. But starting way back in younger days . I was a nun at the time in a parish. Where people were being " granted" appointments as Eucharistic ministers. 5 people applied one of them one of the sisters I lived with. All but me were invited to the acceptance ceremony. And presented to the parish. I was denied because " liturgical dance" was unacceptable and would be off putting to people Fr said no., Many persons wrote letters supporting me , even. Mother superior. It went to the Bishop and the bishop said "No we have enough priests and she is not a priest". All along my career even working in a Jesuit company , only Father was allowed to "read the. Gospel. And preach". I was the "dancer" Interestingly it came to be that dance of the scriptures was a effective manner of preaching moving. The assembly quit differently than just "father's homily."

Being dismissed as a woman!

I have worked with priest who are open to women in leadership. But when they are reassigned, I sometimes have to bow out.

I knew a priest who was very pompous and degrading to others. He upset me so much that I switched parishes to get away from him. He caused many others to leave as well.

Pastor came in to parish and threw all of the married couples out of the sponsor couple program and had a young man with a theology degree write up a new marriage prep program without any input from or discussion with the married couples who had been doing the ministry for 15 plus years.

I have been pushed out of my church on many occasions for my prophetic comments. Too many times to just give one story.

I was asked to have my foot washed on Holy Thursday. I was fine with that, but then the priest said that only men could have their foot washed. (This was around 2008 or 2009.)

I am concerned about the early formation of priests. Too many of our priests present themselves as privileged rather than as servant.

I was on a Women's Commission who prepared Spiritual Conferences for the women of our Diocese. We had Liturgies that were very uplifting and included Liturgical Dance. When we got a new Bishop, he would not allow us to have Liturgical Dance at "his" Mass. Within several years the Women's Commission ceased to be. I was also part of the Spiritual & Intellectual Committee of the Priests Senate. They dissolved the committee and never bothered to inform an Order priest and I that it was dissolved. We found out by an article published in the Diocesan newspaper.

When the local bishop on two occasions refused to let certain qualified theologians speak in the diocese.

The “my way or the highway” attitude of some clerics is the best way to run out of church most except those who are passive and want to be led blindly. And of course all the abuse instances. Want/need to be.

Sexual abuse on me by a priest who wanted a harem of young women at his sexual service.

A priest insisting on needing the community to call him “Father,” feeling his title of self-importance.

A pastor who ignored the bishop’s directive at the beginning of the pandemic, not to give Communion in the hand, because he was a theology expert and could quote documents saying, “you cannot refuse anyone communion just because they want it in the hand”.

Our pastor has told our parish council that he will listen to our thoughts, but in the end, he rules. This kind of attitude has our youth leaving in droves.

Sexual abuse of servers by the priest.
Scandalous.

A priest that tells others how to dress.

Clerics refusing Communion to the people and holding the Sacraments as a dog biscuit or something to be done to people.

Clerics who do not look a woman in the eye.

I was verbally bullied in my first full time experience in a parish by the pastor. I finally quit in order to save my sanity. It was a wounding that took a long time to heal. Thankfully, the subsequent pastors i’ve worked with were complete opposites. It helped restore my trust as well as my vocation in liturgy and music.

I was groomed by a priest who followed me across country. I was a novice at the time. He was a predator or a man looking for a woman

to love- not sure which. But I don’t see that as clericalism.

In about 1990 in a church in Chicago, a black woman religious was “silenced” due to her wonderful reflections o the gospel in church, which threatened clericalist men. My family and I left that church. We are white.

Milwaukee Archbishop’s declaration on trans folks is a document that is not based on love and empathy.

I’m as fierce as they are about it. George Wilson, SJ, wrote a book that connected the two and other professions as well. I think everyone should read it.

Clerics evaluating the life of religious women (Sisters) in the US.

I was an unprepared reader of a doctoral thesis focusing on the lives of ten adult men who were sexually abused by priests as young children and are now members of SNAP. Their narratives haunt me. The families rather not question the blood in their children’s underwear along with the children expressed. The need to belong to the church community, with “pastor” as the lord of the manor, was primary. Most Catholics I know over the age of seventy still ground themselves in this institutional model.

Overpowering, in total charge, not open to listening.

I have worked my whole life in the church as ministerial leader. I have been used by the church when a need arose to replace leaders, but when I needed a job after a church merged, there was no safety net like priests have. Also, the “old boys club” assured that regardless of gifts/talents, priests would be considered first. Priests expecting to be treated “better” than laity, while standing in lines or when an opinion is asked at mtgs.

A truly angry, depressed and therefore nasty pastor.

Priests do not always have the right answers, but some think they think they do. A priest told my mother that she was going to hell because she would not give my brother permission to enter the seminary when he finished 8th grade. Mom carried the guilt of that situation up to death.

When the local clergy goes through the motions of being collaborative but a plan & a decision has already be made about the closing of a parish.

We used to have an annual event where we acknowledged lay leaders and now we not do not acknowledge lay leaders but we do not try to encourage lay leadership. We seem to be only interested in financial stewardship.

A priest who was not knowledgeable on the music ministry tried to tell me how to do my job as music director. I had over 40 years of experience & much training yet he insisted that I “obey “him.

I have experienced and witnessed priest sexual misconduct that was covered up and the idea that protecting the Church was paramount and the idea that people pursuing justice are against the Church. I have been friends with offending priests who acted as though that being a priest made them exempt from guilt.

More than one pastor I worked with only treated me as working for him. I could only bear this a short time. I was able to move on. People in the pews will either put up with them, find another parish, or find a different church. Pastors really should not move into a parish and make all kinds of changes, so that people no longer know the community they have been.

For Baptism: only one family with child at a time- not with a sister-in-law and baby--never ex.

As a lay woman formed with the deacon candidates, I was hurt by how I was not seen by the church as a servant; no rites to acknowledge how I've been found worthy by the church to serve, no storming the heavens to pray for me as I ended formation; no recognition of how I've also become a herald of the Gospel.

It's general devaluing of women. As a woman with a Masters degree in Pastoral Ministry my views & knowledge are not valued.

Tried to give a young priest material about Mary Magdalen. He called the source heretical.

Worked in a Diocese and was on a Curial Cabinet with the Vicar General.

I was on my parish council for 4 years. I felt like it was a formality where we had no say. The pastor met with us each month but nothing was ever accomplished. He resisted or ignored any suggestions for the parish council, except for one - that was restriping the parking lot and it took four years to get that done. Once when I suggested that there was a conference we could attend that was for getting more lay involvement the pastor yelled at me and said that that was a front for getting woman ordained. It was very upsetting to be treated that way by a priest.

I experience clericalism continually in a church that disallows women to participate in Holy Orders and I have sought to worship in a community lead NY a RCWP.

Priests who give funeral homilies or remarks that barely mention the deceased and rant on about following the commandments and avoiding hell; ridiculous adherence to “rules” that were broken because of one misplaced word which then seems all Baptisms administered by that priest to be invalid!

Not listening to or valuing women.

A priest who changes the topic when he doesn't want to address a challenging issue.

After almost 15 years of preaching locally, the "new" Roman Missal was implemented. The pastor was conflict avoidant and not willing to advocate for women's voices to be heard. I was assured by the liturgy coordinator to whom I resigned, that the pastor would call me. Never got that call.

After speaking up once about five years ago at the end of Mass, regarding the denigration of public schools, and again recently regarding the lack of safety about communion on the tongue, our pastor has told me that if I ever speak again, I will have legal action taken against me for a restraining order or a no-trespassing order. Both times what I said to the congregation was said respectfully. However, at the recent time, I made flippant remark, unfortunately, as I stepped down. Our pastor has not protected our parish by following the state mandates for months now. I became quite concerned about the elderly in our parish. Other parishioners had asked him to address this issue, but he would not.

Being a student of liturgy I tried to advise our pastor that the information he had been given by a parishioner was in error. The priest looked at me and said "You have poison in your heart." That comment crushed my Being told by a priest that I had poison in my heart when I had tried to help him not make a liturgical mistake. My spirit was crushed and made me realize that ordination alone does not make a priest.

On a parish finance council, the priest signed a major contract without consultation with anyone. The same thing happened when I was on the Finance group in another diocese. Both resulted in a loss of money to the Church.

The pastor is king in his kingdom.

I am asked to prepare reconciliation services. I do and I write homilies that only a priest of deacon can speak. How does that make sense?

Absolutely. Priests who deny couples to marry in their home parish b/c they no longer live in it, but their parents are still members. Good way to get rid of parishioners!

As a sister for 14 years of my life and then as a lay woman who has worked for the Church in just about every ministry with the exclusion of being official priest, I found too many clerics to be chauvinistic, and threatened by strong capable women "colleagues". As a Hospital chaplain I felt heartsick for the patients who too frequently received the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick by a collared clergy who did not bring the Presence of Christ to the bedside along with his oils and rote prayers. Sadly, the families were thrilled to have "father" there and did not realize how short-changed they were being.

A priest in whose presence there would be nothing I could say or suggest that he would want to devote 5 minutes to listen to; a priest who would not value any of my opinions; a priest who can walk two feet away from you and not greet you in any manner.....A priest who professes that he must keep himself apart and he has the support of a little circle.....I love the Mass, I love the lay ministries I perform, the community outreach work I do; I see very little difference now between myself and a clerical person. His pedestal long ago crumbled.

Once questioned our bishop about why women cannot be deacons - raised the question about 10 years ago if not longer, still waiting for an answer. I have played many roles in my parish and noted several years ago as I was anticipating an early retirement that I and other women were ideally suited for the role of deacon and also knew that it was possible for women to become deacons. I approached our bishop to inquiry and even though I had held a significant role in our Catholic school system,

the bishop avoided the question and still has not responded.

I have seen priests arrive to a parish with a heart of service. There have been an equal number of priests who expect to be served.

My experiences are not as traumatic as others, but deeply wounding enough to diminish my trust and respect for clergy. Every interaction with male clergy is rooted in the priest first protecting the power of the church, and, oh, perhaps an afterthought that the church might really be about developing followers of Christ. The only goal of the church is to protect their ultimate power and possessions, not about developing faith.

I mentioned the clerical experience I'm about to repeat on another survey but while i find it extreme, it so surpasses anything else that might have bothered me with the priests with whom I worked over many years that I must repeat it. A friend who was depressed and confused went to a priest for spiritual direction and ended up being abused mentally and physically by him. When she was in recovery from a serious crisis she approached this priests diocese to report the situation both out of fear as well as need of healing, She was interviewed at length, told they were going to deal with him and would get her help. Months went by and she continued to try to get help from them, She was told the Bishop knew the whole story but they didn't recommend that she meet with him directly. Basically, it seemed that they just hoped she would go away, It is still unsettled as is her mental health. This is a very simplified version of what has gone on now for more than 3 years. So this is the greatest example of what I can only imagine clericalism to be.

Homophobic attitude towards Gay people, witnessing the pain caused to good, loving human beings as a result and broken relationships between Catholic parents and their children as a result.

My experience with our administrator is lack of communication - the decisions have already been made.

As a religious woman, I have approached my pastors and deacons on multiple occasions with concerns and have never felt that I was taken seriously. Rather, I was simply dismissed and things went on as usual.

Priests refusing communion to people they "judge" ineligible.

Seeing dozens and dozens of teenage boys (seminarians?) Walking around in Rome in cassocks!

Pastor refusing Eucharist to divorced widow,

Some priests and deacons continue to deny the Sacraments to people with disabilities or forms of dementia because supposedly 'they don't understand' the Sacrament. This must stop! On another note: Too many priests dismiss women's ideas, suggestions etc., often in an abusive way. I've had it and seen it happen too often. One priest was obsessed with using large amounts of incense. He was asked to stop as people were ending up in the ER. One Christmas during Mass he put incense on the coals then turned around and looked at us, grinned and put more on! We got up right then and walked out!

Preventing me from living my calling because I'm female and downplaying the importance of the call.

I was nominated as a subject matter expert to join a bishops' committee to draft a statement. The bishops shouted down any disagreement, unfortunately including factual corrections. Afterwards, staff edited out any statement indicating that the church itself should or would do something to improve itself. As for the measures to prevent sexual abuse -- yes, there certainly are some experts at meetings, but, in my experience, the expert input on what the

church ought to do is just ignored. As a result, I have no confidence in our “new” procedures for preventing, monitoring, investigating, reporting etc. Sexual abuse in the church.

My work in the parish is in justice and outreach ministries. According to the 1971 post Vatican II doc, *Justicia in Mundo*, justice is constitutive to the work of the church. However, in a typical staff meeting the percentage of time given to this critical work of the church is negligible. More time and concern is spent on making sure a 60 inch candle gets ordered for Easter.

An Opus Dei pastor assigned to an active Vatican II parish.

I was a daily mass-goer, active in parish work and this guy could not listen to any but his way. He was off-putting and my children, husband, and I avoided him.

Bad experience at 18 yrs. Of age when a priest accused me in the confessional of sexual activity. Dispensed a penance of daily Mass and Communion and weekly confession before I would be forgiven. When I asked how I could receive Eucharist the next day without first being forgiven he ranted and with an expletive told me to get out. I did, for over 50 years. Did I report him. It just wasn't done.

Our diocese is undergoing a gigantic merger process because of a priest “shortage” (sic). The process is so clerical with abundant arrogance and entitlement. This leads to lack of transparency which leads to lack of accountability. Our bishop has made promises that he has not kept. For example, he told a parish that they would have to close their school because of financial reasons but that if the parishioners could raise \$150k they could stay open another year. The parish raised \$175k but the bishop closed the school. I have not been able to find out what happened to the money. 2. I have been an adult catechist for 20 years in our RCIA program. Our Pastoral Associate retired and I was approached to take over

running the RCIA program. This had been part of the Pastoral Associate's responsibilities for over 30 years. I was told that I was expected to do this on a volunteer basis and was not a team player if I wanted to be compensated for my time and skill sets. I believe this is at least in part because I am a woman.

Many small things, that seem to petty to mention, but they add up. And larger things, like people not being welcomed to the sacraments.

Nothing personal. But I am experiencing changes in my catholic faith community due to decision coming down from on high. I am part of a church community that was begun following Vatican II and founded on those principles but due to decision made through clericalism this is no longer the case. People are leaving, finances are dropping.

My uncle was abused. He never got help from the bishop.

An Orthodox Russian trained priest was put into our Catholic Church due to a lack of male Catholic priests and he did several horrible things in Christ's name: 1) he told the students that girls and women should not step up on the altar or serve as altar-servers, Eucharistic ministers, or readers, b/c the altar is for males b/c Jesus was male and God is male, 2) he literally tore off my niece's baptism dress b/c he insisted that the baby should be naked to be baptized -- it was shocking and we/ godparents & parents didn't know what to do other than say it was never a problem w/ other babies before (he arrived) -- it seemed sexual him staring at her naked body and it was violent in his taking off her dress while she screamed and we felt helpless b/c priests are given too much power in the Church. There are several more examples, but that will do for now. Besides accepting more conservative / Orthodox priests, the Catholic Church has hurt women and girls from my first-hand experiences growing up in the Church. I can

say several more, but I will touch upon one that some Catholic priests started to harp on constantly: abortion. As if nothing else matters and to suggest that women/teen-girls are murderers who have an abortion -- no compassion, no fighting rape culture, no fighting domestic violence, etc. Basically, abortion seems to be a way for misogynist or ego-centric male religious to justify their subordination of women despite most violence in the world being perpetrated by men against men, women, children, animals, ... To claim to be Christ-like and followers of Jesus and yet to set up a patriarchal institution that allows men to get away with sex abuse and verbal abuse/ etc. Against females is FAR FROM JESUS CHRIST. Shame on any religious who are complicit in this institution that has harmed my and many self-esteem, self-image (created in God's image?!), etc.

Being so focused on saying funerals in a certain way resulting in family being excluded.

Becoming aware in 1987 of abuse by 2 priests serving in my childhood Church towards children (altar servers) only strengthened my resolve for positive questioning of why we have separation of men and women in the Western (Latin) Roman Catholic Church through the 1139 rule of clerical celibacy and restricting Holy women serving at the Altar of God.

I was verbally put down by a pastor who didn't know, and didn't care to know, my involvement in children's liturgy. I had been chairperson of a community building committee for over 10 years, and a member of the parish council. I shortly after resigned my position. My son was also removed from his lector duties because of a shirt collar not straightened in a lector training session. At this point, he was a senior in high school and had been lectoring for three years. He also lectored at the daily mass at his high school. Subsequently, he stopped going to church because he cried every time. He is also gay, and I don't know if this had anything to do with it, but he was devastated. He is such a

good person and did not deserve this treatment. We now have a pastor who insists on being called Father. I haven't called a pastor Father in the 50 years of my parish.

How Can Lay and Ordained work together?

There are so many social and humanitarian issues that it will take everyone to make a change.

We all have gifts, we need to acknowledge the gifts of all even if they are women, even if they are married. Even if they are gay or have accepted their other forms as gifts from God.

They pray and eat together.

Ordained should live as lay.

Realizing the difference and contribution of feminine wisdom Really living the belief that all men and women are images of God.

Respect for one another and for those being served together.

Perhaps there should be consideration of not using the term laity and ordained but find a better way of "marrying" the two entities. Everyone is part of the priesthood of Christ. Perhaps we need to delve into that phrase and discuss it thoroughly.

Tear down the psychological barriers between lay and clergy. Both sides need to change.

Have a real team of equals that address issues and resolve by consultation and consensus.

Change of attitude of priests. Lay people are not taking over their work.

Through an elected process, a council or group of people composed of ordained and lay congregation members making decisions. To do that, there needs to be support from the office of the Bishop I suspect.

Respect.

Praying together with Staff & others.

Open parish council (not pastoral council) for a start. Pastors taking our ideas seriously and also not just favoring big, conservative donors.

A realization that all are holy, that Spirit works through ALL of us, not just one person. We are limiting the work of Spirit when holiness can come only through one person.

Respecting the dignity of baptized faithful the life and spiritual experiences.

Giving the lay person authority to do the job.

As equals promoting each other's talents.

Have several positions within a church that covered managerial as well as relational activities divided into groups.

Synodal style of decision making.

They will only work together effectively when there is equality between laity and clerics.

Health sense of self, psychological help for priests who are themselves wounded or have an unhealthy sense of their own sexuality, lay people who are able to meet priests as equals allowing the foibles of humanity, cooperation based on different gifts of the spirit regardless of ordination. A new definition of ordination to include consecration as a sacrament equal to ordination elevating nuns and religious men and women to equal status in the church with ordained priests.

Get rid of the closed seminary building experience. Get the trainees out there with the sheep.

Removing the administrative burdens from the ordained and giving the lay people a stronger voice in the parish.

Remove the institutional church hierarchy that builds walls not relations or partnerships.

Recognize that the priest is not God. Allow the community to run the community as many other denominations practice.

Less criticism and judgment from both lay and ordained toward the other. More honesty and humility and shared prayer--especially shared contemplative prayer.

This can only work if patriarchy and hierarchy are put aside - so that all gifts are recognized and allowed to be used for the greater good of the community and the church. It is important to form community with a diverse group of people - one that is inclusive and welcoming of wisdom no matter where it is found. In other words - the Catholic Church does not have a monopoly on wisdom.

I like the model when a lay person can administer the parish, lay persons take on many other responsibilities and the priest is a pastoral presence.

Priests recognizing us as led by the Holy Spirit equal to them.

Focus on the task to be achieved, while respecting what each individual has to contribute.

Priests need preparation to be able to accept lay People as equals. Abolish seminaries. Let priests rise up from the community because they have the gifts of reflection, compassion and service.

Equalitarian "rules", Jemez Principles, biomimicry of Earth ways.

More democratic. Not the “top-down” Each offering a perspective.

Working together as equals...adult to adult, not parent to child; Cooperative and where every thought or suggestion is entertained.

It's not an issue, really, we all get along together in the real world , some good some bad, we can learn how to get along together. It's about the person, not whether or not they are ordained.

There needs to be a separation of the administrative tasks, a recognition of the gifts of the laity (including religious women) and a trusting relationship. Communication skills are important too.

I think we are in need of discernment around who is admitted to the seminary. Training there must be around what a priest is called to be. The answer is not the one who knows it all, decides it all, judges it all, etc.

Focus on justice solutions is key to developing outside of a hierarchical, clerical top down toxic structure.

We need to recognize the systemic racism in our church and address it. We need to welcome all diverse people in leadership and participation.

I don't have much to say about this. Not because I don't care. I am just limited in my vision for this.

A parish where the talents and knowledge of members is encouraged, especially on issues that affect the wellbeing of members and participation in issues like racial inclusion, care for creation.

Willingness to collaborate and cooperate as equals.

A greater sharing in working with people closely and with sensitivity and compassion...

an equal playing field of mature, caring adults sharing community with equal power and authority.

Priests have to be open to work with parishioners and work as a unit not this is my church but it is our worshipping community. By good communication - open to all.

Starting small and slowly Mandate.

If the strengths of lay people would be recognized and used in ministry freely.

An understanding that the Church and Parish needs both and each with their special skills and education. Transparency may also happen again.

Priests and laity celebrate the Eucharist together.

Whilst a community benefits from having a leader, there is no need for a dictatorship. Discerning together has to be the way forward.

The best ideal of a parish is gathering the gifts of all and allowing those gifts to be used for the betterment of the parish, no matter who it is who have the gifts.

It is the only way forward. We are all baptized. Seminary formation must include lay persons, especially women's perspectives. Also needed non-priests as spiritual directors. Priests on staff are the mentors/guides.

Openness on the part of the ordained.

Trust in each other's gifts...setting aside what separates us to focus on what we share in common.

Listening to each other and having difficult conversations with respect, remembering we are all part of the community. Just faith has a program that is called “Having Difficult

Conversations” that I completed yesterday--a resource for the lay and ordained.

This synodal work is a great beginning! Use what’s learned and move forward!

Giving lay ministers credit and respect for what they know and do. Not mistaking academic knowledge for human knowledge.

I think allowing the community to choose leaders and ministers, no matter what their ordination status would help. We need leaders, but this system has created a disempowered laity and an overzealous group of clerics.

If lay people feel needed, if their ideas are listened to and considered it would help a lot. If ordained people would take the time to listen and to dialogue with their lay people we’d have a better relationship that would make us better partners.

If the priest were really more of a pastor, and administrative work was left to professionals who could do it. If women had a co-equal voice. If it was not so hierarchical, so that a new pastor couldn’t just fire the staff, change the liturgy, etc., changing the whole tone of the parish without the parishioners having any recourse.

Formation and training should be integrated. Stop putting young men in a seminary on a pedestal. Let them learn in a parish community setting. Theology, etc., should be in an integrated program. Teach them listening skills! Stop having priest formation directors who emphasize how special they are. Look to parishes to help discern who has qualities of leadership, a prayerful spirit, and an ability to listen and discern to the Holy Spirit, especially as the Spirit emanates from the laity.

The seminaries need to change how they educate not separated from the rest of education.

Many lay people at my church defer too much to what the Jesuits say, prioritizing it over what wise lay persons share, even those who are well trained and experts in their field. Clericalism runs deep--many Catholics have been raised on it so it will take a long time to undo it. I think we should stop calling anyone “Father” unless it’s actually our dad. It fosters a sense of power that doesn’t belong in that relationship.

More deacons needed....college students, women, LGBTQ members.

A better understanding of the meaning of collaboration, clear definition of roles.

Being more fully human and not being afraid to talk about what is really happening in peoples lives. Being open to walking beside the lay-ordained and providing opportunities to be Christ.

St. Vincent de Paul is a model and a standard that I use whenever I have searched for an active parish in the many cities I have lived. There are very few that measure up. St Nicholas parish in Evanston, IL is another such parish. The priest cannot be all things to all people. The laity have many gifts to offer and should be empowered to step up and fill in the gaps. This is especially important now with the priest shortage.

Open up dialogue, allow people to come together and discuss the needs of the church - both locally and globally. Then commit resources for educating the laity, provide them with the tools to do ministry and grow in their own “call” to holiness.

Recognition that our allegiance is to the Gospel, not the bishop, and all the gifts of the Spirit should be honored and shared.

Addition of women who are called. We know from marriage how much better we work and live and worship and serve together. We all

have something to contribute in a meaningful not hierarchical way.

See above answer.

Encouragement, support, initiative of the local ordinary of the diocese.

Our group thought it would be a great idea to follow the Episcopal Church's process and change the way bishops are chosen. Instead, a bishop should be selected by a panel of lay people. And the lay people should be chosen by the lay people, not the bishop.

Priests should have open minds and truly LISTEN to we the people of the church.

Work better! True acceptance of lay-ordained as images of God as God put us here. Different but equal.

As a person in our breakout group said, "Untie the Priesthood from the Parish." Let the parish be handled by the laity. Let the leadership be chosen from the group. Let there be small house churches that are connect with one another.

Actual partnerships - not just a few people doing the work. Fewer bosses - more workers. Have a goal to help others.

The lay should be organized to "run" the parish - building ongoing organization of the group. Priests should be able to devote their time to the Religious needs of the community - Sacraments, Mass, the sick, the dying and their families.

The priests need to be trained better in the seminary to see that the community is the main focus, and not themselves. They need to be taught that they are one of us, not different from us because of their ordination. People who are seen as equals can work together, people who are in a hierarchy are given tasks to do for the "boss," which makes us different.

A couple of things: Intentionally questioning reflexive behaviors grounded in "how it's always been done"; sitting in a circle where all are on the same level; inviting and engaging all voices (include opportunities for everyone to comment after homily and prayers of the people); engaging a dialogic approach around charities to support and process for decision making in the community.

Dioceses should have a fund to subsidize some if not all of training to be educated in pastoral ministry, administration, etc.

Non ordained have to be recognized as having equal gifts and being sent by God into the world to make "THY KINGDOM COME". A penis should not be a qualifying component of who gets listened to, gets permission to even just preach.

Equal sharing and responsibilities.

A committee of lay people could easily administer a parish. Increased emphasis on lay participation as Eucharistic Ministers, servers, distributing ashes, etc. Education is needed however - there are still many people who won't receive from a lay Eucharistic Minister. The ordained need to see lay people as central to the Church.

There are excellent models of collegial leadership processes; open and respectful communication is a key to success.

Important they are committed to meeting together regularly and start the meetings with prayer and a "check in" on how things are going.

Acceptance of both men and women by the officials of the church as authentic and capable ministers.

How, how, how can we get a male priest to listen to our cry? It is hard to envision after

being rejected and even scorned for trying to speak as a child of God.

They could work if they were allowed in the circle at all and given more responsibility

Root out clericalism, especially in the newly ordained.

I've been saying this for 30 years - take all administrative duties off the Priests/pastors plate! Let their ministry of presence, prayer, companionship and liturgy flourish.

Ordained needs to listen to the lay voice! The arrogance of the ordained thinking they know more than any lay person is not only insulting, but wrong.

A lay/ordained partnership could work great if the bishop would give them more freedom to listen to and enact, or at least try, new ideas that are not in the rule book. I'm thinking of Bishop McElroy in San Diego who sticks his neck out to be inclusive. The negative consequences are only to the bishop himself, so he has to be very committed and strong.

Education, a round table approach, no one is the boss, everyone has a role, people encouraged to take on responsibilities, take time to grow as well as carry out the mission; people can be challenged - don't have to accept edicts from above.

We need a whole different image of priesthood. Ordained is only one image. Seminary needs a whole different model. / 90 % of the Church is laity==when are we going to allow them to have a voice?> Francis is trying.

A spirit of collaboration in helping each other more fully live the message of the gospel which calls us to love, to care for neighbor and the disadvantaged -- and not take an attitude of superiority where rules are more important than people.

A community with shared responsibilities according to individuals gifts with the priest being the spiritual guide forming relationships of love and metanoia

A leader who has the ability to create a dynamic leadership team. Celebrate the skills/gifts each member of the team brings to the team so the parish benefits from these gifts.

The lay and Ordained working together is better provided there is constant Reflection, evaluation and planning together. Otherwise, dictatorship takes over.

Seriously diminish the distinction between laity & ordained. Give more power to the people in the parish.

Need to adopt good "management theory" and work from bottom up and not top down. Cooperation not competition.

Openness, collaboration in ideas, programs, allowing lay people with some training to preach.

Many steps need to be taken, present clergy has be willing to learn "new/different ways". I would say the same for the laity. They too have to relearn or accepting of ways that are different from what they are/were accustomed.

The priests don't always have to have the last word. Through true collaboration and consensus they would arrive on the best decisions for the situation. Seeking out the people who would be "experts" in the particular situation. In our parish during the pandemic the priest sought out the help of parishioners who are doctors to help develop our parish response to the pandemic.

Lay people need to be heard and respected. A trust level needs to be developed.

I believe there needs to be an attitude adjustment. Until we all see each other as

gifted by the spirit and not ordained as superior to lay it will be difficult. Individuals need to pray together and examen their gifts that best serve the community.

I think seminarians need to be educated alongside lay Catholics. It may help them value the training and experiences of the laity.

It happens when there is a spirit of community, humility and respect for all the gifts of the Spirit. No one is without gifts and the community needs all of them. Learn more about team work and shared leadership.

I have experienced lay and ordained working together. And I have grown spiritually because of those experiences. This only happens when a priest or deacons are open to sharing. More and more I see this disappearing in my parish and others.

The opportunity to work together makes a big difference.

It is hard to imagine without the lived experience.

Being part of the many facets of God given life and understanding personally what it takes to live that life and then share in that understanding.

Shared governance and administration within a small-parish community model, would be a nice start.

Opening ordination to all those who are called, trained etc. Individuals need to respect the life experience of one another. Current priests should not see themselves as “defenders of the faith” -- we are all on this journey together. Shared goals, respectful dialogue. Church needs to be relevant - divorce, LGBT, birth control, abortion, capital punishment etc. We need to build relationships so they well represent the teachings of Jesus.

Lay and ordained ministers should share in biblical and spiritual training together.

I envision a circular model, with pope, bishops, priests, ordained lay women and men, and non-ordained all having effective roles.

Using talents of people and used of education. Educate and encourage our lay people. Feel that there is an openness to work together.

It's the Bishop who holds the key to having the priests of the diocese treat all pastors with respect. Lay or ordained pastors. My experience with Sacramental ministers and our liturgical leadership as coworkers of the church was fantastic. The community responded with graciousness and with faith filled energy to be the catholic community in that town After leaving that position as pastoral administrator I have found no parish priest who has allowed me to use my gift and my experience as I don't fit into the....What they allow a lay person to do, they seem to want uneducated lay people to do specific things that they train them to do.

Working as equals to serve the Faithful. Silo approach in parishes doesn't make good team service.

Lay people must believe in themselves and gather with others-lay and priests and sister-and work toward reform. It can happen and is happening if we believe and keep focused. The Synod is a prime example of an action that will move our working together forward. We cannot give up since we are making progress. We might need to leave the conservative folks behind, but we can move forward and we are! Future Church forums and dialogs are examples of this!

Co-operation, respect for the other, baptism as the great equalizer.

Commission individuals for distinct ministries. Then no one is “ordained” - everyone shares the duties of the priesthood of baptism.

It could begin with people (lay and priests) who volunteer to work together in current churches in this manner. Pilot programs so that experiences could begin to change the models of church leadership.

The strengths and gifts of each person need to be utilized to their maximum capacity. The marriage of lay and ordained persons should call forth the best each has to offer. These groups must be schooled in collaborative methods that maintain level ground and the dignity of each person. The use of power and dominance should never be used.

Laity need to stop asking permission and feeling 'less than.'

More input from the laity on bishops appointed and from parishioners on pastors assigned. Parishes where the pastors really take the advice of parish councils.

Willingness of pastors to use the expertise of the laity.

Allow the ordination process to see lay communities - how they work, the value that they bring. Allow lay community leaders to see the ordination process - get an understanding for how this works. Don't be afraid of experimentation, and when successful experiments are run (like Future Church, Discerning Deacons, etc.) Allow these to be shone from the mountaintops as a model to follow. Drop the one size fits all mentality, and have a more accepting understanding of what a faith community could be.

No more hierarchies! All are called to serve.

Working together in helping Church be Church. Common training, learnings, discussions.

I suggest having a Parish Team including the priest(s), deacons, and several lay people who are chosen by the congregation, serve together for a specific number of years (3-5 perhaps.

Lay people needed formation...and ongoing formation, as do the priests. Just as other professions require continuing education, priests need ongoing formation. In our diocese we had a lay ministry formation program for 12 years. A new bishop scrapped the program.

Listening to each other.

Working together as brother and sister without distinction, to reach out to ANYONE in need, to help them feel wanted, respected and loved as equals in this world.

Would need to change the structure of the priesthood for that to happen. A church for the people rather than a church for priests.

Eliminate the patriarchy. Allow ordination for women to the priesthood and diaconate. Create more opportunities for connection and belonging in our faith communities.

There are already many small active vibrant communities peripheral to the parish, groups that worship together, or homeschool together or have other meetings, on line and face to face, catholic communities that are alive! These can be our model, as can the model of some rural protestant churches where lay people are in charge and the priest only comes in to do the sacraments deacons can't do.

The relationship could work better if they don't play the cleric card.

A parish I'd been in has a lay (woman) pastoral administrator with a Masters in Pastoral care (a program now defunct at the local seminary). She coordinates retired priests who live in the rectory or who come in. Laity are in charge of grounds, committees, etc. There are some other parish staff, but it's a small parish of 250 families. This laity-led model could be expanded elsewhere. Sadly, this parish may die in the present consolidation by the Cincinnati Archdiocese called "Beacons of Light."

We need more accountability from the priest. Every year or certain time it needs to be a community examination of the work of the priest on the community to improve his pastoral work. Sometimes lay people contribute to this clericalism culture when they are looking for special treatment from the priest and give them gifts and never say anything that might upset the priest.

Women deacons would solve so many problems. I think it would have more of a positive impact than married priests.

First, there needs to be an understanding of co-leadership and co-equal. I do not like to use the terms priest and lay, they are inherently decisive.

Try different situations and environments - research what should be the rules, if any, that work best. Maybe term limits for bishops and priests

I think seminary training is going to be critical to effect any change in the institution. Parallel to the institution there will continue to grow communities - RCWP - Future Church etc. That educate, nurture, inform, support inclusion, open-heartedness, and awareness of the giftedness of the many in a community.

Those involved need to be open to this partnership where each one has value in coming to the ways of ministering in a particular parish. Prayer needs to be part of the experience. It is surely a worthwhile endeavor.

The number one thing is respect. the priest has to respect the lay member. I facilitate a bereavement group at my church and the pastor is totally respectful and grateful for what I do as he is for all the other positions and people who help in our parish. The priest has to have humility and respect and appreciate those helping him.

At this point it has a long way to come and until we erase the clerical lines we will continue to have a division.

The ordained do not have all the charisms necessary to run a parish within themselves. Having the maturity and humility to recognize that and surround themselves with individuals who DO have those charisms would be a big start.

Ordained ministers should have parish groups established which meet regularly to discuss parish items. These groups should be changed annually. Have discussion items sent to church members via mail/email so they could respond if they wish.

Have answered this question in bits and pieces in the previous questions. The ordained need to want the change, read the documents, to invite the lay people to participate, and get over this image of how wonderful the Church was prior to Vatican 2. Their eyes need to be opened.

The most important requirements for working with the ordained are based on two words, inclusivity and equality, for example, homilies given by women and men, small faith groups whose membership includes the ordained but rotating leadership with lay women and men.

The ordained need to recognize and utilize all the talent and expertise of the lay. The ordained need to share responsibilities and resources.

Have the courage to remove the administrative side of running the parish out of the hands of clerical leaders. This i understand happens in a local Greek orthodox church. The lay leadership lead the administrative/ financial side. The priest is employed by the lay administration to led the community in the radical following of the gospel, administer the sacraments, visit the sick, lead the

community in embodiment of social justice and prayer, drawing out the gifts from among the community. Helping the community to be outward looking to the needs of the wider world.

They would need to have mutual respect for themselves and for the other co-leader. They would need shared trust, shared commitment, shared attitude of servant leadership. And they would need training and practice to develop these skills. They would need to pray together to maintain the attitude and trust needed. Good communication skills are vital.

What will make lay-ordained partnerships work better is to take a serious look at the priest formation and ONGOING formation including the embracing of sexuality as part of our wholeness. And have the Church seriously update their understanding of sexuality based on the evolution of our awareness of human development.

It would be necessary for the ordained priest to recognize the particular gifts of the laity in his parish, and then to invite them to share these gifts. A priest who recognizes, invites, encourages would only help to bring vibrancy to the community!

Church is Community Relationships!! People have different gifts: Recognize and use the gifts that each has been given!! Work together: some preach, some teach, some administrate, some give spiritual direction, some have the gift of healing... Learn to recognize, encourage, share, as a team the gifts God gave. Give time to know each other, sharing, planning, reconciliation... All of that. Everyone is called to help build the needs of the community. Not just the Priest.

The number one thing would be to lift up the God-given/Baptismal gifts within the laity. Instead of a top-down leadership of priests "we need Bingo/festival organizers, altar cleaners, Eucharistic ministers" etc. The Church would

offer discernment retreats to help the laity discover where/how God is calling them and how they can assist in the running/maintenance/ministries of the church.

We need to open up all of the ministries to all baptized. All should be included no exceptions. The entire body of Christ has the talents, gifts, skills needed. All should be involved.

The laity should be invited to express their concerns and wishes, in all situations, be included in all parish decisions and activities, and be listened to seriously especially when pastors are to be appointed to their parish. When a parish is in need of a pastor, have parishioners come together, compile their vision, needs, etc. Of the parish community and what qualities they want in a pastor, make this known to the diocesan priest personnel board and then interview priests who apply to be their pastor. The parishioners who do the interviews would then rank their choices. The final appointment must be one of these choices.

I think the promotion of small communities within a parish which help people feel that they are known and they really belong to the community are crucial. These communities need to be connected by some kind of organized effort - maybe by a semi-annual meeting of small communities to celebrate Advent/Christmas season and then again Lent/Easter season could work. A community of communities, as Gabriel Moran suggests.

Openness on the part of both, see example above answer.

I think that clergy and laity can first work together when being ordained is not necessary to minister to people. For example, I have had a lay Spiritual Director who is certified by our diocese and is master-prepared to perform that ministry as my spiritual director for 17 years! I would recommend her highly. She is married with five grown children and several

grandchildren. She is excellent in counseling regarding relationships and knows the Catholic Faith very well. She also is very good in working with people with issues such as scrupulosity. She is a thanatologist, who has worked in a hospital setting and throughout the hospital system in grief counseling. She has her own spiritual director.

Sharing responsibilities, not position of control or power from either one.

A team where everyone has a place at the table. A circular model rather than a hierarchical model. Ability to collaborate and recognize each other's talents.

Christ centered.

Eliminate clerical caste.

Create new job descriptions and expand people's awareness that we all have gifts and we're moving forward utilizing all those gifts

Good communication and respect for one another's giftedness.

Listening, Communication, Accompaniment, Formation.

Put aside ego and just be like Jesus was with the people!

As full partners in all areas of Church life.

It has to be part of the ordained person's training to work with lay people.

Able to listen to one another - using both of our gifts to preach God's word and to serve the Church - real team approach.

Minimize the "awful" power that has a tendency to become part of a priest's personality.

Redoing the vision of the ordained being the be-all and end-all of the Church.

There needs to be mutual respect for the gifts of each. What are the needs? Who can address them BEST?

Respect for one another.

When the clergy realize they do not have a monopoly on the Holy Spirit.

Letting go of the need to be better than. Living in humility with mercy for all. Following literally in the footprints of Jesus. Listening to wisdom people like Pope Francis and taking his example.

People who are called to ministry all have varying gifts that can be used according to the needs of parishes and the unchurched. Ordination doesn't need to be the factor that separates Catholics from serving the church.

When they believe in the priesthood of believers.

More communication and sharing in decision making.

Complementary, Partnership, Respect, Not hierarchical.

New and Christlike leadership. The USCCB is useless.

LISTEN to each other. The church - Body of Christ - is in partnership and co-equals in living and preaching the Gospel. My talents and skills are every bit as important as the priest's ordination. I personally am not called to the priesthood, but I am to the diaconate.

Broader meaning and administering of sacramental presence.

E.g. In Pastoral Presence to those in need of forgiveness, peace, unity, anointing, relationship.

Both clergy & laity need to see themselves as equal partners sharing specific designated gifts. This works. Many know this experience already.

With respect and collaboration.

Mutual respect and cooperation.

Not sure. I think the training should be more open, maybe with lay teachers for the seminarians.

Love, Compassion, Kindness, Understanding.

Mutual respect is essential, the ability to appreciate each other's gifts and call them forth from one another.

Go on retreats together with a process to learn together how God calls everyone to use their gifts. Use the ideas of Elizabeth Johnson.

There needs to be respect for one another's gifts and purpose. The ordained need to stop seeing themselves as higher on the scale to heaven and recognize that they are also travelers on this journey - just having different skills/gifts to share.

Respect each other's gifts, listen to each other and speak honestly ...being considered equal is a must...in "titles, salary, etc."

I hope they would share their gifts and All would be considered on the levels...“dancing Sara's circle instead of climbing Jacob's ladder. I have been forbidden to show S Maureen Sullivan's presentations to the parish because it was sponsored by FC....FC is for women's ordination to priesthood, making women deacons ...etc. All of which is against the teachings of Holy Mother Church.

I think a recognition that no one person has it all. . .that we need to envision a wide circle of welcome and enablement of giftedness-

expressed freely on behalf of serving one another.

Reformed formation in the seminaries, including respect for laity and especially women.

Both groups have to listen and be open and transparent and honest and respectful. Desire to do so on both parts.

Prayer.

First, clergy need to be much better informed re women, more opportunities created within parishes to work together.

A willingness to share roles. A respect and openness to the role of women.

Respect, compassion, engagement at the same level.

Letting the person most fitted for a job do that job. Not all priests can preach well, but maybe a lay person in the parish could do a better job. Using Spiritual Directors who have been trained be available to the people. Many priests are not trained for this.

The ideal is what we spoke of at Old St. Pat's. It takes trust and respect for each person and a great deal of listening to each other, the signs of the times and the Holy Spirit.

More equality, dignity and respect for lay expertise. We are here to help and have done our work. Training of priests in the seminaries needs to change big-time-complete overhaul! With more women there and LGBTIQ+ people.

Training of priests is so inadequate in regard to respect for others' ideas and feelings. So many do not know how to engage in healthy relationships with people. Priests now have no accountability for their performance.

Having an open mind realizing we are all equal no matter our race sex or other orientations Remembering we are all Gods beloved. Being inclusive and welcoming of all.

Parishes need to have to authority to vet & hire their pastors rather than have the Presbyteral council or Bishop assign pastors to parishes. That would make for a more coordinated effort on the part of both since the pastor would be responsible to the parish rather than thinking that the parish is his to run in any manner that he so chooses.

Openness and mutual respect of the gifts of women and lay folks.

Movements such as Cursillo and Emmaus retreats. Lay Passionist Associates and priests

This would benefit from the support of a bishop who would provide training for how lay and ordained could minister together.

Listening and discussion sessions would be helpful. Placing the needs of the poor and underprivileged first. Have the administrative needs of a parish be performed by a lay businessperson and not the pastor. Perhaps the community needs to interview the pastor-to-be, to assess if they are able to meet the needs of the community. Perhaps appointing by the bishop should be dismissed.

The Catholic Church needs to be mindful of current times.

Respect, invitation to collaborate on ministries, budget, priorities

St. Bridget's Manchester CT < 1999 (same week as death of Princess Dianna) At the funeral mass for a dear friend. New said that when he was assigned he would ask, "How do you...?, Where do you find ...? Who does ...???" The answer would always be the same, "Gee father. I don't know. But if you ask Mary Lucas, she will know." He said by the 3rd week it had

dawned on him. He was just the priest. The REAL pastor of the parish was Mary Lucas - Lay Catholic with no formal training.

The ordained need to have respect for the lay leaders in the church and embrace their diversity and their talents

Respect for one another.

Respect.

I would like to see the model of consensus and dialogue i a team ministry setting become the norm. That would mean letting go of any need for power or control, any mentality of entitlement.

Collaborative ministry will involve more meetings, rather than autocratic decisions being made, but a circular model of ministry, where leaders are elected for short times.

Lay-ordained partnerships will only work if each is committed to make it work...meaning that each has to respect and honor the other and believe in actions that God is at work in each (not just the ordained!) There can be no entitlement, nor arrogance in this relationship, nor any issues of just WHO is 'in charge'!

The lay and ordained can work together by adopting a servant model for ministering to their communities. Complete control would have to be aside.

Lay could preach as well as preside over other sacraments. Lay could also preside at Eucharist.

Basically, the seminaries have to change the way they prepare priests. I find that locally, they are not even aware of Vatican II.

Regular meetings and making decisions after respectful dialogue and discernment. Respecting diversities

I've seen it work once and know it can be done. Training is imperative. Bishops don't seem to be willing to invest in this.

Working collaboratively and not being dictated by parish priest or bishop in all aspects of the church community and the wider church.

Each has their duties and each should respect the others role.

I envision a working relationship that is cooperative and mutually respectful. Willingness to learn and adapt and to consider the value of all involved.

We definitely need more priests. Parish priests need to relinquish some of those administrative duties to the lay community

At a minimum, allow lay people...including women...give homilies. This does happen in a few parishes.

On a professional level lay and ordained ministers should be educated together in the same schools.

Nostalgia for the past won't work/begin intentional communities outside the parish domain to see how they work-church be more creative

We need a new model for parishes where the government is a shared government of clergy and lay.

Respect each other's vocation. One is not above the other.

Simply working in LOVE and honoring each other's gifts for the Body of Christ.

Better if priests realize they are also part of the unwashed. We have a Nigerian priest who is like this and it is very good so far.

More respect and real positions of authority and leadership throughout the church for lay people.

The ordained should have the right to choose marriage if so inclined. Close relations and the experience to see how to work together with all types of people; recognizing that we are all serving each other in ministry as the baptized

I really like the idea that Fr Steven presented of small faith communities putting forth names of candidates for the priesthood, whether they are male or female. When I look at the parishes around me, most of the people attending are women, very few men -- women have kept the faith alive within their homes/families and we need to recognize the gifts that they have. Open honest communication are needed to make the partnerships work. Recognizing that we are looking for the best to grow the community not trying to take over from each other.

Mostly each recognizing the gifts of the other and working together to give a more complete pastoral action. Working with strengths better.

Support and encouragement by the clergy, bishops.

Lay and ordained can work together by recognizing each one's talents and using them. I ministered in a parish where we worked as a team: priests, school principal, music minister, artist, etc. All had similar vision of Church and were willing to work together to achieve that goal. I ministered for some 14 years with this group but never had an experience like it again. SO, it is possible.

Listening to each other and using the gifts of each person.

Shared training in Vatican II vision and documents. Shared leadership in areas of expertise.

A mutual respect that both are called to serve the people, who are the church. Being the old boys club, has its prejudices against women being able to preach as good as men!!

Taking the time to dialogue; share faith; share theological insights; collaborate

Inclusive, participative, transparent and accountable in all aspects like in decision making and sharing responsibilities. Develop and train more the lay in the needed skills in pastoral work and in liberational feminist theologies. Use symbols and structures that are inclusive and encourage participation.

Respect and Humbleness, the ability to learn from each other.

Besides praying together with more spontaneous prayer services, the Ordained can sometimes recreate with the lay people with whom they work.

The ordained minister needs to respect the gifts and contribution of all members of a team. Needs to be a consensus builder.

Seminary education must include the concept of sharing duties and what that entails. Get rid of egocentric power-driven ideas that the priest is in charge. He is there to serve his parishioners, not the other way around.

Respect of the clergy and laity for each other because of an understanding of equality and the good of the persons being served.

Work out who has which gifts and use them. Some work well with youth, some better with seniors. A communication about needs, discernment and sharing decisions about appropriate action

Recognize each other's strengths and use them to the fullest. All should learn how to discern before making a decision on projects and management.

Have lay person in charge. Have that part of the seminary training

Must begin at the seminary level. Must be assumed as the normal role of the ordained and the lay.

I think that where lay parish staff have worked successfully is where they are respected and honored for the gifts/talents that they can bring to the running of the parish. In order for that to be successful, it takes a pastor who is not intimidated or jealous of the laypeople. The clergy have to face the facts that there is and has been a severe shortage of men entering the seminary and in order to maintain a living, sustainable Church for the future, they have to be willing to share not power but the responsibility of keeping the Church as a living, breathing Spirit.

I think the Dominicans I joined in Houston TX is an example. The Dominican Sisters of Houston are leading a group of us, over 125 people now, who have gone through formation and are carrying the charism of Dominic out in our communities. We are called the Dominican Family--we are not lay people or associates. We are Dominicans. And we are carrying on the Dominican work that has taken place here in Houston and Galveston, TX for over 100 years. We are women and men, married, single and LGBT, we are not all Catholic, some are of other Christian faiths and we are all Dominicans. It is wonderful and a model that should be used elsewhere.

Priests should not have to be bogged down with administrative tasks. They should allow lay people to take over care of the buildings, etc.

I want the leadership of a kindly pastor. I want time for open meetings when we discuss together the concerns, the plans, the developments in our parish.

I believe Parish Counsels that are active with both men and women and young people serving together is an excellent example. I believe we should have women deacons who could go on to be priest. Women can give to the priesthood many abilities that men do not have the capabilities to do

Recognize we are all people of God, and all trying to be the hands of Jesus continuing to create His world.

I think both bring gifts to the table and both should be respected. Lay people should be empowered to carry out ministries. If the ordained actually listen to the laity and together they can incorporate their goals into the mission, that would help. Priests shouldn't rule with an iron fist.

There needs to be a partnership between each. A recognition that Lay, especially women, who usually are the teachers of the Faith can work together and that we can spread, nurture and sustain the Faith Together

Making all feel valued and welcome

Having priests share homilies with the laity. Having laity assist with administrative duties so ordained person can use their time to be pastoral

First get rid of the term LAY -- over the past few years I have begun to find this term more and more offensive! As a church we need to make it easier for our priests to work with people who are members of a parish my being open to their involvement and expertise.

Both clergy and laity need a major reform of world view, theology, business model, organizational structure, selection, preparation - revisit sacraments - less priestly turf

Equal footing

The laity and in particular women need more authority in each diocese. They also should be put in responsible positions in seminaries

I see that it would be a network of leadership in a community with persons taking on different roles through an inclusive and collaborative structure. We need to model a respectful, loving and inclusive community of faith that includes ordained and lay persons in a shared collaborative model. Anyone ordained should be of any gender, married/single, any sexuality. The leadership of communities should be complementary to each other's skills and gifts to support the needs of the actual communities served. By working in a de-centralized and shared servant leadership structure, we can better live out the Gospel message in the institutional Church.

The ordained should focus on pastoral care, spiritual growth and development, building strong Christian communities; laymen should be responsible for administrative duties and organizing and facilitating focused subgroups working on needs

Focus on ministry... And lots of humility...

Clergy need to see lay people as their equals. Different roles but equality as people, baptized, priestly people.

Being open to the ideas of others. Realizing no one has all the answers. I minister in that setting and know how lucky I am.

I went on a trip to Mexico with women, including nuns and theologians, some of whom wanted to be ordained. This was a wonderful communal experience as we visited with Mexican women about their spiritual and economic situations. I saw this type of small community could work. The parish model is outmoded.

I think everyone needs more catechesis. Is being Catholic just an identity? For many,

this seems to be the case. I am not sure many lay Catholics I've met in Canada know or care much about their faith other than going to Mass out of habit.

At first I thought the lay person/s would be parishioners. But I think it could work with someone who had not been a part of the parish as long as he/she was willing to learn about the parish/parishioners.

Acceptance of essential equality and complementarity. Formation and training in collaborative leadership.

If priest lives in setting with lay people. If budget decisions are made cooperatively.

There has to be a real going back and studying Vatican II. There has to be a re-examination of the philosophy of Seminary. I believe it hasn't been looked at/evaluated at all.

I think we have to let the patriarchal church die out and encourage new expressions of Christianity based on the life of Christ and many ordinary people who do extraordinary things for others.

Lay people need to claim the priesthood of the faithful and baptismal promise; clergy need to practice being brothers rather than fathers. I don't see it happening as long as priests are referred to as Father - in Matt 23, Jesus instructed us to not address anyone with an honorific reserved for God.

With the priests in our Diocese, I can't even imagine such a thing. If they had their way they would turn the altar back around and return to only Latin Masses.

Women should be ordained. Without that there is no chance to move from patriarchy. Education could make it work better...as part of the opportunity to serve and be served in a community. Praying together is essential for this to work...prayers where all voices are heard,

especially voices of those who are suffering...
Blessed are they!

Please allow the wives of those pursuing deaconate to be able to be ordained as deacons .Have married priests be ordained . Women have a lot of good to say- have them preach.

Not really sure. We need to undo all male celibate clergy first. The best thing for lay people to do in the meantime is form grassroots house churches and small Christian communities that empower them. Where collaboration is possible in parishes, schools, etc. And lay people who have to collaborate with priests need to do so because it's part of their job (i.e. They are employed in ministry) or if they are lay leaders volunteering in some way, then they should look for authentic mutual adult relationships that can be formed with reasonable people and work together with the ordained as best they can.

Sharing responsibilities in parish/church matters/activities with proper training for the laity

There is no reason that they should not be able to work together if they consider each other as EQUALS. It seems as though the women so often feel subordinate to the males for many reasons I am sure. That is still happening in the world outside of the religious to be sure as well.

Priests who are fixated on power, money, and their own image can never work in partnerships. Nor can white supremacists.

More responsibility needs to be entrusted to the laity who have more experience with teaching, theology, counseling, finance.

There are many gifts and those gifts should be utilized for the common good. Parishes need to be small faith communities where all discern how the "church" lives out the Gospel of Jesus.

More group meetings on topics presented by parishioners.

It seems that most of the business aspects of running a parish should be delegated to lay people. They should be answerable to the Bishop so that the priest isn't saddled with overseeing it all. I'm not sure what happened to parish councils. Our schools seem to be running pretty well without nuns. Or with just a few. I think our parishes could run pretty well without priests having to answer for all the business aspects.

Candidates to priesthood or any church ministry need to be educated in collaboration. They need experience in empowering others to share the ministry

Each one recognized and respected; praying together and strengthening bonds of friendship; the diverse gifts honored and allowed to be exercised; all focused on the needs of the community and how to strengthen its growth in love, justice and service

Reform seminaries. Teach collaboration between lay and ordained in the seminary. Perhaps an practicum in this area. Create teams of ministers, so that each person's gift can contribute to the parish. Have boards that include lay people (men and women) and women religious.

Seminary education currently has to change and Bishops have to get behind this. If Bishops cannot abide the Synod, we need them to get on board with the laity.

Begin working that way and reflect on the experience. Offer formation possibilities.

Lay and ordained can work together if there is mutual respect. In so many cases, the ordained clergy have no respect for the laity, who they consider to be of lesser importance, with lesser gifts. No more "pray, pay, obey." That has to stop.

Seeing a lay woman administrator a group of parishes shows me that running parishes requires a variety of skills and talents. They do not need to be combined in one person. Having lay ministers in significant roles gives life to the Church.

Recognizing the complimentary gifted ness of each. Example~ priest/religious doesn't have the same experiences of married as such, but each one has the experience of seeking to be in relationship with the One who is greater than ourselves. Each lifestyle choice has its particular demands but the lived/learned wisdom can be shared.

I envision a sharing of responsibility for the wellbeing of Christian community and a sharing of tasks. Bishops will need a new vision of their diocese, more trusting and more empowering, than present fearsome punitive control.

The partnership should be discussed. Does the ordained person feel he/she has the final say? If that's the case, why does he/she feel that way?

Acceptance of the holiness of both; solidarity; one is not superior to the other; subsidiarity

We have the tools, but clericalism fears losing the power if we use the tools

With the current shortage of priests, lay-ordained partnerships are the way forward. We need to find ways to use all the gifts we have in the community in a meaningful way. We have to be open to various possibilities depending on cultural and local situations. We have to find a way to share what works in one community with others so that we don't just work in isolation but continue to grow together as a church.

Appreciating the gifts of each person. Know the community. Being accepting of different views. Females and males

A balance of men and women based on qualifications not sex or privilege

Every person must see themselves as a member of the team. Each person deserves respect and inclusion. Good communication skills are extremely important and we constantly need to improve on them. There will always be problems and difficulties but we need to address the problems and work through them to improve our service to one another. In the end the only goal is to love and be love. It is as simple and as complicated as that.

The inclusion of women and married priests in the organizational as well as the pastoral life of the church. Let's put a lay woman or religious women or a married couple in a rectory to lead a parish so it doesn't have to close.

Today's priest have to give up clericalism and love of power.

Communion, reciprocity, mutual respect.

Recognizing each other's gifts and using them for the good of all.

Ordained need not fear loss of power. Leadership must encourage the gifts of all for the good of all.

Faith sharing leading to a shared spiritual grounding; calling forth and valuing the experience of women as well as men. Training in shared leadership.

Most importantly, priests need to be "called" from the communities they serve, from among the "elders" (male and female) of the community, rather than only being selected from the small number of young men who are willing to live celibately.

It's already happening in various parts of the world and both lay and ordained are better human beings for the experience!

Frequent, open-hearted conversation. Respect for each person's gifts, skills, and challenges. Shared ownership of the mission.

Mutual respect. Spirit alive in each I serving each other. Contemplative listening

We need to challenge the "rules" that prevent this from happening. We need to train in the seminary the value of this. It seems the younger priests coming out of the seminary are the most strict. Celebrate priests and parishes who are modeling this. It almost seems the priests that are enabling these partnerships do so "under the radar" for fear of reprisal.

More mutual training, more experiences in which our pastors learn with us. A process for lay decision-making in parishes exists to a degree in our parish council. That would require council to report activities to the parish. We don't have that in my parish now. Social justice programs are essential.

The lay people have the pulse of the parish. They know the community and its needs. The clergy are passing through and would do well to include and rely on the wisdom and energy of the laity, both men and women. Be open to their ideas and give them the support to follow through. The ordained could learn a lot from cooperative efforts, and it would relieve them of some responsibilities that are not essential to pastoral work.

It would take a different type of person being called to ordination, and a different formation for ministry I suspect. Ordination would need to be open to all of the baptized - so that it doesn't remain such a magical and privileged role. In our small group, we reminisced about the investigation of the LCWR and that summer of the "nuns on the bus." As a layperson, I watched from the outside - but

I have never been more proud to be Catholic than I was that year. The LCWR was so calm, so prayerful, so respectful - and so steadfast in opposing the effort by the male hierarchy to 'squash' them. Truly prophetic -

Just start in a small way - let the experience grow. Ideally an effort could be initiated for a diocese for implementation throughout the diocese. Preparation during seminary would be ideal - to be carried into the eventual leadership of a parish. Develop models for partnerships with experimentation and sharing of results.

The ordained needs to encourage and guide the lay in performing different services and rites. For example, I led the Social Justice Stations of the Cross. Yes, I skipped a station, caught it and went on. Next time it will flow.

Also in Seattle the parish I was part of implemented a role of Lay Presider. The Lay Presider led the prayers of the Liturgy participants before Mass, led the procession with the cross, opening the Mass with centering words, sat next to the priest presider during the Mass, coordinated the Eucharist ministers, read the prayers of the faithful, and took a leadership role in worrying about details so the priest could focus on the homily and celebrating the Mass. Even visually it insured a lay person was seen in a leadership role in the parish.

The priests giving up the attitude of clericalism, of being the ones to make unilateral decision and seek the input of lay parishioners and staff.

Having a great respect for each other and the persons God given Gifts

Respect for the gifts each person brings.
Working in Teams. Being open to new ideas.
Supporting each other.

The priests, whether men, women, married or single, need to give administration of parishes

over to people who have the talent and desire to run the day to day workings. Then those who are called to minister to the people can do just that.

Much like was said in today's reflection by Fr. Newton, ordained ministers spend so much time on administrative decisions; ones that are not part of what I'll call the essential functions of a priest/ordained. A minister's prime work should be pastoral, so free them up to do that work.

Priests need to treat laity as equals--especially if the laity work on parish councils or do other jobs in the parish. Too many young guys are demanding total obedience from laity. This is maddening because it is so wrong.

First of all, trust needs to be build among the ordained and lay Catholics. As long as there is clericalism, as long as the ordained men continue to think that they are above lay people, there will not be partnerships between the two groups. Assuming a trusting relationship can be maintained, each group could have distinct responsibilities that complement each other, rather than what we see now which is lay people often serving as "rubber stampers" of the ordained.

Education is important! Create adult education classes to help the people develop gifts to be more Christlike. Then give them the latitude to go ahead and use their gifts. The MBTI is important to let them know their gifts and then such classes in pastoral ministry, finances, documents of Vatican II, etc. Can be used to give a solid background. Then provide space for them to use their knowledge and they will grow together. That is what happened in the above-mentioned parish. Most of all, be a good listener and observe relationships that give life.

Clericalism MUST be replaced. The people of God should identify and call their candidates to ordination. The lay ministers and parish

council should be involved in all decisions made.

Awareness that all have wisdom to share and are called by their Baptism to take ownership for their faith. No one has all the right answers. God speaks through everyone.

I listed humility first as an essential quality for a priest. That is probably the single most important requirement for such partnerships to work. It is only in understanding that none of us have all the answers that such partnerships can function effectively. We each bring different gifts and the Church would be wise to recognize all bring value. Check out Old St. Pat's.

For over 50 this community has worked as a caring, respectful, equal partnership.

Lay-ordained could work, with training and theological education, without the arrogance and clericalism. So good rich theological training for both! Women make great theology teachers!

Lay and ordained working together would be a team ministry with members bringing their gifts to the community as servant leaders for good of the whole.

A respect for each other as having an equal and rightful place in the church - working together and honoring the work of each.

The lay need to have the same ability and availability to education and lay formation as the ordained. Families must be taken into consideration. Lay and ordained are coworkers in the Kingdom of God. Both bring gifts and roles and each must be respected without one being more important than the other.

It should be possible for lay and ordained to share in the role/work of administration as well as serving in pastoral ministry.

Lay and ordained used to work more together. It seems in the past 10 years things have gone backwards, at least this is so in my local parishes. These partnerships would work better if the priests could practice humility and not feel the need to control everything. I know this can't be easy, but I've seen it work.

I think it is important for a local parish to have the freedom to develop its own culture of collaboration without having the Bishop of the Diocese looking over their shoulder. When the ordained ministers take the reality of the priesthood of the faithful very seriously, I think both will work at being partners to the greatest extent possible.

No reason such forms couldn't succeed! Need the openness and willingness to be open, honest, flexible, committed to belief in the goodness and Divine Plan for created humanity!

I have to say that many of the parishioners look to the priests for leadership, when they should be taking more responsibility themselves. What do we expect when we start by asking the priest to "lead us in prayer", run the meeting, give his advice? WE need to own our own voices, speak up! If it means a clash, maybe refuse monetary help?

Every person and group of people have strong points and weak points. It is only when everyone is able to share their gifts, that everyone benefits.

Moving from a pyramid model to one of community. Not top down but circular. Move from authoritarian structure to one of open dialogue

In a spirit of collaboration, with common, clearly delineated goals for the common good. Not ego-driven is important. Have a strong social justice bent, theologically sound values and a deep desire to 'do good.'

Clericalism must be totally absent in the partnership or else power will reign supreme and it will fail.

The biggest obstacle to making lay-ordained partnerships work better is the Church's insistence that the pastor and the pastor only is accountable for all outcomes. As such, would any ordained priest let go of control and power if he is answerable and would be given a hard time if something didn't come out quite as expected. In the business world, systems of accountability and responsibility have been worked out so that a manager can let his team use their talents and the manager isn't fearful of losing his job. Priests can't lose their jobs, but they sure act like they could be fired any minute, so they stay confined to a certain way of doing things.

Must develop the RELATIONSHIPS - take time to share experiences, pains, joys, hopes; be support for each other; pray together as equals

Places where there is lay ministry development and a call to ministry and where the pastor is an encourager of wide and varied ministers and where these ministers are supported by the leadership.

Respect for the personhood of others.

By talking as equals without all the rules.

Mutual respect; open dialogue; responses that are challenged when necessary.

In LA there was a program to develop lay ecclesial ministers to collaborate with priests as pastoral associates and parish life directors but it is being dismantled and deacons are being prioritized for these positions to further exclude women and laity so promoting more clericalism

The lay ecclesial ministry model needs to be promoted as we work for broader changes for women to serve as deacons and priests

We must be respectful of one another, the ordained should not always be the designated leader especially if the lay person is more knowledgeable. They must trust one another and feel free to make suggestions and willing to bounce ideas off one another and view each other as equals.

The experiences that I shared above would be a good start

What it would look like is that those who are ordained would value the knowledge and contributions of the laity.

Be open to one another. Encourage open avenues of communication.

The parish I was just referencing with the retired priest who worked with parishioners as partners always seemed like the closest partnering with the laity and the community around it which was very mixed. Even several of the "street" people would attend mass with the retired pastor who was definitely a servant minister and welcomed everyone.

There are many areas where trained professionals could make a great contribution to the work of the priest. I could see, for instance, a group of trained nurses making a contribution to the parish. New technology has helped bring groups together for teaching, creativity, etc. Let's use these means to build the Body of Christ.

It has to happen with leadership that is grounded in Gospel, not in Church "law". It has to happen with people in a partnership who are not afraid of new ideas and creative, expansive, inclusive for worship, ministry and community.

I would hope priests and lay people could work together just like regular people respecting who has the most expertise when expertise is required. Respect is important.

Maybe by not having people 'ordained'. Maybe they have a "degree" or "certification" or something similar to what other professionals (those who have studied) have. We all have equal access to the Holy Spirit--so what is the purpose of 'ordaining' people to be leaders in a church? Re-establish Parish Councils. I belonged to a parish where it worked well. For awhile, when a new priest came into a parish, he brought his special skills to add--he didn't come in and completely change a parish--like what has happened in recent years. Even Bishops do that today...with no interaction with parishioners. The church today is not a place of spirituality. It's an Institution often led by a authoritarian. We're watching a situation in our world where that type of leadership is devastating (Putin attacking the Ukrainian people). That might sound like a weird analogy--it isn't.

Less hierarchical.

Honoring the gifts a person brings, whether or not the person is ordained

Collaborative leadership between lay and ordained is the way to go if we want to have not only healthy parishes but also healthy leaders. Building good relationships is key. But I believe a lot depends on the way that priests are formed in seminary. The role of women in their formation makes a huge difference.

The needs of the people of God can best be met when the official leaders of worship have strong pastoral training in the spirit of the Gospels and the Beatitudes. When lay people are encouraged and supported in leading the needs of the community that they identify, churches flourish.

They need to be equal partners. Lay parish administrators could free up priests for more spiritual and social justice work until women and married men are able to be ordained.

I think that if lay and ordained were allowed to marry, if wished, and still be able to be in ministry. I think that there would be a better appreciation of the gifts of each. Women absolutely must be vigorously included and invited to be in ministry.

Ordained deacons of both genders, understanding and respect of what gifts are needed for the community and the development of those for all. The model of shared ministry as I've seen it in some protestant and Unitarian churches.

Ordained seem to think their ideas are somehow above those of lay ministers. There should be a free exchange of ideas and then give and take to arrive at a solution where both lay and ordained have a piece of the resolution. Win-Win. So many priests are arrogant. It's quite sad.

Decision making should be shared, not always defaulting to "Father." We need to get past the idea of ordination conferring "special powers" and privileges, and respect and honor the gifts and experiences of each person. And listen to each other!

No working together will happen unless lay and ordained mutually respect and accept one another as equals.

The hierarchical idea that priests are above others in the church, their decisions and actions are the word and not to be questioned is antiquated. Lay and ordained people often bring different perspectives to a situation or and organization and those differences, if respected and honored, can create a much more well-rounded and fulfilling organization/community.

Mutual respect is essential.

Both actively involved in liturgies and shared decision making for parish.

Start with mutual respect for each other's competencies and gifts so that power is shared humbly by all. On-going conversion for all members is not easy. The Lay vs. Clergy tension needs RADICAL healing through a married priesthood option that still treasures the charism of celibacy. Small faith communities need to be the norm for the church that are not coerced but work creatively with the parish.

Collaboration between lay and ordained would bring involve the largest group of the baptismal priesthood. If only the priesthood could really welcome the gifts of women in particularly but there are so many distorted opinions regarding the feminine genius.

As equal each having their own gifts and talents.

Democratic leadership in parishes for decision making and finances.

I am OK with the priest performing the actual consecration but everything else should be done by congregation members.

Openness to change essential and recognition of value of sharing,

Priests being aware of what's going on in their communities

Unfortunately, our Archbishop wants to put Vatican II back in the can and force the Latin Mass on us. He allows priests to turn their backs to the people and disallow girls from serving Mass and women being Eucharistic Ministers. I would like the laity to have the position of functioning member of the Church as intended by Vatican II. Priests need to keep their egos in check. Some do, like my pastor and Friars I know.

I believe they need a great deal of Training to become like Deacons or Priest . Also want

to say that Women can be Deacons or Priests. They qualify be Priests and Deacons.

Lay and ordained working together on Youth ministry. I was asked to work with a wide diversity of youth, primarily Hispanic & saw how the men & women served as leaders in their Charismatic community. Most of the families were new immigrants from Central America. The main priest did not feel comfortable with the charismatic group but he delegated a layman to lead. I applaud his recognition of inability to adapt but allowed one of his deacons to take the lead.

We have to get past this restorationist pre-Vatican II attitude of 'Father knows best'. The priest will by default be looked to for direction, it is their full time role to work for the Church. They need to be humble and ask not tell. Only those that truly love people and are not threatened (or afraid of women) will be comfortable enough to let go of the reins of power.

Mutual respect.

Need a clear d elimination of all responsibilities, understanding of gifts and abilities, willing to work as equals, respect for all.

Need to change Canon law that gives ordained ministers a privileged status above the laity (like a feudal lord). Priests and laity must be on equal footing - totally collaborative - in exercising pastoral leadership in parishes.

Lay-ordained partnerships demand leveling the playing field. We are all priests by virtue of baptism and that reality needs to be acknowledged and realized by all in partnership.

Laity must be knowledgeable of their faith I.e. What rules are based on dogma or doctrine or decree

Seminaries need much broader education and training. The church needs to decide how to “run” parishes - what is a collegial system for finance/ school/ ministry/ sacraments. Priests need training to become open to sharing the wholistic life of the parish

Share responsibilities

When pastors, assistants and pastoral lay leaders know each other and respect the gifts of each one as they serve the Community of faith, what they demonstrate is working effectively together. Love one another..... Lived is essential!

Wi have to have priests who consider us as equals

Actually listening to the ordained and honoring their gifts and callings.

Develop a diverse, active group of people to work together.

Equality!! True collaboration and partnership

Parishes today, at least in America, typically employ at least one or two lay employees, and many parishes may have a large lay staff composed of both professionally trained and credentialed lay pastoral associates and/or permanent lay deacons, along with several lay support staff members...many of whom are making a pittance for a salary and may or may not have some sort of health benefits and retirement plan. Even more so, much of the grunt work of running a parish falls upon the volunteering by members of the parish community. Without the hours and energy donated by parishioners, not to mention their financial support, there would be no community. And there would be little ministry by the community to its own members, to the larger local community, or to the wider world in need. I envision a parish team of lay and ordained working together, with the division of labor somewhat fluid, depending upon the

parish's unique situation, the talents of the individual team members, and the resources available to the parish and the team. What works for a while in a parish may not work 5-10 years later. What works in one parish might not work in another parish. The sine que non for a successful parish team ministry is that it is the model required by the local bishop...and also by his successor. Every parish must have a functioning parish council which advises the pastor as to how to lead the parish as the local Pilgrim Church on Earth.

Lay people and ordained ministers have to work together as equals. Everyone should be valued and appreciated for what they bring to the work at hand.

Mutual respect for the expertise of each other. Not to treat lay people as assistants but to recognize their holiness

Follow the example of Pope Francis. Do not alienate. Find a way to reduce the power of the priest. Married priests would be a good beginning.

We need to review the duties and gifts of the ordained. Priests are seldom trained in accounting yet we make them responsible for all the finances of the parish. Priests are told to run schools in the diocese yet seldom have the administrative skills or talents in HR. We need to recognize the talents / gifts / charisms of the laity and the clergy and use those gifts appropriately.

Collaboration skills for priests

In the earlier days, there were many priests who worked well with lay people. We were blessed to preside at communion services, share in the reflections in the gospel, we came together to listen to each other. There was so much respect for our priests as well.

‘Unmarried’ all male cult which oppresses women, men who marry women, has sex with

one another or, worse, our children, & hide their CRIMES & squander billions in 'hush' money, move 'offenders' around & on & on!!!

Listening to one another. Mindful of the presence of Jesus and the spirit. Acknowledgment of racism, greed and need for prayer and education concerning these issues. It has to change or it will die . Awareness and efforts regarding climate change and care of earth.

Over the past 40 years I have witnessed many instances of priests and the laity successfully working together.

I see us relating as equals in all the ministries of the church. I see us encouraging and supporting one another and calling forth the best that we have to give to one another and the community of believers.

If all of us, no matter what our roles may be, can begin to relate to one another as equals.

Get rid of "ordination" as though we only have one priest who is called. Focus on priesthood of laity. Early Church broke bread in their homes. Simplify. The present day Mass is way too ritualized.

We were working toward this vision with several Pastors and our permanent Deacon back in the 1980's- 2000. It takes an immense amount of time and a lot of meetings to get people engaged. Many of the Laity need to be told that they are also called to this mission of church. They do not understand their role as a baptized person. The ordained need to give up some of their power to engage the people in the pew.

I am not sure about this.

Have women deacons

Much as I have described above. I also believe that pastors should come forth from the community and not be assigned by the diocese.

If it is necessary for the diocese to assign someone, the parish community should have input into the process and decision.

Changing seminary training, qualifying lay ministers with theological training

TRUST that the Spirit lives and works through all the people

Within a team effort. The team/community meets regularly, prays together, shares concerns, organizes themselves to meet the needs of the wider community.

Openness, no power seekers, if you are part of a team, you are part of a team, nothing about "father says". I only have a father in heaven and that is my dad. I see God as both female and male.

I have participated on many national committees, including lay ministry certification, youth ministry and religious education. We have had clergy working with us and I believe that, since the ordained wanted to be on those committees and realized the need for lay men and women in the Church they were very collaborative. I hear too many pastors say, "we need vocations (to the priesthood)", but never promote lay vocations. When we respect and support each other's vocations, we will have more in our Catholic Church. The lack of respect, in too many cases, has given the non-Catholic Christian Church many vocations.

Eliminating clericalism is essential for lay and ordained working together. There need not be barriers for this partnership. Lay and Ordained are meant to be collaborators. The Ordained have no one to serve without the laity.

I have spoken above of a parish in which I experienced working together. It means the ordained minister needs to be able to listen and accept the fact that they as ordained ministers might not have all the experience required to make CHURCH in that congregation.

As long as the ordained hold themselves as the “ordained,” privileged, elite, I can’t foresee much of a partnership.

Gospel formation in a seminary or a Catholic university with both matriculating together for a ministerial degree.

Communication is Key and Essential.

I don’t think the division is one of ordination, it is one of attitude. Our deacons are ordained but have never led from a position of arrogance, which I would have to say almost all of our priest have done. I think the priests need something akin to anti-racism training. They have been steeped in their specialness for so long, and that has only gotten worse with the contrived priest shortage. It is not a shortage, it is a choice to not share power. Until that training happens, how can there be a true partnership?

I wonder even about the role of dress and titles. The collar and title of Father creates a divide between lay and ordained that positions the priest as holier than all, even if only subconsciously. I think inviting the lay leadership to do some of the spiritual work, like opening with a blessing, can help shift power dynamics. I think it is important to give lay people the opportunity to preach and break open the word of God. It frustrates me to think that priests have to preach every day, to the point that it becomes just another to-do checklist, as well as the gatekeepers to knowing God. Right now, as someone who feels a call to ministry but is not able to be ordained and not sure if I even believe in the structure of ordination, the lay/ordained divide is a big roadblock for me. Perhaps having a leadership structure that is not just a priest at the top and anyone underneath?

I’m not sure how I feel about the diocese moving priests around every few years. It seems like it creates a lot of tension between the

congregation and the priest, especially when values don’t align. In my parish growing up, it was hard to see our pastor moved after 20 years, but I could see that the music minister, a lay person, was stepping up to take more leadership roles in this shift. Perhaps having leadership that truly commits to being in the community for the long term helps, and then mutually discerns when it is time to leave.

Helping those used to the “old way” to see the benefit of having a ministry like Jesus, and the early Christians.

Less “superiority attitude” on the part of the priests and more awareness of their proper role on the part of the laity.

Equal deference from both the laity and the ordained towards each other. Healing from clericalism, on both sides.

A major change in canon law regarding the role and power of the local bishop could result in more collaboration between lay and ordained working together.

I envision them as a team. Although I have no calling to the priesthood, I would be delighted to continue lay ministry and to preach occasionally. I am an oblate of an ecumenical monastery and see ordained and lay ministers working together to serve the community. It’s an inspiration; I only wish it weren’t 300 miles away from me.

Not sure until the institutional structures change.

More responsibility truly given over to the lay people with the proper expertise in any given area - priest as part of a team at a parish or school - not the top of the pyramid.

From my years of observation in our congregation, in order for a paradigm shift of this sort to work, priests and the Catholic Church would need to shift concepts that

priests are superior to members of the congregation. The current attitude, again in my opinion, is that priests who are men are superior to all others, especially thus contributing a great deal to the huge gender inequality in our country.

Allow women to be priests and also married men and encourage priests who have left the priesthood to marry to come back and minister as priests.

Equal partners with shared responsibility not power top down model.

A different kind of priest is needed. Confident, well-educated people, male and female, married or not, LGBTQ, or not, who embrace life and the world. Who want to be in the world and make it better. Not timid, or worse, over-confident righteous zealots who have an agenda to make the world conform to their rigid views.

When I reflect on the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, I see two persons with different calls encountering each other, sharing stories, listening intently to each other respecting the brilliance of the other, acting with deep humility and working together to spread the Good News. Encounter, humility, respect, wisdom, appreciation that ALL are called, etc. Suggests that partnerships is the platform from which all men and women can fulfill their vocation.

It would be important first to realize what qualities a lay minister brings to the parish community and what qualities an ordained minister brings and how they coordinate these for the spiritual social psychological life of the parish community.

Being open to all members, sharing the talents of many members, showing kindness, encouragement.

A patriarchal hierarchical church system cannot create a church of equals without a new vision.

By invitation not coercion, helping people to claim their own giftedness open.

Contemplative centered.

Since Vat. II lay people have contributed very much in most parishes I lived in, including teaching in our schools since so few sisters are no longer teaching.

Deacons administer Sacrament of Healing. Lay all sacraments mut reconciliation & Eucharist & here I am not sure but I would include these also.

Education, education, education of both the leadership and the laity in Vatican II and implementing it in the 21st century. This will allow the laity to recognize their gifts are important to the church in living the gospel.

There would need to be a mindset of walking together, instead of each maintaining “territory” boundaries or building walls around their specific ministries. No “them and us” mentality. Working together lay and ordained would accentuate the positives, be grateful, respect and trust one another.

Staff meetings and/or retreats for sharing values, and professional goals in ministries; effective and consistent communication could help make lay-ordained partnerships work better. Good leadership is a must.

Diocesan opportunities for ongoing faith formation, professional development, and spiritual nourishment with both ordained and nonordained participating are invaluable.

I believe that it is possible if there is a mutual respect given to each person and ordained. Laity want to support their parish and the sacramental life if they are given the opportunity, they will faithfully bring their gifts to the table.

**There is plenty of work to go around!
Empowering the laity to be more involved
in administration of parishes and pastoral
ministries give members of a congregation
more ways to connect to their church.**

Laity need more education to participate.
Clergy need to be educated around Vat. 11
documents, social justice teachings and Pope
encyclicals.

**Education for lay ministries for men and
women for the diaconate and priesthood.
Seminary training must be revised to stamp
out clericalism that produces priests who think
they are 'God' and have absolute power over
parishioners and their Parish.**

How about humility? Recognize the gifts
of each other in an equitable partnership
committed to the service of God's people?
This idea that male priests are somehow more
than human and therefore to be adored and
unquestionable has got to go. They are human,
they are fallible, they need help.

**In respecting each other's roles as equal
children of God, working to spread the reign
of God, living the way Jesus taught, we walk
the journey together.
Clericalism needs to be gone! Some seminaries
are much responsible for this. There also needs
to be a change of mindset by lay that "Father"
is better than them.**

Sharing experiences.

**Priest must give up the attitude that they are
better than the rest. And parishioners must
stop treating them as though they are.**

Lay and ordained should treat each other
as equals - we are all baptized Catholics.
Eliminating all training about how special
ordination is. Replace it with emphasis on
being called to serve.

**All sides showing respect to each other and
working as a team of equals.**

I'm not sure we need ordained persons at all.
Perhaps the model should be diaconate men
& women. Or possibly an updated version of
CFM (the Christian family movement) that was
so popular in 1950s and 60s.

**Many Priest are reluctant to let go of the
power. The current situation is dire. We must
encourage laypeople to play a larger part in the
Catholic Church.**

It needs to start with mutual respect for one
another's talents. Finding the right person for
each job and working collaboratively. I believe
the Protestant churches have shown good
examples of this.

**Listening to one another, accepting that
another person may have more/better
experience and can shift responsibility to said
person.**

Having a time and a place to try working
together. Team building is not an easy thing,
but. The process can help everyone who gives
it. A try in one way or another many people are
doing this already. And some of it is taking
place worldwide on. ZOOM!!

**Dialogue and encounter as Pope Francis would
say!**

This is possible but those called and chosen
ought to be guided by the Holy Spirit though
constant prayer for discernment.

**It would help for some lay people to have
seminary preparation. But the kind of
preparation is key. It must be with a vision of
Vat II.**

The ordained should treat others with respect.
They should value their input and encourage
dialogue. Lay members should do likewise.

1. STOP calling priests “father”- call them brother. 2. Recognition that there is only one priesthood- the priesthood of the baptized- some people step up into a leadership role in that priesthood but they are not “above” the rest of the laity. C. Humility and servant leadership

I would welcome a return to the model of early house churches and a more diverse loosely structured church.

Laypeople leading prayer services; priests helping out with chores around the parish (some already do!)

I feel that lay-ordained partnerships would work better if priests were open to collaboration, and if lay people are prepared to form themselves spiritually to step into ministerial roles.

Education in partnership and practice of what is learned. Too often there is very little mutual guidance and support.

Catechesis for Bishops on the benefits of this type of working relationship in parish settings so they don't become an obstacle to them but rather encourage it, providing catechesis for pastors.

Honesty, openness, transparency, equality

Effective pastoral councils with real authority within limits that have true co-responsibility with whoever is ordained, and who can within limits override a pastor. Parishioners outlast pastors by many years and arrive often disrupting community to assert their authority and ego. We must begin with the premise that **IT'S OUR CHURCH!**

Decision-making power needs to be shared. Not just providing input but having a voice in the final decision

Sodality, collaboration, consensus, and shared authority

If priests and lay leaders saw themselves as equals working together having different gifts, abilities, and roles.

More respect on the part of priests for the “vocation” of the laity.

Equal training and backing from the Church.

Equal input. Respect for the other's opinion and talent.

Built on a Marianist framework.

Good and pertinent theology that reflect our lives. Placing power and control on the back burner. Emphasis on servant leadership not only to the people but to our planet.

Lots of prayer.

Accepting that everyone has a piece of the wisdom; no one has it all.

Recognition and living out by all the ordained, veterans and new, that all the baptized share equally in God's graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Provide seminarians with training in human development, counseling and diversity/inclusion.

With an open and inviting pastor, it works now in many parishes.

I do this now with a lay-based Community. Everyone participates in some way. All decisions are made by lay people. Many lay people have theology training. Priests are valued members of this community and celebrate eucharist. It was worked for over 50 years.

First of all, get rid of priestly notion of ontological change which translates into ontological superiority. Once we begin to see ourselves as co-equal partnerships and recognize that no one person has all the gifts and that we rely as a community on sharing gifts with one another, we can begin to imagine how that might look. We can both share what we are and get out of the way so others can share their gifts.

Ability to listen to each other's vision and set ground rules when working as a team. Understanding team leadership behavioral science.

Why don't you all take a look at how other Christian denominations operate. You don't have to invent the wheel - - it is already invented.

I don't know I don't know except to close the seminaries only able to work out of a patriarchal and hierarchical, colonial political, oppressive model.

Bring in JEDI trainers (justice, equity, diversity, inclusion) to outdoor retreats with ordained and laity, to wrestle with new beginnings.

Listening to one another, open to other's opinions, education for working together

Respecting each other's gifts and turf. Ability to communicate and work things out together and to show that respect in all situations

Humility. Collaboration. Shared vision.

There has to be some kind of contract/agreement with the parties concerned.

Everyone has to be humble and appreciate the gifts of all involved. Sharing of equal power in decision making

Priests need education about accepting and promoting the role of lay leaders; and the laity need to help the priests understand that they

(the priests) can't do everything that needs to be done without the laity.

Education & examples of these partnerships

Build a common vision of what they want their parish to be, and keep revising the way forward. This requires a "synodal" parish process. It takes lots of time listening. All need to read good materials, too.

There are many parishes which have or had embraced good parish teamwork between ordained pastors, paid lay ministers and voluntary parish council members. We know where such partnerships were built and embraced in our local diocese. We need to look to these communities and the community of lay and religious Catholic ministry workers who have lived and experienced good partnerships to help document what worked well and allowed for good partnerships and good work. Many have retired, reach out to them for insights now, asap!

The willingness of the ordained to work side by side as children of God.

True sharing as equals.

Think we need to broaden our theology on vocations so that we all can see that EVERYONE has a vocation and the difference is in how that's lived out; Think formation of clergy should be amongst the lay/deacons; Think it should be modeled and lifted up.

A better understanding of the lay vocation as described in Pope JP II's Christifideles Laici. It is essential to the church.

Equality in having women in leadership roles in all areas of church life. Cooperative interaction with laity and clergy.

Lay people are the Church. We should be working together in all ways. There should be more opportunities to learn about how we can

be involved, it seems like a secret. And more adult education would help engage people to be involved.

The admission of noncelibate persons with families to ordination would be significant.

Having a parish council group with equal say on how the community runs; Listening sessions among the community; use of questionnaires for community participation ; all the things our parish used to do before the archdiocese appointed a pastor who reversed all the programs we had built over 50 years. This “spiritual abuse” was the height of clericalism and rendered us a virtual faith community with no regular home after decades of being a church family of openness and inclusion.

If the ordained could recognize lay people as knowledgeable, informed co-equals who love the Church, it would show progress. If lay person would stop running away from the non-responsive ordained but rather would promote the development of skills to keep in dialogue, it would greatly help.

Please see above for the personal characteristics of a priest. Those same qualities need to be present in lay single, married members of any staff.

Respect. Collaboration. Listening to the voices of the local needs. Common education.

Recognizing that this is an equal partnership, the priest is not in charge.

Getting to know one another, praying together and appreciating each other’s talents and gifts and calling up each other to use their gifts for the good of all.

When you have the right people working with an ordained the ordained has to be willing to listen to their ideas and give things a try. It worked at St John Fisher for years!!!!!!

Recognition by clergy that lay ministers can be equally as well educated as clergy. The intelligence of laity needs to be recognized.

Obviously, the training that candidates to the priesthood would need some drastic changes if priests are no longer the sole “bosses” in a parish!

Ordained seems to always trump lay decisions, even when the decision is outside the expertise of the one ordained. When I was a principal, the pastor hired a teacher without consultation while I was recovering from surgery. I had to deal with terminating her a few months later (mid-year). The priest was very quiet then!

Get rid of clericalism.

Lay people are often far better administrators and have a more rounded life experience. Let people do what they do best for the good of all. Homilies should be shared by men and women. Gender should play no role in determining the roles and responsibilities assigned.

Support of bishops and cardinals to allow women a place at the altar. How about women deacons and priests? The church would find more people entering the religious life, helping parishes with no regular deacons or priests.

It has been my contention since 1961 when I began my years as a woman ministering in the church that there are so many people of God to be served and situations to be tended that if we could come together, utilizing our own unique gifts, and respecting each other as Baptized Equals, putting aside the craving of “Power”, we could be a Church on Fire and visibly relevant to those who hunger and thirst for the MORE on their Spiritual Journey through the Mystery of Life.

Open meetings that concern important decisions for the well-being of the parish; not merely reporting done from the ambo

at the end of weekend Mass. A prepared-in-advance agenda prepared and circulated among the parishioners. Dialogue and discussion, concerns, opinions given respectful consideration. In some cases, perhaps the process of voting on certain issues; clergy respected for their knowledge and experience in leading congregations, with an eye on the experiences of other parishes' experiences. Listening, listening, respecting, respecting each other. Example in my parish: a big church renovation and the need to choose a statue of Mary to be prominently set in the area of the sanctuary. A large modern sculpture of Mary was done by an artist-friend of the head liturgies, a large statue of Mary depicted in a very motherly, middle-age time of her life, so life-like and inviting. I love it; she speaks to me in this pose. Yet, many parishioners do not like it, and there is any undertone of disgruntlement. What a perfect issue this could have been for a synodal process of decision-making! Most people do not know how the piece of art was selected, or where it came from!! The rumor is that a wealthy member totally paid for the work. That's great for our worrisome finances, but how was the sheepfold shown any respect? It hurts to think how we smelly sheep have been content to take a back seat.

That it is finally understood that church is all of us, when two or more are gathered in his name . . . That church will survive but in a very different way and where the lay are leading.

The priesthood is a human service job. In addition to theological studies, they need training as missionaries, social workers, and counseling.

There are no real opportunities for broad based partnership at this point. Sure, each parish "allows" for some lay leadership. But, if you'll look closely, it is a closed "club" for the few chosen in the community. Those usually are the larger donors of a parish, hence, reinforcing the approach of the priests and church to do

everything in their power to FIRST protect the power and possessions of the church. And, if they happen to develop someone's faith along the way, well then, that's icing on the cake.

I try to think back to what made those experiences so comfortable and fulfilling. I think we were working more in a partnership. We figured out what was important by listening to each other, we respected each other and how each of us could help accomplish our goals. We actually were taught some of these skills in training in the diocese. This makes me wonder what has happened over the last 20-25 years. Control was never an issue. We were in this for the greater good of the church & it's people. We had Life in the Spirit Seminars and prayer groups, We were nourished in Faith by goodness in our leaders(priests) & trusted each other I guess. We welcomed everyone to our church. We need to be welcoming again. We don't need to hear how sinful everyone is. We need to hear about the Joy of the Lord and begin to recognize it in our lives. I haven't thought about this for a long time but Joy is missed when we start being exclusive rather than inclusive. I remember now there were always people who wanted to be exclusive, but I think they used to be outnumbered. First, they were confused by Vatican 11 which I think was never positively explained or welcomed within our parishes by the regular priests which to me means their Bishops neglected educating the local priests. Then it seemed that many of the more welcoming priests began to leave the priesthood. What a shame we lost them to social work, psychology and other helping professions. Then as things got more inclusive parishioners started leaving the church. I remained. Always hopeful that change could occur from within -never from outside. I've done a lot of reading and praying during these Covid years. It's hard to go back but still it is where my core faith is centered so I will still try to work from within.

Community building is a significant part of supporting spiritual growth and the laity have a

very significant role in this and have the ability to reach beyond the ‘walls’ of an exclusive church structure.

Openness to laity and new ideas and open to working together not top down.

Lay and ordained people do work together on Parish Councils in my parish.

Absolutely can work together. I experienced that many times as a Deacon. I had people work with me in Baptism Preparation also marriage prep. The priest and I put a group of parishioners together to visit the elderly, bring them communion, visit the sick in local hospital and more!

Dissolve the present priesthood and develop lay leadership.

Praying together. (People complained because I started and ended choir practice with prayer!). Eating together. Both need on-going formation. Both need co-equal ministering training. Learn from other parishes who successfully co-minister. (Priests need to step off their pedestals and parishioners need to stop pedestaling priests. I believe that priests are not the only ones who can ‘consecrate’.)

Letting go of ego, letting go of comparing, letting go of needing to be super busy all the time. Get out if your own way and make room for others.

Lay-ordained “partnership” is susceptible to inequality / clericalism as well. Moreover, in the wake of public scandals over sexual abuse, clerics seem to have closed ranks and distanced themselves from laity. Perhaps the clerics could practice accepting the majority decisions whenever possible, and reserve executive privilege to those things that would be very hard to execute (e.g. Projects that require resources that aren’t available), or that violate religious principles (e.g. Changing the wording

or marrying those who are not currently eligible).

Make God’s justice the centerpiece of parish life. I am convinced that justice and mercy literally works. I believe accompaniment with the poor and disadvantaged is the way to salvation. I believe the Eucharist dwells in every being and is memorialized in the Mass. Buckminster Fuller said that you can’t change an existing model. Rather, you must build a new model that makes the old model obsolete. Every parishioner should undergo discernment of charisms, priests especially. Those with leadership charism, lay or priest, should be offered the equal opportunity to lead. Finally, we need parishes with visions of what a just world looks like and work toward that aim because that is where we will find God’s kingdom.

Eliminate the pyramid structure of hierarch at the top. Embrace the circular structure of we are all in this together.

Relaxed friendships would help lots.

The laity can be much more comfortable with the ordained that do not act like pompous holy rollers. The ordained who welcome lay input and share their own doubts as to how things are.

How about some respect and recognition of each as SERVANTS not a power unbalanced relationship. The lay people I know have many skills that could benefit the parish. They also have a realistic understanding of the world because they are in relationships; they parent; they support themselves financially. I do not know very many ordained persons who truly understand this life experience.

We need to do so much to overcome clericalism. It’s been part of how we were brought up and certainly part of how priests are trained. It’s going to take a lot of re-learning.

I believe it has to begin in the seminary. Those choosing the priestly way of life need to be taught that they are not privileged and have some special spirit that no one else has. That would be a beginning.

They must know what their job is and do that well. The priest must be a Spiritual leader not the 'man with power' and the only one in charge of running the Church.

I believe we have made an idol of ordained priesthood & exclusive male priesthood. Too hard to let go of the power -is THE ISSUE, not whether others might be called.

Eliminate spiritual hierarchy. It's one thing to have different roles and education levels, etc., but it's wrong and not Christlike to put oneself on a pedestal like many male religious in the Catholic Church have done and continue to do.

There needs to be an understanding that they each bring skills together
It is collaborative - a realization that they need and support one another- have strategies to solve differences

1. The Roman Catholic Latin Rite needs to have optional celibacy for priests (opportunity to marry and to have healthy and normal relationships) which will in turn help to have normal and healthy relationships between both women and men.

****Women are so often not treated with respect, love and trust when communicating with priests (celibate men) who have oftentimes, unfortunately, been brainwashed in seminaries regarding healthy sexuality. Oftentimes teaching in seminaries encourages young men to keep their distance from women, which can indeed foster not having normal and healthy relationships with both women and therefore- all people. This is being seen in some conservative young men being trained in seminaries. The things we have heard them**

say about women, and about love of God, and women, (divided hearts since 1139) etc. Is truly disturbing and needs to change for the future of our Worldwide priest shortage. 2). The Catholic Church needs to have the return of ordination for Holy women called to liturgical service for God to our original historic Early Church. These 2 points will address the Worldwide priest shortage and Open up the entire Church for the return of love, hope and positivity in the worldwide Church.

Q3. . How do you envision lay and ordained working together? What could help make lay-ordained partnerships work better?

First, the priest has to be willing to work in coordination with the lay parishioners. Having town meetings where everyone's opinion is valued would be helpful. Our parish council at present can make recommendations, but the pastor has the full say in decision-making. Having a priest who values the input of women and accepts that they are co-workers in the vineyard would really go a long way. Having new priests being ordained from very conservative seminaries does not help. They have a feeling of entitlement that somehow, they know it all and are not open to new theology.

They pray and eat together.

Respect for one another and for those being served together.

Perhaps there should be consideration of not using the term laity and ordained but find a better way of "marrying" the two entities. Everyone is part of the priesthood of Christ... perhaps we need to delve into that phrase and discuss it thoroughly.

Have a real team of equals that address issues and resolve by consultation and consensus

Through an elected process, a council or group of people composed of ordained and lay congregation members making decisions. To do that, there needs to be support from the office of the Bishop I suspect.

Praying together with Staff & others

Synodal style of decision making.

They will only work together effectively when there is equality between laity and clerics.

Working together as equals...adult to adult, not parent to child.

It's not an issue, really, we all get along together in the real world, some good some bad, we can learn how to get along together. It's about the person, not whether or not they are ordained.

Willingness to collaborate and cooperate as equals

Priests and laity celebrate the Eucharist together.

Whilst a community benefits from having a leader, there is no need for a dictatorship. Discerning together has to be the way forward.

Open up dialogue, allow people to come together and discuss the needs of the church - both locally and globally. Then commit resources for educating the laity, provide them with the tools to do ministry and grow in their own "call" to holiness.

Addition of women who are called. We know from marriage how much better we work and live and worship and serve together. We all have something to contribute in a meaningful not hierarchical way.

The priests need to be trained better in the seminary to see that the community is the main focus, and not themselves. They need to be taught that they are one of us, not different from us because of their ordination. People who are seen as equals can work together, people who are in a hierarchy are given tasks to do for the "boss," which makes us different.

A couple of things: Intentionally questioning reflexive behaviors grounded in "how it's always been done"; sitting in a circle where all are on the same level; inviting and engaging all voices (include opportunities for everyone to comment after homily and prayers of the people); engaging a dialogic approach around

charities to support and process for decision making in the community.

Important they are committed to meeting together regularly and start the meetings with prayer and a “check in” on how things are going.

The lay and Ordained working together is better provided there is constant Reflection, evaluation and planning together. Otherwise, dictatorship takes over.

The priests don't always have to have the last word. Through true collaboration and consensus, they would arrive on the best decisions for the situation.

I believe there needs to be an attitude adjustment. Until we all see each other as gifted by the spirit and not ordained as superior to lay it will be difficult. Individuals need to pray together and examen their gifts that best serve the community.

I have experienced lay and ordained working together. And I have grown spiritually because of those experiences. This only happens when a priest or deacons are open to sharing. More and more I see this disappearing in my parish and others.

The opportunity to work together makes a big difference.

Opening ordination to all those who are called, trained etc. Individuals need to respect the life experience of one another. Current priests should not see themselves as “defenders of the faith” -- we are all on this journey together. Shared goals, respectful dialogue. Church needs to be relevant - divorce, LGBT, birth control, abortion, capital punishment etc. We need to build relationships so they well represent the teachings of Jesus.

Lay and ordained ministers should share in biblical and spiritual training together.

Using talents of people and used of education. Educate and encourage our lay people. Feel that their is an openness to work together

A team where everyone has a place at the table. A circular model rather than a hierarchical model. Ability to collaborate and recognize each other's talents.

Lay people must believe in themselves and gather with others-lay and priests and sister-and work toward reform. It can happen and is happening if we believe and keep focused. The Synod is a prime example of an action that will move our working together forward. We cannot give up since we are making progress. We might need to leave the conservative folks behind, but we can move forward and we are! Future Church forums and dialogs are examples of this!

It could begin with people (lay and priests) who volunteer to work together in current churches in this manner. Pilot programs so that experiences could begin to change the models of church leadership.

Working together in helping Church be Church. Common training, learnings, discussions.

I suggest having a Parish Team including the priest(s) , deacons, and several lay people who are chosen by the congregation, serve together for a specific number of years (3-5 perhaps).

Working together as brother and sister without distinction, to reach out to ANYONE in need, to help them feel wanted, respected and loved as equals in this world.

There are already many small active vibrant communities peripheral to the parish, groups that worship together, or homeschool together or have other meetings, on line and face to face, catholic communities that are alive! These can be our model, as can the model of some rural protestant churches where lay people are in

charge and the priest only comes in to do the sacraments deacons can't do

Ordained ministers should have parish groups established which meet regularly to discuss parish items. These groups should be changed annually. Have discussion items sent to church members via mail/email so they could respond, if they wish.

They would need to have mutual respect for themselves and for the other co-leader. They would need shared trust, shared commitment, shared attitude of servant leadership. And they would need training and practice to develop these skills. They would need to pray together to maintain the attitude and trust needed. Good communication skills are vital.

Church is Community Relationships!! People have different gifts: Recognize and use the gifts that each has been given!! Work together: some preach, some teach, some administrate, some give spiritual direction, some have the gift of healing... Learn to recognize, encourage, share, as a team the gifts God gave. Give time to know each other, sharing, planning, reconciliation... All of that. Everyone is called to help build the needs of the community. Not just the Priest.

The laity should be invited to express their concerns and wishes, in all situations, be included in all parish decisions and activities, and be listened to seriously especially when pastors are to be appointed to their parish. When a parish is in need of a pastor, have parishioners come together, compile their vision, needs, etc. Of the parish community and what qualities they want in a pastor, make this known to the diocesan priest personnel board and then interview priests who apply to be their pastor. The parishioners who do the interviews would then rank their choices. The final appointment must be one of these choices.

I think that clergy and laity can first work together when being ordained is not necessary to minister to people. For example, I have had a lay Spiritual Director who is certified by our diocese and is master-prepared to perform that ministry as my spiritual director for 17 years! I would recommend her highly. She is married with five grown children and several grandchildren. She is excellent in counseling regarding relationships and knows the Catholic Faith very well. She also is very good in working with people with issues such as scrupulosity. She is a thanatologist, who has worked in a hospital setting and throughout the hospital system in grief counseling. She has her own spiritual director.

More communication and sharing in decision making

Go on retreats together with a process to learn together how God calls everyone to use their gifts.

First, clergy need to be much better informed re women, more opportunities created within parishes to work together

This would benefit from the support of a bishop who would provide training for how lay and ordained could minister together.

Listening and discussion sessions would be helpful. Placing the needs of the poor and underprivileged first. Have the administrative needs of a parish be performed by a lay businessperson and not the pastor. Perhaps the community needs to interview the pastor-to-be, to assess if they are able to meet the needs of the community. Perhaps appointing by the bishop should be dismissed.

Respect, invitation to collaborate on ministries, budget, priorities

Collaborative ministry will involve more meetings, rather than autocratic decisions

being made, but a circular model of ministry, where leaders are elected for short times.

The lay and ordained can work together by adopting a servant model for ministering to their communities. Complete control would have to be aside.

Regular meetings and making decisions after respectful dialogue and discernment.
Respecting diversities

On a professional level lay and ordained ministers should be educated together in the same schools.

The ordained should have the right to choose marriage if so inclined. Close relations and the experience to see how to work together with all types of people; recognizing that we are all serving each other in ministry as the baptized

Mostly each recognizing the gifts of the other and working together to give a more complete pastoral action. Working with strengths better.

Lay and ordained can work together by recognizing each one's talents and using them. I ministered in a parish where we worked as a team: priests, school principal, music minister, artist, etc. All had similar vision of Church and were willing to work together to achieve that goal. I ministered for some 14 years with this group but never had an experience like it again. SO, it is possible.

Taking the time to dialogue; share faith; share theological insights; collaborate

Inclusive, participative, transparent and accountable in all aspects like in decision making and sharing responsibilities. Develop and train more the lay in the needed skills in pastoral work and in liberational feminist theologies. Use symbols and structures that are inclusive and encourage participation.

Besides praying together with more spontaneous prayer services, the Ordained can sometimes recreate with the lay people with whom they work.

Recognize each other's strengths and use them to the fullest. All should learn how to discern before making a decision on projects and management.

I want the leadership of a kindly pastor. I want time for open meetings when we discuss together the concerns, the plans, the developments in our parish.

I believe Parish Counsels that are active with both men and women and young people serving together is an excellent example. I believe we should have women deacons who could go on to be priest. Women can give to the priesthood many abilities that men do not have the capabilities to do

I think both bring gifts to the table and both should be respected. Lay people should be empowered to carry out ministries. If the ordained actually listen to the laity and together they can incorporate their goals into the mission, that would help. Priests shouldn't rule with an iron fist.

There needs to be a partnership between each. A recognition that Lay, especially women, who usually are the teachers of the Faith can work together and that we can spread, nurture and sustain the Faith Together

If priest lives in setting with lay people. If budget decisions are made cooperatively.

Women should be ordained. Without that there is no chance to move from patriarchy. Education could make it work better...as part of the opportunity to serve and be served in a community. Praying together is essential for this to work...prayers where all voices are heard, especially voices of those who are suffering... Blessed are they!

Not really sure. We need to undo the all male celibate clergy first. The best thing for lay people to do in the meantime is form grassroots house churches and small Christian communities that empower them. Where collaboration is possible in parishes, schools, etc. And lay people who have to collaborate with priests need to do so because it's part of their job (i.e. They are employed in ministry) or if they are lay leaders volunteering in some way, then they should look for authentic mutual adult relationships that can be formed with reasonable people and work together with the ordained as best they can.

There is no reason that they should not be able to work together if they consider each other at EQUALS. It seems as though the women so often feel subordinate to the males for many reasons I am sure. That is still happening in the world outside of the religious to be sure as well.

Each one recognized and respected; praying together and strengthening bonds of friendship; the diverse gifts honored and allowed to be exercised; all focused on the needs of the community and how to strengthen its growth in love, justice and service

Lay and ordained can work together if there is mutual respect. In so many cases, the ordained clergy have no respect for the laity, who they consider to be of lesser importance, with lesser gifts. No more "pray, pay, obey." That has to stop.

The partnership should be discussed. Does the ordained person feel he/she has the final say? If that's the case, why does he/she feel that way?

With the current shortage of priests, lay-ordained partnerships are the way forward. We need to find ways to use all the gifts we have in the community in a meaningful way. We have to be open to various possibilities depending on

cultural and local situations. We have to find a way to share what works in one community with others so that we don't just work in isolation but continue to grow together as a church.

More mutual training, more experiences in which our pastors learn with us. A process for lay decision-making in parishes exists to a degree in our parish council. That would require council to report activities to the parish. We don't have that in my parish now. Social justice programs are essential.

The priests giving up the attitude of clericalism, of being the ones to make unilateral decision and seek the input of lay parishioners and staff.

Much like was said in today's reflection by Fr. Newton, ordained ministers spend so much time on administrative decisions; ones that are not part of what I'll call the essential functions of a priest/ordained. A minister's prime work should be pastoral, so free them up to do that work.

Education is important! Create adult education classes to help the people develop gifts to be more Christlike. Then give them the latitude to go ahead and use their gifts. The MBTI is important to let them know their gifts and then such classes in pastoral ministry, finances, documents of Vatican II, etc. Can be used to give a solid background. Then provide space for them to use their knowledge and they will grow together. That is what happened in the above-mentioned parish. Most of all, be a good listener and observe relationships that give life.

Clericalism MUST be replaced. The people of God should identify and call their candidates to ordination. The lay ministers and parish council should be involved in all decisions made.

Lay and ordained working together would be a team ministry with members bringing their

gifts to the community as servant leaders for good of the whole.

A respect for each other as having an equal and rightful place in the church - working together and honoring the work of each.

Lay and ordained used to work more together. It seems in the past 10 years things have gone backwards, at least this is so in my local parishes. These partnerships would work better if the priests could practice humility and not feel the need to control everything. I know this can't be easy, but I've seen it work.

Must develop the RELATIONSHIPS - take time to share experiences, pains, joys, hopes; be support for each other; pray together as equals

In LA there was a program to develop lay ecclesial ministers to collaborate with priests as pastoral associates and parish life directors but it is being dismantled and deacons are being prioritized for these positions to further exclude women and laity so promoting more clericalism

There are many areas where trained professionals could make a great contribution to the work of the priest. I could see, for instance, a group of trained nurses making a contribution to the parish. New technology has helped bring groups together for teaching, creativity, etc. Let's use these means to build the Body of Christ.

I would hope priests and lay people could work together just like regular people respecting who has the most expertise when expertise is required. Respect is important.

Decision making should be shared, not always defaulting to "Father." We need to get past the idea of ordination conferring "special powers" and privileges, and respect and honor the gifts and experiences of each person. And listen to each other!

No working together will happen unless lay and ordained mutually respect and accept one another as equals.

The hierarchical idea that priests are above others in the church, their decisions and actions are the word and not to be questioned is antiquated. Lay and ordained people often bring different perspectives to a situation or and organization and those differences, if respected and honored, can create a much more well-rounded and fulfilling organization/ community.

Both actively involved in liturgies and shared decision making for parish.

Democratic leadership in parishes for decision making and finances.

Lay and ordained working together on Youth ministry. I was asked to work with a wide diversity of youth, primarily Hispanic & saw how the men & women served as leaders in their Charismatic community. Most of the families were new immigrants from Central America. The main priest did not feel comfortable with the charismatic group but he delegated a layman to lead. I applaud his recognition of inability to adapt but allowed one of his deacons to take the lead.

When pastors, assistants and pastoral lay leaders know each other and respect the gifts of each one as they serve the Community of faith, what they demonstrate is working effectively together. Love one another..... Lived is essential!

Develop a diverse, active group of people to work together.

Parishes today, at least in America, typically employ at least one or two lay employees, and many parishes may have a large lay staff composed of both professionally trained and credentialed lay pastoral associates and/or permanent lay deacons, along with several

lay support staff members...many of whom are making a pittance for a salary and may or may not have some sort of health benefits and retirement plan. Even more so, much of the grunt work of running a parish falls upon the volunteering by members of the parish community. Without the hours and energy donated by parishioners, not to mention their financial support, there would be no community. And there would be little ministry by the community to its own members, to the larger local community, or to the wider world in need. I envision a parish team of lay and ordained working together, with the division of labor somewhat fluid, depending upon the parish's unique situation, the talents of the individual team members, and the resources available to the parish and the team. What works for a while in a parish may not work 5-10 years later. What works in one parish might not work in another parish. The sine que non for a successful parish team ministry is that it is the model required by the local bishop...and also by his successor. Every parish must have a functioning parish council which advises the pastor as to how to lead the parish as the local Pilgrim Church on Earth.

Lay people and ordained ministers have to work together as equals. Everyone should be valued and appreciated for what they bring to the work at hand.

In the earlier days, there were many priests who worked well with lay people. We were blessed to preside at communion services, share in the reflections in the gospel, we came together to listen to each other. There was so much respect for our priests as well.

Over the past 40 years I have witnessed many instances of priests and the laity successfully working together.

Much as I have described above. I also believe that pastors should come forth from the community and not be assigned by the diocese. If it is necessary for the diocese to assign

someone, the parish community should have input into the process and decision.

Within a team effort. The team/community meets regularly, prays together, shares concerns, organizes themselves to meet the needs of the wider community.

Eliminating clericalism is essential for lay and ordained working together. There need not be barriers for this partnership. Lay and Ordained are meant to be collaborators. The Ordained have no one to serve without the laity.

I have spoken above of a parish in which I experienced working together. It means the ordained minister needs to be able to listen and accept the fact that they as ordained ministers might not have all the experience required to make CHURCH in that congregation.

Gospel formation in a seminary or a Catholic university with both matriculating together for a ministerial degree.

A major change in canon law regarding the role and power of the local bishop could result in more collaboration between lay and ordained working together.

I envision them as a team. Although I have no calling to the priesthood, I would be delighted to continue lay ministry and to preach occasionally. I am an oblate of an ecumenical monastery and see ordained and lay ministers working together to serve the community. It's an inspiration; I only wish it weren't 300 miles away from me.

When I reflect on the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, I see two persons with different calls encountering each other, sharing stories, listening intently to each other respecting the brilliance of the other, acting with deep humility and working together to spread the Good News. Encounter, humility, respect, wisdom, appreciation that ALL are called, etc. Suggests that partnerships is the

platform from which all men and women can fulfill their vocation.

There would need to be a mindset of walking together, instead of each maintaining “territory” boundaries or building walls around their specific ministries. No “them and us” mentality. Working together lay and ordained would accentuate the positives, be grateful, respect and trust one another.

In respecting each others’ roles as equal children of God, working to spread the reign of God, living the way Jesus taught, we walk the journey together.

Having a time and a place to try working together. Team building is not an easy thing, but. The process can help everyone who gives it. A try in one way or another
Decision-making power needs to be shared.
Not just providing input but having a voice in the final decision

If priests and lay leaders saw themselves as equals working together having different gifts, abilities, and roles.

I do this now with a lay-based Community. Everyone participates in some way. All decisions are made by lay people. Many lay people have theology training. Priests are valued members of this community and celebrate eucharist. It was worked for over 50 years.

Listening to one another, open to other’s opinions, education for working together

Respecting each other’s gifts and turf. Ability to communicate and work things out together and to show that respect in all situations

Everyone has to be humble and appreciate the gifts of all involved. Sharing of equal power in decision making

Lay people are the Church. We should be working together in all ways. There should be more opportunities to learn about how we can be involved, it seems like a secret. And more adult education would help engage people to be involved.

Getting to know one another, praying together and appreciating each other’s talents and gifts and calling up each other to use their gifts for the good of all.

Ordained seems to always trump lay decisions, even when the decision is outside the expertise of the one ordained. When I was a principal, the pastor hired a teacher without consultation while I was recovering from surgery. I had to deal with terminating her a few months later (mid-year). The priest was very quiet then!

It has been my contention since 1961 when I began my years as a woman ministering in the church that there are so many people of God to be served and situations to be tended that if we could come together, utilizing our own unique gifts, and respecting each other as Baptized Equals, putting aside the craving of “Power”, we could be a Church on Fire and visibly relevant to those who hunger and thirst for the MORE on their Spiritual Journey through the Mystery of Life.

Open meetings that concern important decisions for the well-being of the parish; not merely reporting done from the ambo at the end of weekend Mass. A prepared-in-advance agenda prepared and circulated among the parishioners. Dialogue and discussion, concerns, opinions given respectful consideration. In some cases, perhaps the process of voting on certain issues; clergy respected for their knowledge and experience in leading congregations, with an eye on the experiences of other parishes’ experiences. Listening, listening, respecting, respecting each other. Example in my parish: a big church renovation and the need to choose a statue of Mary to be prominently set in the area of

the sanctuary. A large modern sculpture of Mary was done by an artist-friend of the head liturgies, a large statue of Mary depicted in a very motherly, middle-age time of her life, so life-like and inviting. I love it; she speaks to me in this pose. Yet, many parishioners do not like it, and there is any undertone of disgruntlement. What a perfect issue this could have been for a synodal process of decision-making! Most people do not know how the piece of art was selected, or where it came from!! The rumor is that a wealthy member totally paid for the work. That's great for our worrisome finances, but how was the sheepfold shown any respect? It hurts to think how we smelly sheep have been content to take a back seat.

Openness to laity and new ideas and open to working together not top down

Lay and ordained people do work together on Parish Councils in my parish.

Absolutely can work together. I experienced that many times as a Deacon. I had people work with me in Baptism Preparation also marriage prep. The priest and I put a group of parishioners together to visit the elderly, bring them communion, visit the sick in local hospital and more!

Praying together. Eating together

Lay-ordained "partnership" is susceptible to inequality / clericalism as well. Moreover, in the wake of public scandals over sexual abuse, clerics seem to have closed ranks and distanced themselves from laity. Perhaps the clerics could practice accepting the majority decisions whenever possible, and reserve executive privilege to those things that would be very hard to execute (e.g. Projects that require resources that aren't available), or that violate religious principles (e.g. Changing the wording or marrying those who are not currently eligible).

Eliminate the pyramid structure of hierarchy at the top. Embrace the circular structure of we are all in this together.

There needs to be an understanding that they each bring skills together.

First, the priest has to be willing to work in coordination with the lay parishioners. Having town meetings where everyone's opinion is valued would be helpful. Our parish council at present can make recommendations, but the pastor has the full say in decision-making. Having a priest who values the input of women, and accepts that they are co-workers in the vineyard would really go a long way. Having new priests being ordained from very conservative seminaries does not help. They have a feeling of entitlement that somehow they know it all and are not open to new theology.

Q4. Please add any other comments you may have regarding the future of the priesthood in the Catholic Church.

They must be more open to minorities, especially Latinos. We're a racist nation and the Church (clerics and laity) are racists.

It is imploding and when it does, The Spirit will lead us.

Clergy should be clergy. Not administrator. The head of my local parish actually has the title Parochial Administrator. Get an MBA to run the parish plant and staff. That person does not need to have the background in pastoral care; the pastoral team needs empathy and knowledge of church history and ritual. The person hiring a gardener does not need it.

It needs radical "surgery". Start with the Holy Spirit - how the Spirit works and then put structures around that. Let go of the old wineskins and create a new one!!

To begin with, do not require celibacy for the priesthood

I agree with others that it may be in danger unless it changes and opens up to women and married men.

Parishioners are starving for spiritual opportunities.

Be near to the people, encourage their participation, foster their charisms, learn from them

I am deeply concerned that the all male hierarchy will doom any effort at reform.

It is out moded and our seminaries are also very outdated.

The current newly ordained are being influenced by very conservative views (pre-Vatican II) ideals. It is so disheartening and not conducive to growing our church as it does not appeal to most youth or young adults.

Time to get of the sense of obedience to the bishop!! They are VERY human as we have seen through the abuse crisis. They don't always have the best interest of the Body of Christ at heart. Some are just too Escobedo in civil politics!!

It is my sincere hope that the opinions expressed in these sessions will be heard at the upper hierarchical echelons in the course of this synodal process.

Faithful women are ready now to take the helm and lead the Church into safe waters that will carry us forward.

I am confident and hopeful. At age 84, I may not be around for some of the beneficial changes, but I can support with my prayer, whatever the age. I do believe, since the Catholic US Church is close to 50% Hispanic, that Hispanics will play a big part in the changes.

I don't think we can completely eliminate the hierarchy except to make it more democratic in its structure.

We need to break open the institution of priesthood and go back to the church's origins before the patrilineal culture traits took over. Be more inclusive the Holy spirit doesn't see separateness but seeks the unity of love.

It must change if it wants to remain relevant.

Trusting the Holy Spirit is at work. I do not know what the future will look like. I am unlikely to see major changes in my lifetime. In the meantime, I will pray, work in the vineyard & trust God is at work and we are loved and called to love each other.

As it currently exists I don't think the priesthood can last.

The current model is dying - and that is being covered up by closing churches or merging parishes.

We need to recognize that women, married, widowed, gay, lesbian, all nationalities are spiritual leaders too. Small faith communities are the only answer that I see. I am 80 and will no longer put up with a church that is stifling and not life giving.

Set aside the magical aura of the past and let the Priesthood truly come forth from the people.

There is no shortage of priests. There is a shortage of acknowledgment and recognition of the priests among us.

An overhaul of seminary formation badly needed. More study on human formation. Much more experience of studying, listening to lay persons needed, working with them as equals. Better opportunities for priests to receive feedback from those around them.

The male clergy is going to die out, except for traditionalist young Ones... There will come a day of reckoning, I think!

I don't expect to see changes in my lifetime, if ever. Too many differences between Eastern and Western views in the world.

I believe the future of our church will be severely impacted by the priesthood as the seminaries are forming them now in the United States. The total lack of women's voices is a travesty. Keeping the feminine marginalized to protect priesthood and its celibacy is not from God and has caused a perversion of God's will in the decision-making of the church.

The opportunity to be ordained priest MUST be an inclusive pathway open to anyone who is hearing God's call to take that path, if the Church is to have any credibility in the future.

Thinking they need to start over-seminary formation does not prepare candidates for pastoral ministry

Thank you for this opportunity to express my life's experiences here in SE Florida in decades of pastoral involvement.

1. Open the priesthood to women and allow priests to marry. 2. Open the priesthood to women and allow priests to marry. 3. Open the priesthood to women and allow priests to marry!

I can't stress enough how not having women involved in the priesthood has limited the church SO MUCH. I am male, by the way.

The experience of organizations like Future Church, participation in conversations where all are heard, and working together to accomplish community welfare would be good training for our future priests.

I hope that a willingness to risk creative approaches will enable a future for the priesthood.

Priests should be older and more mature...as with the Jesuits who have men who have much life experience and have lived in the world and have learned the realities of real life and the true struggles that people experience in a world that is driven by things that divide and that do not bring people together. All people...should be led by a spiritual leader devoted to bring us together in this big, diverse and beautiful world God has given us to care for!!

Seminaries must acknowledge Vatican Council II and use the compilations of this council for courses. Bishops must get on board with Pope

Francis and begin to communicate with their people!!!!!!!

Mandate teaching about Vatican II. Its documents and the letters of Pope Francis.

I do believe a priesthood is needed and for many reasons, but women priests, married priests, and gay priests should be welcomed as priests

They need to be better trained, need to be better screened before seminary, longer associate pastor experience with experience working on the margins of society, and not live alone (more so in the rural areas).

Women are being called to priesthood and now answering that call. We stand on the shoulders of those who went before us. We serve in small faith communities where all participate in the breaking of the bread, serving out in the encampments with homeless, working in prisons and hospitals. The church is changing from the bottom up not top down. Men and women are called to serve as single, married, gay or lesbian.

We need to move away from clericalism. The Church must facilitate the ordination of women who are called to priesthood - not to do so is a sin against the Holy Spirit. Enforced celibacy is a crime against humanity. All God's children are created to love and to be loved - it's in the very first book of the bible!

With all the mergers going on, we're not going to have many ordained priests around soon because the good priests are overworked and experiencing burnout. We need to be open to using the gifts and the call of ANYONE who has the ability, the desire, the energy and the Spirit within to serve.

I pray that the Spirit will free us to envision 'a new church' into being' - followers of Jesus and not maintaining 'the institution.' Keep Pope Francis healthy!!!!!

In our diocese a wonderful priest was fired. This infuriated the congregation. What a way to alienate!

Please consider the gifts of ALL members of the church as potential ordained ministers to serve Gods people...so many urgent needs... we HAVE the willing laborers of All ages/ genders/marital status... Look upon them as God does and train and form them...then send them out to a very hungry world.

The swell of lay voices need to form a movement and perhaps the Synod will be a vehicle for change. Thank you for setting an agenda for critical conversations to bring about change.

Two things: we need some community reconciliation efforts to heal the hurts before we can move forward and build on solid loving foundations. And, I'm hoping that what's happening in the synodal process is being done with the involvement of! Many of our clergy! Or we will have a longer way-to-go if we haven't had that face to face relationship building exchange.

Inclusivity. Allowing all those who hear the call of the Holy Spirit to at least be considered.

I think we need to open the priesthood to all who are called, but also reform it so we don't replicate clericalism.

I'm excited about the possibility of future priests coming out of their communities. Also having a means of future priests being held accountable for their actions. If it's not working, having a recognized means of addressing the situation (new work for Bishops?).

Clericalism and misogyny are costing the church the faithful.

Are we ready to read the signs of the times that the clerical priesthood is harming the church. What will it take? Only when laity claim their baptismal priesthood and exert their competence and are discerned for orders, will we grow. I think an underlying problem is a fear of losing power.

The idea of priesthood has to change they have to be a part of the community

I see an inclusive priesthood as the way to go, welcoming all to the role and hoping that everyone will become a priest before they die. The Mormons ordain all male members as priests. I think we Catholics can ordain all members as priests to continue shaping and revealing the mystery of our faith, like the hands of the potter on the clay.

Needs REFORMATION at seminary level..... break the 1950 mold.

The priests will need to learn to let go of their privileged position and the so long-lived role of ingrained clericalism, not an easy task.

The men coming out of the seminaries. . .they come across very rigid. We can't connect with them, especially the youth of our parishes. That needs to change and be restructured. Open the priesthood to woman. ..it's time and been too long in discussion.

The priesthood needs to be open to ecumenical opportunities to partner with the ordained from other faith traditions especially Anglican and Lutheran. Not requiring "reordination" but fully recognizing the Holy Orders of these clergy and allowing for shared ministry.

The Church would do well to return to "gospel living" where we emulate Jesus and his ministry of healing, serving, feeding, encouraging. We are all in this together, recognizing, affirming and supporting the growth of all members of the church - and especially those called to

ministry would go a long way to healing the divisions we experience.

The RC priesthood is stressed, in numbers and in duties. The prohibition on married priests--unless they come in from certain Protestant clergy--makes no sense. Women have served as priests in ancient Christianity; a woman has served as priest in Czechoslovakia, ordained when the male priests were imprisoned and blocked from consecrating the Blessed Sacrament and serving their people. Why not ordain women? Relegating women to only support roles of a male hierarchy does not comport with Jesus' own example of placing women in high regard.

Better, more inclusive seminary training. Exposure of seminarians to the lay faithful, parish discernment groups, faith sharing groups, etc. We need priests but they are not "the bosses" of the laity. They are to serve.

Church needs to rely more on the Vatican II theologians who have taken a less role under Popes John Paul and Benedict papacy. If the priesthood doesn't change, more Catholics in the U.S. will leave the church for other faiths. I myself struggle to find a place in church in AZ and NJ. Still shopping around.

Abolish clericalism!

St. Peter, apostle and first pope was married. Allow priests to marry; Christ had women followers. His mother and Mary Magdalene followed Him. He respected their opinions. Women need to be priests for our Church to be saved.

If we continue to send pre-Vatican priests to our parishes, I fear that it will be a controlling church and not one reaching out and bringing good news to the world!

The priesthood belongs to the people. Of, by, and for the people. I don't know how to do it, but it needs to be changed.

The future of the Church is more important than the future of the priesthood. Look at our Jewish cousins. What has happened to them? Exodus. The future of the Church is in movement, flexibility and flow.

We need to realize the rewards to ourselves by helping others. Start by doing something nice for someone today and don't tell them. Don't do a good thing for the wrong reason

Priest need to be focused on following the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church under Pope Francis, not trying to create a Latin Church under pre-Vatican II. Those who are not with us are against us and are fracturing the Church in America today. Pope Francis needs to call some of these folks to Rome for discipline. Failure to follow the Church teachings should be a cause to de-frock or excommunicate.

Seminary training needs to be a main focus of the synod. Of course, they need to open up the priesthood to all who are called in order for the Church to survive, but you can open up the priesthood to all and then train them badly, and you will still have the problems that we have.

Our community currently operates in a hybrid mode. We've grown 200% with the pandemic - in people and financially. Typically about 25 people are in person in a chapel we rent at a United Methodist church and 50 or 60 windows on zoom (people around the world).

For the wellbeing of the world, we need to bring Christ to a hungry and needy world through Christlike and caring spirit filled people. We need real, authentic, and honest leadership--servant leaders.

I believe we all must continue to raise voices for change. Giving up, being silent is complicity with the status quo. I also believe the numbers of those leaving hurts the financial status of our church. It gives me pain that such good

organizations suffer from this, but perhaps there will come a time when the leaders of our church realize change is necessary to stem the flow of people leaving. But mostly, I want a realization that women are also made in God's image, have gifts, are equally valued by God. So many unused gifts.

Priests live in an environment which hinders personal growth. Most are living by themselves with little human interaction and call to personal responsibility. Priests should be married if they want to be. Women should be welcomed into the priesthood and diaconship. Parish administration should be separated from the role of the priesthood. Did Christ administer anything?

Invite back priests who left to get married. Ordain women as deacons. Allow deacons to marry or remarry. Ordain women as priests!

Serious conversations on the labeling of "secular" and "religious"; authentic conversation on diversity in faith perspectives among church believers that includes hearing and responding.

Church has to be committed to inclusive and grounded in the Vat. II values and beliefs.

Priests.. The world is full of people to whom God speaks. The world is full of people who God calls. Let every human who hears God, have an opportunity to discern what their role is, regardless of gender. God speaks to women. Let them answer the call. God speaks to Gay people. Let them answer the call. God speaks to married and unmarried persons. Let them answer the call. Do not keep the private club of priesthood closed to those who yearn for God. Open the church doors wide- and let the servants in. Peace!

By allowing women & married or divorced men into the priesthood certainly would help the shortage situation. I have noticed more young men going into the priesthood for the Latin

rite more prevalent than going into the regular priesthood. I believe we should not abolish the Latin service for those who choose to participate in the Latin service. I am surprised at amount of people in their 30's who gravitate toward the Latin Mass.

I believe the present "priest shortage" is not really a shortage but a lack of listening to the promptings of the Spirit to reimagine what priesthood could be

Young people have zero respect or connection to monarchical/patriarchal institutions. The Spirit has led them to a place of much broader thinking. They are much more global in their thinking than older generations. Give them a church they would consider being part of! Of inclusivity, real boots on the ground service and open at all levels of call and participation to all people regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, race, etc. Then it will truly be a church of LOVE the way Christ intended.

The Church needs much better seminary formation. Current seminary graduates are rigid, scared of making mistakes, can't embrace diversity, very attached to the Law.

Go back to small communities. Use former churches for education, community groups and activities

If we want a future, we need to make many changes. We have already lost many of the younger people. With the experience of the pandemic, we have lost many more who found more in virtual gatherings than in local parishes.

The priestly formation given in seminaries is in great need of reform. It is an outdated model. Also, the priesthood needs to be opened up to be more inclusive -- not limited to celibate men. That model has not worked too well....

Seminaries could be abolished and candidates could get their education in universal centers of

learning. This would contribute to maintaining the church in the real world.

And it goes without saying that marriage could help in this regard.

I would like to see women and married men ordained for the priesthood. This is 2022 and if we are going to attract and keep young families in the Catholic Church we must change an obsolete mode of operation. Open the window and let some new thoughts in to invigorate the Church. We can't wait we need the gifts so many want to share with others but have been stopped because of gender or marital status.

Married Priests, Women Ordained Ministers and laity participation will tone down clericalism, Sex abuse, money making etc.

Must take on a radically new form that works today. Be open to discerning the promptings of the Spirit. Don't try "to pour new wine into old wine skins." Preserve the fire not the ashes.

Construction of questions in survey very difficult to answer. Need to be broken down into segments. But all the questions are hugely important and capturing the "crises" in our church. We need to see Church as us the people of God. Not the hierarchical Church that we are addressing?

Training in some of the seminaries is pre-Vatican II, need for women in seminaries to create a balance. Often priest training depends on the bishop - where he sends seminarians, married clergy has benefits, eventually women ordinations but more women leadership is needed.

A willingness to "let go" of our past thoughts/hurts, and let God be God, using/accepting the place where we are at present and not losing hope or getting discouraged. Try to bring our hope to our present, and not abandon hope for our future. We may not be alive to see this new church, but I believe, that out of the ashes

of our present state in the Church, as new and more Christian Church will emerge.

I am concerned with the seminarians today. I see them as ultra conservative and taking us back to pre Vatican 2. This deeply concerns me. So, who is responsible right now for the formation of new priests? That needs to be considered, also.

The newly ordained priests that I have met are extremely pre-Vatican and act very entitled. Listen and follow Jesus!

In the immediate future, we need to examine what is happening in seminaries.

The future of the priesthood must change. It is not sustainable. We need to recognize that access to the Eucharist is more vital to God's people than a male, celibate priesthood.

Our hearts are breaking for the pain of seeing the deep beauty and saving grace within the church being squandered thru clericalism, rigid holding on to archaic rules over real human needs. ASK people to tell their stories of their experience of church that led them away. We need ready alternatives for those who can no longer abide the old dying forms.

The priesthood must change. Women priests, deacons, married priests, and laicized priests all must be recognized as ministers of the word of God. We are missing out on so much! Diversity is what is needed in our church if it is to survive. Enough of the clericalism! I'm as worthy as a priest to minister to people and feel that I am a member of the priesthood of Christ through my baptismal priesthood. It seems that the men coming out of seminary today have a feeling of being entitled.

Wish I could be more hopeful. Knowing the Holy Spirit, I believe things could change.

The patriarchal hierarchy needs to be broken down. Fancy dress has no place in today's

world. The Roman Catholic church is not the ruler of the world. Pastoral leadership is needed now.

If only one thing can come out of this synodal process, worldwide, it should be that clericalism be condemned and abandoned, with urgency and radical vision. Priesthood should be inclusive of women and married folks.

The Catholic Church will die if we don't address current culture and issues which affect the young - especially those dealing with sexuality. We have lost credibility.

While the priesthood must change to engage the young, many of the older churchgoers are comfortable with the 'old' style and messaging of the priesthood. The change will have to be gradual and non-threatening, but it MUST happen.

I pray that families will once again nourish children for vocations to priesthood, religious life, and families that are joyous, happy faith community members. All baptized, each with a truly meaningful membership.

Why are not Bishops included in these meetings? How do they know true feelings of the sheep?

Open up seminary training to men women religious and lay people. That dialogue in seminary will enrich every class and every discussion and it will make sure that seminary training is not geared to men only

I am not called to the priesthood, but if today a woman could be ordained, I couldn't see why they would want to be ordained in the current system. It is very clerical. Seminary training has little to give when it comes to how they should be with laity. The clerical structure takes over.

The time is approaching that we will recognize the facts that in the early church

women presided over the feast at the table. Sr. Christine Schenk taught us that from her scholarship and many other contemporary theologians are writing/speaking today to be inclusive in many ways including the priesthood. We all are the church and we must use our voices and actions to graciously but determinedly to prove that.

Very concerned about newly ordained and lack of knowledge of 2nd Vatican Council; super conservative attitude of same

We the church rebels against clericalism because of its abuses. If the church cannot reform itself, it will destroy itself and have to rise from the ashes a new identity. The current model is based on the political structure inherited from the Roman Empire. That no longer exists, and we should not cling to an outmoded mindset, a nonfunctioning model. If the USCCB wants a small, pure, orthodox church, then it turns its back on what the Holy Spirit tried to do thru Vatican II teaching. What a shame if we have to become the church of the present day saints, a breakaway church people that model ourselves on the way Jesus formed community -- teaching, and preaching and sharing meals together.

The church has to include all sexes: women, married men and women as priests first and foremost; if single males are the only priests, over half the population is excluded from sharing leadership in the church. This would significantly begin a reformation in the church. Thank you.

Revised seminary training seems needed -- with more emphasis on Vatican II documents, social justice encyclicals, synodality, the early Church, and the Gospels and less on Church rules and regulations. It would be good for seminarians to do work with the poor and marginalized during their training.

Thank you for allowing a disenfranchised Canadian Catholic to partake in this opportunity!

I only now realize what a privilege and joy it was to have been a part of a Vatican II Church. I pray that the Spirit will enable us to "begin again".

Hoping the Church will be open to the nudges of the Holy Spirit.

Priests cannot be the ALL for parish.

We need new models of priesthood. Presently there is a desire with a number of people to return to pre-Vatican days.

Becoming a real presence to one another

If we continue with an ordained priesthood, loving compassion, acceptance and equality need to be the strongest emphasis in their training.

Priests would have to have a desire to set aside their status and serve as co-equals in the church to make it healthy and whole.

I am the daughter of a Roman Catholic Priest. My brothers and I are living proof that priests should be able to marry. He had to leave the priesthood in order to marry my mother, when he fell in love with her and felt called to want to marry and raise a family. He loved the faith and taught it to us. I am the product of 16 years of Catholic School.

Desperate need for change! For married and women priests and deacons, for liberal as well as conservative young and older folk who want to serve in the church to be able to

I would like to hear what clerics think. They are not happy either.

Definitely need more lay people involved. No reason a priest needs to be doing all the

administrative tasks. They could be done by many others. I'd like to see lay people feel more included in decision-making processes, and in the liturgies themselves. I still remember how special it felt to stand around the altar in a circle with others during the Mass. I've seen this sometimes in Masses at different Orders of Sisters as well. I feel more included when I am with Sisters than in parishes. I think that nuns are the hope of the future. They already have been working hard in the field. They are not properly acknowledged now. They have the prayer skills, the pastoral skills, the "street-wise" experience on the ground and are steeped in Catholic Social Teaching. Women need to serve! There would not be a priest shortage if women, married men, all people could be ordained if they receive the call. At a minimum, women should be allowed to give homilies (sometimes couched as "reflections"). They have so much to say! So many insights. And women would be much better at hearing confessions with their empathy skills. I'd rather confess to a woman for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Women were the healers many centuries ago. I could see women administering the Sacrament of the Sick and other Sacraments. The way it is now, the clericalism prohibits any discussion even by parish priests. One was kicked out of being a pastor in the new "Family of parishes" because he was 66, and the AOC wanted priests under 65. He was doing a great job. Parishes and priests were never consulted. It's "my way or the highway" the way the Archbishop is handling it. And a lot of people, perhaps myself included, are taking "the highway" at this time. I feel marginalized and between parishes, perhaps between faiths too. Thank you, Future Church, for doing the synodality and for listening to us. Breakout rooms both weeks have been wonderful. Good people are in the meeting.

The future priest should be involved with the everyday activities of his parishioners, should spend less time doing paperwork and more involve with his parishioners. The church should hire someone to do the administrative

work and he should spend more time serving the poor, listening to them, giving the sacraments. The priest should listen to people of God and empower lay people. He should avoid being an orchestra man that tries to do everything at the parish.

The few new ones will be hyper conservative, further eroding the intent of Vatican II. Hopefully this will peak early and then true change can occur.

If we do nothing to bring women into the priesthood, we will continue to lose girls. In every other aspect of society, they are treated equally and will no longer accept what they see in the Catholic Church.

While our group recommended trying the many usual alternatives, the one unique suggestion might be HOW bishops are selected. One comment was, "The bishops smell more incense than sheep"

I think it would be a grace for us all to be educated in calling forth from our communities, leaders who are truly faith-filled, human and able to grow in wisdom while journeying with each other.

I am afraid if things don't change. If pastors and priests do not become more "pastoral" then we will not have people joining the catholic church. It pains me that so many of the children of people my age who grew up in the church and still attend...their children do not attend catholic church or are going to other churches. They are not finding a welcome at the catholic church or meaning there. Many people have been hurt by the church by unkind, proud pastors and priests who do not "serve" in the way Jesus wants us to serve. I love Pope Francis and all he tries to teach us. My own pastor is wonderful, thank god, but i have had 40 years of walking in the desert in our church with prior pastors and it is a miracle that I have been able to remain a catholic.

The current clericalism and abuses committed by priests and bishops must stop or more people will leave. The church will die.

Hang in there, the slow work of God is happening as we speak. “Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceedingly small.” Longfellow

I think something must be done to ease the burden of priests already ordained. If not, they will burn out or worse, their mental and physical health will suffer. How many priests are alcoholics because they do not have the emotional support they need to manage the stress of supporting a parish? The institutional church isn't doing a very good job of explaining why the current practice must be preserved. Having a closed mind and heart is the very antithesis of what Jesus modeled. I will say too that even if we had women and married priests, not all have the gift of being able to preach/be a homilist. I don't think you have to be ordained to preach in church.

If married priests, must consider the financial aspect. A larger family needs more salary and housing. Will they be permitted to take an extra job. Would women priests be “subjugated” to the men priests? How would the seminaries accommodate other than only single men?

The Catholic Church will have no voice to proclaim God's Word unless and until the priesthood is based on equality. Cannot God, the potter, call to priestly service whomever the Creator wants?

Priesthood must change. We are losing too many people. The church has many talented women and men who could serve in the priesthood. Priests do not need to be single males exclusively. Our town has welcomed and accepted female pastors at multiple denominations. Christian communities may flourish in different models. We need to be imaginative.

Revise the whole seminary model. What is the role of the priest? How and by whom do the female/ male candidates get chosen? Take candidates out of the present male enclave? Get their spiritual, theological, psychological training in a very diverse environment, out of the hothouse! Help them to understand their role as one of service, and as of one among equals, away from “my” parish. Priesthood is not a calling to a place of privilege or entitlement in society. If we have the courage to go the way of small communities, candidates would need training in facilitating groups and their cohesion within the wider church, and to have their own perceptions and experience broadened as a lens through which to view the world.

If you are trained pre-Vatican you would need to be re-trained. The people need care and mercy, not robots. Pope Francis' vision of the people of God connects with me: we are wounded, we are sinners, we need mercy, understanding, help. Married priests would be better equipped and have better understanding of their parishioners who are mainly married couples. They would better understand divorce, children, dynamics of family life. Priests would benefit from personal counseling so they know themselves well and they would need to be trained as counselors. They need to get into the homes of parishioners and get to know them in their environment. They need to be human and share how they grew up and share experiences from their own lives. Many priests in my experience don't know how to share their own experiences from life. The homilies in my experience are generalities, they leave people empty, not challenging. Oftentimes there is no concrete take-away and the homily could apply to 20 different topics. When will priests speak about Racism as sin, or speak about improving the character of our nation, or speak about marriage, divorce, money problems in life, communication between people, the homeless, the immigrants. Too much silence. They are fearful men; God have mercy on our priests. God have mercy on us.

It needs to be **INCLUSIVE**: women, married. To enable priest candidates to flow from the community. Return to the **SPIRIT** of Vatican II where laity are co-workers in the Kingdom of God. Begin looking at the communities lead by women priests as models for revitalizing the Church.

It would seem that the priesthood cannot be reformed without 1) ordained ministry open to women and married men. 2) major changes to the teaching and training in seminaries, i.e. Psychology of relationships, appreciation of women's contributions to the church, teaching of the mystics, contemplative prayer, to name a few. 3) optional celibacy. 4) community building among priests. (They are lonely and in need of each other's support)

It is time to 'reshape' the priesthood. Truly become a "priestly people" - the "priesthood of the laity". Let God remake us as we listen to God's Voice in this Synod. "Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done?" Says Holy God. "Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel." Jr. 18, 6

Clericalism is a disease in the priesthood which must be eradicated from the root beginning in the formation process in the seminary.

The priesthood at minimal needs major reform for it to be relevant to the entire body of Christ. I favor the elimination of ordination primarily because it signifies that some men are superior to all other humans simply because of ordination. No human is more loved by God than his love for all. God see all humans as worthy and important. We need people to exercise their gifts, talents and skills that God gave each of us to serve each other for the betterment of all.

Have all those discerning a call to priesthood--women, men, married persons, singles, LGBTQ--educated in well qualified universities

with other ordinary students. Their university studies must align with Vatican II and new contemporary insights in theology, scripture, etc. Other programs focusing on preparation for pastoral service, community building, etc., should supplement the university studies and those to be ordained must have opportunities for pastoral service and personal evaluation by the people they are serving before ordination. Root out pre-Vatican II teaching and practices in seminary studies and training and in current parish practices. Overhaul the way bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals are chosen to allow grassroots participation in the selection process. Require bishops and other church officials to provide a lot more opportunities to hear the concerns and suggestions of the laity. Revise the Mass and sacramental rubrics and prayers to reflect a more communal and contemporary understanding of our faith and of scripture and to allow a lot more participation by folks in the pews. In this way the priest will be **ONE with the people, not **ABOVE** the people.**

I am convinced that the Eucharistic "leaders", who are then, trained in theology and liturgy as they assume the role, need to come from the people by acclamation and perhaps they need to be in that role for a set period of time. The important thing is for people to feel that they are known and that they belong to this group.

Let those in the priesthood be humble, not puffed up, and realize that the end game is to do God's work in a way that God intended, whether it be male or female.

I cannot get excited when I hear that the Catholic Church is promoting "The New Evangelization." I see many areas where the Catholic Church, for the sake of preserving the current clerical system, will not address the need for women to be ordained as priests. Maybe there exists a document somewhere which addresses all of the errors which some of the Church Fathers and other clerical writers created and/or promulgated about women.

Women have been portrayed as inferior human beings, who lead others to do evil, who are weak, frail and stupid, and incompetent in ruling or governing. I have never seen an official refutation by the Catholic Church of these false claims. The New Testament promotes the headship of the husband over the wife. Where are all of the accounts of women in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, who are strong, hard-working, capable, wise, holy and zealous for the Kingdom of God. They are also thrifty enough to support Jesus and the Apostles out of their own means. We do not hear about them. We hear about complementarity of women, who help make men better husbands, etc. Why isn't complementarity preached to men? It is a doctrine that would pigeonhole women in subservient roles while the men run the Catholic Church. Why do we not hear preaching on Genesis 1:27? "God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them." (The New American Bible)

Continually ask, what might Jesus do in this situation.

Will wither and slowly become less relevant.

Largely hopeless in our lifetimes.

Be open! The Spirit moves where She may!

Probably not in my lifetime sorry to say. How many are willing to voice their opinion on this and be for others?

Must be in accordance with the spirit of Vatican 2 which the church in the US I feel is retreating from....

They need to re-teach Vatican Documents especially to the young coming into discernment.

One of my major problems, whether or not we eventually ordain women as priests is the powerful hierarchy of the male in the catholic

church. There can be a tendency for them to become like "little Gods."

The future of the priesthood in the Catholic Church is the vision outlined by Future Church.

I do not want to lose the social justice commitment of the Catholic Church but I do want us to use everyone's GIFTS in the best way we can.

Openness to the Holy Spirit.

The priesthood is a vocation just like marriage and religious life. It is no better or worse. It has been elevated to pedestals that are useless and pompous. Get off the mountain and down to where the people of God reside - on the margins and at the foot of the Cross.

I can move around, but parishioners who live with their family in a parish don't have much choice. Some priests think ordination has made them good speakers whereas their homilies are uninspiring to say the least. They seem to have no preparation, no understanding of prayer and the Scriptures, and sometimes just drone on and on saying very little.

Women must be ordained we need them, their leadership potential and their gifts.

Needs to be totally revised along with a redoing of seminaries.

Seems fairly universal - Opus Dei has too much influence. Too many bishops are ultra conservative and unwilling 'to step out of line. The influence of bishop selected by JP2 & Benedict.

We were baptized Priest, prophet, king. We as laity need to find out what that means. We are co-disciples not underlings.

The Association spoken of tonight by Fr. Newton? Is a way to build up a parallel

experience of “church” with priesthood being the ordained and the

Training is key: who is involved and manages a breadth of formators. All will be able and welcome. Discernment has to play a key role. We do not all know ourselves well enough.

The pandemic has taught us about home church and being smaller. We need to respect and encourage each individual’s gifts.

I would like to see woman priests and their talents be used.

I had a dream about the church having a cobblestone floor and stone pews not facing the altar. I think the present church is set in stone.

Easier to become a Priest.

In the future priests having only pastoral responsibilities instead of administrative, financial, facilities management would be a positive. It would free priests to be more available to people and better balanced in their personal lives.

People need to know God is inclusive. Recognize the God Jesus taught to us. Abba, father, loving parent.

If the priesthood does not change, it will cause the Church to die.

It is definite that changes must be made...the more people have input into the changes the more ownership we will take

If the Church does not change, more people will leave. That’s ok because I believe the Spirit is leading and speaking....collapse of the Hierarchal church May be God’s way not ours.

I think it is important to encourage one another in support of this vision for a servant-leadership in the Catholic Church.

Recognize the many features of a medieval structure which are no longer useful or valid today. Fancy dress and exclusive practices do not reflect what I believe Christ taught. Pope Francis has beautifully modeled the simplicity and humility that has been missing.

The new priests are extremely conservative and turn off many. They act so superior. And the current priests are burning out with large parishes with no help or multiple merged parishes with angry, hurt parishioners.

A view that the priesthood (male or female) see their as service not governance.

I want married and ordained men and women. I love ritual and would like to keep that, but it does not have to be unmarried men all the time. This feels similar to the construct that is race. I like the option of hearing feminine perspectives on all things. Some women priests have written beautiful liturgies and changed the whole way one can feel about church.

I loved the idea that we heard tonight of having smaller communities and taking the priest from that community. I am in a parish of 2000 families and one priest. No one person can be available to that many people.

The current system has got to change. Seminaries have to be brought up to date. Priests cannot be imbued with the idea that they are ontologically different than the rest of the world. Priesthood has to open those who feel called including women, married men, humble servants of God and the community of faith.

WOC is on the Synod website now-- Future Church, CTA and all other progressive church organizations should be there too!! Like the one in Ireland (can’t remember the name, but Mary Mcalisse(?) Is part of it. Stop trying to make the church more protestant and stop “dumbing down liturgies and music!” We need a smart church, not a dumb one! Teach all the

documents of Vatican II in schools, seminaries and church settings!!!

Clergy, are you listening to the Holy Spirit? Can you not read the signs of the times and see the ways the world has changed? Solutions for today are not found in yesterday's way of doing things.

It certainly has to change. Growing up the priest could do no wrong. Now I realize they are human with same faults as all of us. They have to come down from their pedestals and be with us

I believe that the priesthood hours be open to anyone qualified regardless of gender, laity or otherwise.

Priesthood is meant to be a gift where people feel included in the ministry they have been given to share. It is meant to validate the gifts of others.

The need to attract more of the young to the Church by not forgetting them after Confirmation. Show we're an all-encompassing Church.

Read and listen Richard Roth who will open you to thinking about the Way beyond the established church.

The Catholic Church needs to allow anyone who is called to the priesthood to be evaluated by the community to assess that calling. The priesthood should not be limited to single males.

The many African priests flooding our diocese need to be invited to humility and less consumptiveness and less pomp and circumstance

It is essentially unanimous as stated by Pope Francis. The young seminarians are (not so) Little MONSTERS! Pre Vatican II. The zoom meeting with the lay seminary teachers.

They are literally TERRIFIED by some of the candidates. The nice young seminarian I met at the conference at Union Theological said he was trying to decide if he was joining a holy organization or an evil one. I gave him a copy of my book, "Men Explain Religion to Me" & a copy of my Canon Law reference on 'legalized' pedophilia in the Catholic Church. Per the Ex-priest in JPII's 'HR' department helping JPII pick bishops in the 80's, JPII had 3 criteria for bishops. 1. Pretty. 2. Unquestioning loyalty & devotion to JPII. Christ was irrelevant 3. ADAMENT no women priests. So JPII scoured the planet for the dumbest, most deprived sadists he could find to make bishops. IT SHOWS!

We MUST encourage and allow women to be deacons and priests, and we must allow for married priests. I am tired of seeing (mostly) white men performing Catholic church ceremonies, services, etc. WE ARE A UNIVERSAL CHURCH. The control males have in our church reinforces the idea that "male is God." And we know God is much bigger than that...the older I get, the more I realize the stranglehold males have on every aspect of our church... It is unconscionable.

Smaller parishes. Married, women, LGBTQ. I really liked Fr. Steve's talk and agree with his vision!

Overhaul the seminaries - or get rid of. Overhaul.

We as a Church need to face the deep roots of systemic misogyny. Our classic concept of a sacrificing priesthood is built on the male priest sacrificing to a male Father God. Officially this is still part of our theology of Eucharist.

I would let time heal the wounds of the present and let the Spirit determine in a few years if it is going to remain, but in the meantime, empower women and men to minister and be far more involved parts of the liturgies, OR do the liturgy together - man and woman....

I saw that in Meighan Holland more than 10 years ago Man (priest) and woman (nun) concelebrating.

I feel that the men that are coming out of the seminary in our area and getting ordained are those that are very conservative and show a sense of entitlement. These are not going to help foster community relationships. Our leaders - whether we call them priests or not - have to live the command of Jesus....to love one another.

The Catholic Church should not restrict anyone who is called from serving as a priest.

Have listening groups of priests to the laity so that they are trained by the laity;
Seminary reform by women and lay persons

Changes must be made if the Church is to be relevant in today's society. The Church must be a community of followers of Jesus Christ, no of the ecclesiastical structure.

A priest, whether a man/woman/ has to be Gospel oriented, up to date theology, understanding evolutionary consciousness about humanity, science and nature, Cosmic Christ

The priesthood as we know it now is doomed. The individuals coming out of the seminaries are ill equipped to work effectively in today's parishes.

Must look at having the option of married/ single priests and accepting women as priests. Should revisit Vatican II initiatives more closely.

I think there should be a married clergy and women priests. I think this would solve the situation. But we now have too many reactionary/conservative clergy and parishioners fighting for pre-Vatican II times. Church Militant in Detroit is a good example.

The Catholic Church needs to allow more of its loving, faithful, caring members priesthood. Women and non-celibate men per se should not be excluded.

If it isn't opened up to women and married priests I fear the Catholic Church's future is in jeopardy

My biggest worry is that the seminary these days is filled with very conservative people who likely will do nothing to support Vatican II. They also seem to. It see a meaningful role for the laity. That is not the future I want for the church

All who the Spirit calls should be ordained men/ women the physically challengedall the baptized have the charisms necessary for the life of the church.

Seminary training must change. Perhaps in a college, coeducational setting. Too many seminarians are trained in a pre-Vatican theology and concept of the priest as set apart.

We need an all-inclusive priesthood and we need it now. Let the Holy Spirit guide us.

Jesus was an outstanding example of honoring women in a time where it just wasn't done. Thank you Jesus. He chose the poor and the lowly the outcast and forgotten to be his chosen ones.

Priests coming from other countries need to be culture trained much better. One month is not enough which is what they get in Canada. I know many long time church people who have left because of parachute priests. They think our church is not clerical enough and so push back to make it like their own country. This is bad. Also newly ordained priests who have picked up on pre-Vatican II ways confuse me. I don't understand why they want to go there. Seminary training has to change. They seem to have no respect for elders' wisdom at all. Perhaps they are just products of their own age.

We need to move forward not backwards trying to fix something or a structure that is no longer relevant. I think my parish would be fine without a priest, we have so many faithful people and people who could lead, guide, help, serve. So much focus on one person with so much power is really demotivating.

It needs to be open to those moved to serve in that capacity otherwise it will die or the Catholic church will just keep losing its members

Something must be done because we are becoming a Church of elderly ministers (both lay & ordained). We have disenfranchised the youth & many older adults because of our unwillingness to listen to their concerns.

Unless something drastic happens, I don't think much will change. Something has to die in order for something new to come alive. Maybe all the present clerics have to go to heaven so that a new order of priestly life can rise from the ashes. Maybe the priesthood has to face what we in women in religious life are facing - the great unknown as our communities come to closure so that something new can rise up. To believe that the Spirit has good things in store for us.

The future is now in that major changes need to start to take place if we want to maintain a Vatican 11 church where we are one people of equals witnessing to Gospel values serving in various capacities of life of the church,

Just to confirm priesthood is not limited to male celibates.

Ordination could include women to Diaconate.

As the Church evolves it needs to be contemporary in all ways. We have had some discussions in our local churches regarding music where some younger priests have changed hymnals without consulting laity.

Being 80 yrs. Old and involved in music my whole life I realize post Vatican 2 might not be considered contemporary yet to go back further to Latin is not productive. It is difficult to minister to everybody and that's where we have/need the Spirit to call, raise up a priesthood that ministers to All.

It is changing. In the 99's I heard that the Pieta was also that of Mother Church holding her dying priesthood. Change, radical change must and will come by the Holy Spirit.

First, we must encourage women to become permanent deacons, the formation of priests must include this sensitivity that all people can serve the Lord. . .

I would like to have more of an understanding of the FORMATION of priests. . . Their studies; their pastoral experiences; the basic requirements of human development.

We keep asserting in creative ways that both men and women can be called to priesthood. Engage more people in sharing experiences of inclusive communities and make it more known. A number of the members of the catholic faith communities are also traditional in their view of priesthood. We need to reach out to them.

Women should have the choice to be ordained, women should be deacons, they should preach, not just read the readings. God is God of ALL, not a set of "chosen ones"

Accept the vocations that are already there, which God has already called, such as women who have discerned that they are truly called to ordained service, and accept those LGBTQ who also feel called to ordained ministry.

It must become more inclusive or the Church will die. Needs to have women in leadership roles including deacon and ordained priest. Church needs to reach out to youth in a creative way. How do the Evangelicals get so many

involved and committed? Priesthood simply needs to change dramatically.

Get women in the seminaries with authority and influence to change the male mentality and manage the presence of women.

A thorough analysis of who are accepted in seminaries and of what is taught.

The sacrament of ordination given to those who are called to the priesthood but also that the priesthood of each baptized person be honored and acknowledged so each person feels their own power and calling as a member of Church

We need to bring back priest who have married but still committed and willing to serve, work on having women join the priesthood, married women also. We need more welcoming community to all who want to serve and do god's work.

Bring the Spirit of Vat II back to the seminary. Don't allow the priest to call us "brethren." Latin is creeping back in - in the service music. Teach how to give a homily

Very conservative seminary so not very hopeful.

If the hierarchy are sincere about the Church continuing to grow, then they really need to work closely with the laity, who have the option to vote with their feet and with a closed wallet. They need to listen to the needs of the young people and to those who feel most disenfranchised.

I pray for change.

Priests should be allowed to marry and women should be able to be ordained
Maybe it doesn't have to be a lifetime commitment to be an active priest

Get rid of any requirement for celibacy. It is a source of hypocrisy. Allow men to marry. Treat

women totally equally....in their discernment to follow their calling....men and women side by side.

I highly respect the Priest that I know and have served with them in many parishes. I see the need to have women in the priesthood and both as Deacons and as priest. I know many women Rabbi's and they are excellent.

It was originally about love, not law. We need to return to that way of thinking.

I think the priesthood definitely needs to expand beyond single males. Women and married folks should be included if they feel called. The focus of the priesthood should be as a servant and ministering to God's people. Priests should not put themselves up as judges of others since we all sin and fall short of the glory of God.

We will be lacking priests very badly in the future especially in the USA. Bringing in priest from other nations is not the answer. Catholics all follow the same Faith of Christ, however, how we do that is much different. African priests, Indian priests, Polish priests etc. - men who have been trained in different seminaries and who's culture is so different from the United States, causes a disconnect between priest and laity. We need to meet people where they are at, not impose and try to change who we are. We have faithful people who can be an asset to the Church if they feel welcomed and accepted for who they are. The strengths of all: women, men, LGBGQ, teens, etc. Can make a better Church when we work together

All who feel called should be ordained...men and woman.

It needs to be open to married individuals, women & men. All are one body helping each other to become our best selves.

I would like the Pope and our Bishops to know that we have no more time to dilly-dally around

fixing the problem of not enough priests. If we do not fix this soon [we might not even have 5 years !] Then the Catholic Church IMHO will no longer exist really except for a few mega-churches staffed by the few remaining male celebrate priests that are left. Never would I have imagined that 50+ years after Vatican II that things would actually be worse ! I also think there needs to be a Vatican lead reconciliation process for the priests, bishops, cardinals to ask for all of our forgiveness for the sins committed against children, women, men by the clergy.

For me - fulfill the call of the priesthood of the laity - share as much of the sacramental role as possible.

Have women priests and women preaching deacons. The majority of the people in the pews, we need to have our perspective included in the life of the church.

It will only survive if it is inclusive and willing to change the current model.

The model as it exists today is broken and perpetuating an abusive church mentally and physically with parishioners. Sometimes as a Catholic, I feel I am staying in an abusive relationship. How can the Church better model the love that Jesus gave to others?

WE cannot continue as things are now.... It's not working... And yet there are places where experimentation is happening and flourishing.

The moral disarray of the clergy, their cowardice in facing oppressive social situations, their lack of spiritual leadership make it imperative that the priesthood be opened up to all those called to it, male or female or trans. God made us ALL.

Need seminaries to assure good candidates to the seminary.

Out pastor wants to build an extension mostly for the KOC to meet, \$250K. Covid hit and put that on the back burner. It is so distressing to walk into a church and feel like I have walked through a time portal. God bless!

I would like to see priests be able to marry. I think permanent women deacons is an urgent need. I am a convert and I feel very much that I just don't have enough exposure to the Church to weigh in on this meaningfully. I think the West is different from the rest of the world, and so perhaps changes will need to be hyper-localized. Germany will likely ordain a woman or 'out' LGBTQ person first. All I know is absolute power corrupts absolutely, and a passive laity in combination with the wrong personalities in the priesthood (combined with big donors behind the scenes, and a Catholic school system that gives trustees a lot of civic power ... In Ontario, the problems of the Catholic school system that is no longer Catholic is huge. I have no solutions. It seems like keeping assets safe is the major concern of every priest. Financial stability and avoiding being sued / risk management comes way, way before the care of persons. Politics has also become very important in Ontario, which in my experience has been toxic.

Remember the saying from awhile ago: What would Jesus Do? Also, it is so important for all to realize that they are loved by God/Jesus.

It must change. At present nothing inoculates Catholics against being adult Christian disciples better than the leadership of priests who are given and adopt the role as the professional holy ones. This convinces generation after generation of Catholics that they cannot or do not lead prayer, bless people, pray with people, speak openly, informally and conversationally with their God.

Work intensely with homilies. Have priests evaluated on their homilies. Set up ining programs for lay homilists.

I am really, really glad that I will be 76 in a few days. I don't have solutions to the problems or answers to the questions. The best gift I can pray for priests and faith communities is imagination. It is my favorite word. We are God's imaginings. It is a very good word.

When you said above "Any person of faith who is called should be ordained", you were not precise enough. Your not saying Catholic.

I think that as the Patriarchal church fades away new expressions of faith will emerge including woman leaders of faith. I read that in 100 years the Catholic Church as we know it will be little more than a footnote. I can believe it.

After twenty centuries of Churchianity, it's time to practice Christianity. En via tu Espiritu, sea renovada la faz de la iglesia...

Would love to see smaller Catholic Christian communities open to all who are called to lead.

We can't continue as we are...there won't be anyone left. Think of the base communities in Latin America: how did they survive even when (because of?) The lack of priests? We are one body.

Until the catholic church outgrows clericalism, we have a long way to go. As noted above open it up to those called by God for this vocation.

The time is now for sweeping change in the priesthood. I just have no idea how the current structures would support or integrate this. They tried in the Amazon Synod, but even where the ministries were already effectively in existence, they couldn't get to the place of accepting women deacons and married priests. Most of the all male celibate clergy and hierarchy today, I think, would not be able to accept women priests, married priests, etc. They would probably see it as a power grab or even worse, a fundamental undermining of their vocations, etc. I think some want this

change and might have ideas about how to help with a transition to a new priesthood, but they either speak-up and are marginalized or quietly go about their business and do not really advocate for change.

It will be difficult, but we must do it.

I am hopeful (but do not think I will be able to see this in my lifetime) that any woman or man who wishes to become a priest may do so.

I had hoped that the Synod on Amazonia would have been the beginning of an opening, a change in who can minister as a Catholic priest. But no matter what the resolutions that came out of the Synod were, nothing changed. I do believe that even if the Pope had acted on them, there would have been enough backlash from many Catholics that might have even divided the Church and created so much bad will. Our country today is so polarized on almost everything, and that applies as well to our beloved Catholic Church. I don't really see any way at present to overcome this divide. I feel sad and hopeless. I personally have no desire to become a Catholic priest, but I have the greatest respect for those who do try. Dismantling the entire clerical structure isn't the way to go because there are many priests and even some bishops who do understand, who respect women and people of color, who have a healthy theology and can work well as United States to build much of anything. We must first save our democracy if we can!

I believe there should be a married clergy. I believe women are equally graced by God and equally called to the clerical life

In the diminishment of men called to the priesthood, God is speaking to us! This is holy time for the laity to lead the Church!

They should be taught to help the faithful grow and expand in their faith not just toe that narrow line. As much as Jesus railed against all the many rules of the Jewish faith. The

Catholic Church took it upon themselves to add rules! What arrogance! The church and its message has to be more relevant or we won't be getting our younger family members back.

The main role of the priest must be to model and call others to live as disciples of Christ. It was Jesus' way of relating and serving people that drew them to follow him and even to suffer martyrdom.

I think priesthood can be a grace and gift to any community if exercised in shared responsibility and sincere discernment of what God is asking of one, rather than a domination model

Include women in all Vatican offices, councils, and local church.

<https://youtu.be/fciqergyflw>

Allow married priests asap. Women ordained asap.

Unless there is change, the remnant will be smaller and smaller. Witness to Christ and His church needs a multitude of people.

Formation of priests in the seminaries must be completely overhauled. Priests in formation must learn current theology. They must also receive spiritual formation, particularly a formation that includes exposure to the spiritual life of a mature person. And they must learn current psychology, which includes an appreciation of diversity of gender, religious affiliation, temperament, etc.

It is imperative that we recognize women and married men as able to serve as clergy in the church. We should start immediately to invite Permanent Deacons to consider ordination. We should invite women to become deacons with the plan to have women priests in a few years. Otherwise, I fear the church will continue to dwindle in numbers and become irrelevant. The people of God need to see God in their ministers. Separate is not equal.

Clericalism has led to a sense of invincibility. Believing/teaching that ordination moves you to a higher ontological level has been sadly detrimental and woefully responsible for many unhealthy men in the ranks. I'm always inspired and encouraged when I meet a priest who knows who he is in the best, well-rounded sense of wholeness and wholesomeness.

Laiety can be affirmed in their ministry of baptism - this would release their charisms for the community. Good leadership is nurturing and affirming leadership. Priests could delegate so much more, could mentor so many more. Most laity don't really know priests, are and mostly unknown to priests.

Discernment of God's will, not gripping onto the existing structure, must be our guide. The discernment needs to be done by lay as well as ordained persons.

More priests, women priests, married priests, men priests are needed, so churches don't have to be so large and small faith communities can be available to minister to the needs of the brothers and sisters of Christ. The clerical system is wasting the gifts of the laity.

The theology of Eucharist must emphasize that communion is not a reward for the righteous, but a healing for sinners. Priests must be formed with the heart of Jesus not just a juridical position.

Accept females into all levels of church authority. Give up the petty rules - example using I or We - making something valid! Building a place for a meaningful community which follows the teachings of Jesus and not necessarily what "Father" thinks.

It has been so evident to lately see the similarities of white male supremacy in our church as it is politics!

It needs a LOT of improvement and it will take a lot of hard work and a long time. Patriarchy reigns throughout the world and is the dominant modus operandi in most cultures. Some of the beliefs I would have could not be considered in cultures that are very traditional. For example, I value and respect the lives of LGBTQIA+ people but some cultures criminalize and would go so far as to use capital punishment for what they consider crimes. We have a long way to go and a lot of work to do.

Let's work together for the glory and honor of God. Let's respect the time, talent and treasures we all are give and not be jealous of one another. Let's build each other up.

The ordination of women is the main issue, requires dismantling the patriarchal culture of the church. Clericalism is a secondary issue, easier to resolve in practice (not doctrinal).

Seminaries have to change to 21st century and stop ordaining such conservative priests who love to wear the long black cassock for one thing. Make sure that pastors are leaders, not dictators. They need to enable the parishioners to take ownership in the parish. Married men and women who have a call from God need to be allowed to administer the sacraments. The ultimate criteria for determining who is ordained should be whether or not God has given you the gifts to be a good priest, not merely "are you a man" and "are you willing to commit yourself to a healthy celibate life"?

The polarization must stop. We are all children of God. Those who would lead us to demonize our brothers and sisters are a brood of vipers. We should not be encouraged to choose a silo of like-minded people. We should be taught how to depolarize and love each other.

I don't see much of a future for priesthood in the Catholic Church as currently structured. When a new priest comes to a parish, the first thing they think is important to share about

themselves is the name of their favorite athletic team. That is so revelatory.

We again need to emphasize more the role of the "Baptismal Priesthood" of all Christians. Jesus Christ is the one and only Christian "priest," theologically speaking. ALL of us (lay and ordained) share in that ONE priesthood of Jesus. We are a "priestly people" (1 Peter) not because some men are ordained ministers, but because Jesus Christ is our priest, our one and only mediator with our Heavenly Father.

Just as I stand on the shoulders of those who were part of the suffrage movement and am grateful to them, I think others will say the same thing of us. The Holy Spirit is speaking; let us keep listening and acting on what we hear!

Jesus didn't say "I am with the church 'til the end of time'. He said I am with YOU! If the institutional church doesn't acknowledge and accept the inclusivity of God's call to God's people, it will just slowly disappear.

Desperately need to end clericalism. Pyramid structure must go. True contemplative stance not only in prayer but in all of life. Priesthood based on call not on false premises of Jesus ordaining men or being married is a lesser calling to holiness or servanthood or sacraments are magical moments which only can be said with exact words or by some holier people.

I am deeply saddened by what I see as parts of our Church being like the Pharisees in Jesus's time. They are focused on the rules without regard to the heart and what Jesus would actually do. Yet I remain hopeful. The Holy Spirit is using this time - parish closings, priests shortages, people leaving the church, scandals, ridiculous law driven behavior of priests who deny the sacraments and hang on wording, the global focus on diversity - to bring about much needed and overdue change in our Church. I

pray the Bishops listen to the people of God and to the Holy Spirit.

I'd love each parish to have introductions to Vatican II & to Catholic Social Justice teachings. That way we'd share same base vocabulary of the dignity of work, primacy of conscience, solidarity, and Synodality.

I am very concerned about seminary training. Three large dioceses feed our seminary. In recent years, some of the newly ordained that I have seen seem to be concerned about what they look like regarding vestments...the more lace the Better. Some even wear the pre-Vatican II vestments. They have not experienced a pastoral year in the real world and do not know how to visit hospitals, preside at a wake or be with people in need. God forbid that they are sent to a poor parish! I worry about our church if this is the future leadership. Some refer back to Benedict or JP II and ignore Francis.

I struggle to hold a long view, and a true hope that God knows what God is doing in our church. I honestly don't see many openings that lead me to believe that change will happen in my lifetime.

Seminary formation must become more attuned to Vatican II. Screening of seminarians is crucial - level of maturity, self-knowledge, humility. Wholesome understanding of church, power, commitment to a spirit of service

We must continue to challenge clericalism. Jesus led the people, but he walked and blended in with them. It is time to change the model. Jesus was not about power but living in loving relationship with others. He was about recognizing injustices and taking nonviolent action. We need leaders and facilitators to move the church forward.

My saying is - there is nothing better than a good priest, and nothing worse than a bad one. But beyond those extremes - its my view that

priests are overworked, are often lonely, have little support to address their own issues, and when assigned from other countries - have many adjustment challenges that are often overlooked. The answer to overwork seem to be increasing the pool of candidates to include women and married men. That not only solves the shortage - but more importantly - adds the gifts of women to the local and global church. Further - it seems a small and obvious step is to ordain women as deacons. To me that is a must-do, right away, and urgent move to make. Finally - the gifts among lay people are profound, and a skill priests should be trained in is - how to empower their congregations

Seminary need to be staffed with good, faithful, men and women teachers, spiritual directors. Seminarians need to have experience with women unless they enter seminary later and have had such experience.

More Women in Leadership roles in the Church if not aloud to be ordained then gather the Folks for Communion service.

Unless the church open up ministry to all who feel called and takes an unbiased assessment of the needs of today's community needs, there will probably be no Catholic Church in the future. Of all my nieces and nephews, most who went to Catholic Schools, only 2 are current church goers.

Smaller church communities would work, but then we need the lay people to have the freedom to lead. A good way to surface leaders both for lay leadership and priesthood is to have discernment by the spirit.

I guess any "set apart-ness" of priests/ministers should come from something along the lines of my comments above - that their focus is always the pastoral well-being of their communities; and not how they are somehow spiritually/ontologically superior. That's killed/killing the church as we know it. There is a tradition that's been communicated

through an institution; and maybe an institution of some kind is needed to help preserve that tradition, the fundamentals of its theology, and how it's practiced. But the character of that institution (as we've known it) needs to change - to become more inclusive; and to work not out of a fear of loss (of power, wealth, influence; any form of loss) and more trusting of our purported faith in the Holy Spirit who will sustain that which is True of our tradition, theology, and practices; in whatever form an institution remains.

I feel that if the church would be less judgmental, we might see more people answering the call. This past couple of years, the church has pushed certain political candidates because of one issue. Yet the alternative was abhorrent. I just can't believe that is what Jesus would do.

I see the churches having fewer members returning from Covid. They are seeing they can get along without the parish. I think we are headed for some kind of revolution to get the clergy and laity to communicate. Our Bishops desperately need to become more informed and open about issues. They need to challenge clergy that our living double lives before these festers into more scandal. Bishops need to study and understand the sexual issues such as homosexuality, transgender realities, and so on. Why can't gay couples commit to each other in blest ceremonies and adopt children? It is scandalous that we leave the ground of need for adoptive parents fallow because we won't allow gay parents to adopt. We show only cruelty acting this way. We need Bishops to learn from science about these concerns. And, for God's holy sake, can Bishops stop promoting politicians who are of one party because that party only suggests it is pro-life!!

Lay people in the Catholic Church must continue to speak in favor of restructuring and change. It is necessary to have leaders, but we must work towards a priesthood that reflects the full make up of the church.

Let's begin such a process NOW.

We need a renewed priestly ministry. The present patriarchal clericalist structure must be replaced with a "Discipleship of Equals"

I don't expect to see married priests or women priests widely accepted in our Church in what remains of my life, but believe that the time will come. As these questions point out, that in itself is not enough. The clericalism must go. The Church is the people of God.

There must be less clericalism and more equality. There must be women included in all areas of the church.

M and more equality.

There is no shortage of priests! What must change is present church structures which excludes women, now married clergy that have been trained in our tradition, and LGBT, that have been trained for ministry.

Through the recent synods, the Holy Spirit is moving the Church to where it needs to be. May Pope Francis and those in charge be open to those promptings and gifts and bring them to fruition.

The future of the priesthood in the Catholic Church is doomed if it continues to only be open to male candidates. Congregations will gather, on their own and celebrate their faith in whatever way they, themselves, deem appropriate - not according to a prescribed dictate.

I have worked with priests that saw law women as gifted and raised them up to be the best they can be and saw them as equals. I have also worked with those that didn't. Once I was asked to leave a diocesan meeting, because I was not ordained, although the topic of discussion was what I was working on in the diocese. I couldn't be part of the discussion,

but I could do the work. Kind of like the CEO asking the FCEO to get his coffee. Priests today are afraid of relationships many times because of the experience of the church around the sex scandals. They have closed themselves off because of their fear of breaking the vow of celibacy. Celibacy most often leads to dysfunctional and unhealthy views of sexuality. This practice as a prerequisite for priesthood has to stop. All candidates for the priesthood ought to spend at least 6 months in third world countries so they understand real poverty.

We are hopeful that the Institutional Church could accept the opportunity to open our access to faith communities.

First step, women religious should be able to become deacons. Next, lay women should be able to become deacons. I hope eventually women will be eligible for the priesthood. I don't see this happening in my lifetime, but I do hope and pray for this to bet the future of our church.

I think there are many reasons for removing the stumbling blocks to ordaining women and married men because it is a divisive condition in the church and between Christian churches.

It is wonderful and challenging that Missionaries are multiple and in the US more prevalent however, some very profound words are often missed when the speaker has a heavy accent. I realize this challenge is more common when the presider is from another country.... However, there are times when an 'eastern accent' is hard for westerners and visa-versa..... One works/prays hard to prepare a message of the Scripture to bring to the Congregation and when the words are not heard (audio system or language) it is a loss for all and the Spirit has a bigger 'job' to provide the listener with a thought to take home and reflect on during the following days! I wonder what other Faith Communities experience in these challenges? Is it our structure? Expectations? Other? Is it more than a

shortage of 'ordained', be they men or women? I believe God will not abandon those who seek a relationship and opportunity to live the Beatitudes, Spiritual/Corporal Works of Mercy so why do 'WE' make it so tough? Thanks so much :-)... On another note: we missed hearing from one in our group who could not unmute. I missed the longer time in break-out. :-(-

Many years ago, I had the opportunity to have a fourth-grade class for their Religion class. I asked these 8 year old children what would they think if the Church ever decided to have women be priests. I hardly had the question out of my mouth when Todd raised his hand and said, "My Mommy is as good as my Daddy, why not" Out of the mouths of babes truth is often spoken.

To be a vibrant church training for the priesthood must be revamped. I like the thought of closing all seminaries and educating interested candidates in colleges and universities.

Seminaries must be totally changed to meet defined criteria that are open to NO clericalism

It will get worse before it gets better. It's a shame, because I am a product of Vatican II (early years with the Latin Mass; junior high with the switch). If we had built on Vatican II instead of going into this nostalgia (which few of us experienced, we would be in less of a problem. Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict were fearful of losing power.

Please let it be stripped of clericalism, patriarchy and closer to the Vision that Jesus taught and showed - where all people are equal and service is allocated on gifts not gender. Seminary education needs radical change: open to all genders and married or non-married; contemporary theology and scripture studies and spirituality must be included in the formation; the People of God should have a role is discerning who are the candidates for their community; Ongoing Formation

and Supervision and Spiritual Direction are crucial for priests All through their ministry - and help given to continue their formation. Priests need to be taught to ask for feedback and humbly receive it from the people among whom they minister. (Many only happily receive compliments and are resistant to constructive criticism even gently given).

As a woman, I'm grateful to have this opportunity to be heard.

The priesthood in the church is not healthy for the men or for the people. Something has to change to build a healthy "system". We need to see our leadership in the church as building the people of God.

Who said that only men could be priests? Mary was the first priest.

Definitely allow women to give homilies & have married priests.

Must find ways to clear the scandals of the church and a new way to invite people (men, women) to respond to the call.

The Priesthood is in big trouble. Clericalism is rampant and women are not respected and "Father is always right." Much needs to happen.

The seminary in my archdiocese is sending out priests in cassocks. The priest in my former parish has told the parishioners that they may not raise their hands during the Our Father, as only the priests are allowed to do that. I am scared about the future of the priesthood in my archdiocese. From what I heard during my break-out session, I am scared about the future of the priesthood in my country. One member stated that we need to go way back to the time when we were church gathered around my kitchen table and your kitchen table. Another member stated that we have been praying for vocations for decades and that maybe God's response to us is, "I have answered your prayer.

I have sent vocations many people. You are just not listening to anything except "celibate (but not really celibate) male."

There is a need for more priest so that every parish is served. I am concerned that many young newly ordained priests are conservative. Many young people are leaving the church because of clericalism and scandals.

I think the archbishop of Cincinnati would prefer we were pre-Vatican. I work at a catholic school where we get the newly ordained priest and as an example, he told the first communion children last year that he was so sorry that he had to give them communion on their tongues rather than in their hands. Note

The men coming out of seminaries are very conservative and not acquainted with Vatican II. This was the basis of the Synod. We must be pastoral care persons as family members, lay people, and priests and deacons.

I had a dream. I entered a darkened church, for attend Mass. Dark with shadows cast by a few people. Candlelight I look for a place to sit. The priest at the altar, I assumed to be the usual celebrant, but it was not. He moved the front pews at the left, looked at me, and asked me who I was looking for. I told him I wasn't looking for anyone, but I was surprised Father P wasn't celebrating. (Father P PRAYS the Mass....well loved.)

He said, "Listen! This is YOUR church. You need to make know what YOU want at all levels. We are in service to YOU on all levels."

I awoke, thinking about the upside-down accountability. That we receive priests by appointment, not interview and discernment. That we have bishops assigned from thousand of miles away, instead of them emerging from our own geography, by our reflection and prayer. This is OUR church...we are "the salt, the light, the see, the yeast."

Breaks my heart that some of us are without access to the sacraments, because Rome does not recognize the overriding message of the Gospel and history, in favor of a male celibate priesthood. We're ready for change.

Expand the diaconate to include women. Expand the functions of the deacon beyond witnessing marriages and baptizing, to also providing the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick. Expand the priesthood, to women, the married and make efforts at the repatriation of those who left the priesthood to marry. And do it now.

We pray for equality in our petitions but not when it comes to the priesthood. This seems hypocritical.

Let's get rid of the priesthood... Jesus wasn't ordained. Let's have parishes that are formed for community--to do the work of Jesus. Rather than follow rules and regulations. More importantly -- "priesthood" has been tainted by the sexual problems of priests, bishops, and archbishops (and the previous pope). Lately, the concept that people were NOT baptized because of one word -- is insane. That has more recently tainted 'priesthood'. We need young people to be involved in our Catholic Church. We are going to have to radically change to get them to want to be a part of our communities. We MUST CHANGE. Ordination is not going to do it! Women, married priests will have to deal daily with the Institution of the Church. The Institution/laws/rules must become minimum--the work of Jesus needs to be our priority. THANKS for these wonderful sessions.

Church structures too often follows conventional thinking and organizational behavior.

Less administrative business, more personal interaction. Present to the people, being aware of issues that parishioners have. Not in charge of fundraising. We need parish managers. The

priest needs time to be with the people. Much more lay involvement needs to be encouraged. In our diocese, the role of women is being diminished.

The current formation model where we isolate young men in a seminary environment needs to change. So sad to see young priests freshly ordained and already clericalist in their ways. We've got to do better. Let them be formed among the people, so that they don't forget that they are one of us, not above us. An apprenticeship model.

Unless women lead worship services and offer pastoral care the church will remain deprived of the gifts of women. I remember the first time I heard a women minister preach. I had heard of women who felt called to priesthood and believed that they should be allowed to preside at the Eucharist. But hearing the sermon by a pastor of another faith, I was struck by how impoverished the Catholic Church is by denying the gifts of women who are often the backbone of parishes.

So many are being called to the priesthood by the Spirit! All those women, priests who left to marry and married men should not have their calls be denied by the patriarchal church.

I think that when I listen to Catholic Women Preach every weekend - it gives me hope. I hear such prophetic preaching there that I never hear in my own parish. I think that allowing qualified women, lay and vowed, to preach at Mass is an essential first step in changing the future of the priesthood. I think that pursuing vigorously the ordination of women as deacons is another essential step that can be taken. As far as women being ordained as priests, if the beginning changes are made, the Holy Spirit will guide us in this area that maybe we can't see as yet. Some say that women do not receive the call or vocation to priesthood - that that cannot be. Yet, I have known women who truly feel called to the priesthood and have prayerfully pondered this

for years. Has the Holy Spirit made a mistake with these women? We need to rely much more on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and less on the rules and decrees of the Institutional Church - especially doing things just because of Tradition and that it's always been done this way. The Spirit blows where she wills! Priests, women or men, need to be chosen from communities because of their Christ-like lives and qualities and their instincts to be Good Shepherds and deeply prayerful people, not because they will obey all the rules or would be good administrators. We need priests, women or men, who are steeped in the mercy and love of God as it pertains to ALL.

Ordain women, married men, and transgender people! I think there is a way to rid the church of clericalism and still have ordained priests but huge changes in education and understanding would have to happen.

There are plenty of holy women and men who could study for the priesthood. Here, instead of learning Spanish in the seminary, our young men learn Latin so they can offer Latin masses -- against the will of Pope Francis! Many have returned to the phrase, "Pray, Brethren..." before the Consecration and even when reminded how offensive that is to more than half of the adult congregation, still insist that it's their choice! Such arrogance! I think the young men learn how to perform the rituals but they don't look for opportunities to minister to the very sick or elderly. They wait to be asked. Jesus was often asked but he was very aware of his surroundings and met people where they were. Most of the lay ministers I know are married. If a spouse agrees to contribute to the support of a lesser-paid ordained minister, I see no problem with that. It was the princely elite that caused the inheritance issue in the early church. I have known two former priests who found work teaching or in business but surely they could have been used by their parishes to complement the ministerial work of the parish. I have worked for a parish and know there is a lot of ministerial work in homes that is not

done. The People of God aren't just those who can get to mass every week. Sometimes, they need to be sought out. In the small group, the wife of a former priest said he is often called -- when grass needs to be cut or a collection-counter didn't show up.

The whole notion of "priest" and the title, "Father," needs rethinking and revisioning.

Women must be admitted to the priesthood along with married men and women.

If the church doesn't take a different view and perspective on who is "eligible" to be a priest, we are going to continue to see a decrease in active church membership because in many parishes the message and service has lost relevancy and isn't resonating for people of all ages. This is resulting in Catholics either not practicing or looking at alternate religions that are more welcoming and accepting on all levels.

Can go with #4 - Clericalism has no place in the priesthood.

If priests fail to seek out the faith experiences of their parishioners and what enriches their faith the priesthood will cease to exist.

Holy Men AND Women priests are not opposed. The present clerical impasse to women in leadership must repent of its way so that all can live together in peace. Sexism remains a profoundly unhealed wound in the church. We have a LONG way to go together. Let's get moving.

Unless the U.S. bishops change their stance toward Pope Francis I believe there will be a schism. Having been active in lay ministry after Vatican II for more than twenty five years I can no longer support what the Catholic Church has become today. I belong to a group of 13 Catholics, some who still attend mass, that meets every two weeks in our homes. Our leader is a former nun with a masters degree in

theology. We come home fed spiritually more than we do attending mass.

Seminary training needs to be completely revamped.

I participate in an Emmaus community which is a refreshing alternative to the current Catholic Church service.

Seminary education must evolve to include that which we value to encourage openness and change. New theology and Christology essential to lead change.

Hoping for women & married.

Like Fr. Steve said in his presentation, I wonder what the Church would look like if the people had a say in who the priests and bishops are and let the laity work side by side with them. I worked with a priest who treated me as an equal and it was a wonderful example to my students. Small communities just might be the answer.

Women have a great deal of Education and Training. I think they can be Deacons or Priest.

There are so many talented lay men and women who would serve with loyalty, love and enthusiasm if the ordained priests would learn to trust them as equal. That's the key!

I feel we had an inkling of the right of it in the 70's. I attended house Masses in Lindsay Ontario by priests of the Scarboro Foreign Missions that were open and welcoming to all the neighbors and friends, and they came. They were joy filled and followed by an evening of food and music. These priests laughed more that scowled and were seen a human by those that attended. Our new crop are sour and serious, the take themselves too seriously and hold others to a burdensome degree of disapproval and legalism.

I feel the seminary process should be more along the Jesuit model. I also feel there is room for a less than life commitment to the priesthood, or at least a discussion.

Need to make major changes in seminary education, role and power of Bishops.

I believe the Catholic priesthood is trapped in a kind of "mystique" that almost borders on a kind of idolatry that the priest is ontologically different than a lay person. I'm convinced these results from both our prevailing theology of priesthood and the Canon law structures that define the selection of priests and their ministry.

My experience is that many younger priests are bound to the law not to the spirit and they offer people the right and wrong , not the love and compassion of the Lord

Equal education for women and men, training should be given to those who feel the call to serve the Lord.

The formation of young men needs a serious infusion of the realities that are the consequence of systemic abuse, of sexism, of racism, and of systemic injustice. Leaders of communities need to understand the WHOLE picture, not simply the one-on-one relationship of pastor and member which should be a compassionate one; but in terms of their role as a leader in a societal context. Like all of us, they need humility, to recognize their limitations and remain grateful to a God who loves us all.

I believe if it doesn't change drastically, more people will not be returning.

We may not want a priesthood.

Complete accountability--Bishops Archbishops Cardinals--end the cover-ups--end moving clergy from one place to another when in many cases they should be defrocked.

I am concerned that a number of newly ordained priests have little lived experience outside of usually enclosed seminary walls, except perhaps for a semester of pastoral experience. It seems that a number of young men are grouped together rather early in their lives to live, pray, and study together in a setting that little resembles the world at large, the world in which they will be expected to minister to an increasingly diverse population. Luckily, the admission of boys of high school age into the minor seminary has largely been abandoned. However, even the admission of men of college age into a seminary is too early in my opinion. Young men of that age are usually still struggling, at least to some degree, with their identity, their sexuality, and their beliefs. I believe that men need to be at least 25-30 years old before they are accepted into a seminary, into a program that explores a possible vocation to serve the people of God as a priest. If women ever get the "official okay" to enter the priesthood...and they should've long ago..., they perhaps would perhaps not have to wait until after their college years, since women mature sooner than men, by and large. Also, I would recommend that bishops send their men...and women...to seminarians located on urban Catholic colleges, not to remote monastic rural seminaries. I also liked the idea that the local Catholic community itself invite men and women to explore a possible call to ordination. Vocation today seems to have a very individualistic flavor, between God and the individual man...or woman...only. The local Church community should have more voice in their seminarians suitability and vocation. How exactly to effect that I'm not exactly sure. Perhaps our non-Roman but Catholic sisters and brothers might have some experience which we could consult.

Efforts need to be made to help priests who come from foreign countries understand the culture of their new country.

I know many young people who simply don't understand how the church continues to refuse to ordain people called by God. I had been happily a Catholic catechism for many years. When I felt called to ordained ministry I was confused. I felt as if I had to choose God or the church. I was accepted for training in the Anglican Church where I could offer mass etc. Then my husband a traditional Catholic reacted so badly as he thought I had chosen church over him (with only a celibate role model of priesthood) that I had to take the decision to leave. I haven't been in a church community of any denomination since. I continue to pray and contemplate. I am on an ecumenical Jesuit based course which gives me support and I attend mass online. My heart is still heavy 15 years on. My husband now regrets all he did and said but he didn't even attend church at that time certainly doesn't now.

I believe that the priesthood plays a valuable role in the life of the church if we believe in a sacramental church. However, we need to address the understanding of who is called to priesthood. To image Christ one needs to be human but not necessarily exclusively male or celebrate. We will be a more human and complete church if priests can marry and the requirement is not gender specific!

I feel that Vatican II needs to be put in place. That would be helpful. In our diocese, at this time, the bishop is certainly pre-Vatican II. His reaction to gays and lesbians is not that of Jesus. Women are not respected unless you agree with him.

Just look at the abuses & murder in Ukraine while the clerical/hierarchical HYPOCRITES stay silent or running off at the mouth abt. Embryos. Right to Life? Really? Force women to have babies so clerics can molest them! This 'priesthood' must end if there is to be any hope.

Outreach and willingness to listen to our young people. What do they envision? Acceptance of

the equality of women and concrete measures to make this happen.
How do we as the people of God bring peace to this earth?

The Catholic Church is dying in the U.S. without changing the requirements and practices of priesthood, survival is neither deserved nor possible.

I believe the priesthood should be reserved for people who can singularly and successfully dedicate their lives to living the life that Christ lived.

We need to look to Jesus and how he related to others. We need to put aside theology that separates us from one another. We need to walk with our fears into the unknown trusting that the Holy Spirit is with us and guiding us to the place where need to be.

Even the language of this survey is focused on priesthood as something separate, something that needs a special "ordination" ... Focus on priesthood of the laity and take that seriously. Eucharist should be available as Food for All...

In our Archdiocese we are seeing a big step backward away from VII especially in our newly ordained. The seminary has changed its approach and it is producing much more clerical focused priests. The retired VII priests are being used, because we can't cover Masses w/o them, but they are not in the conversation. Parishes are being brought into "families" where one Pastor has 5-7 church communities to cover. At the same time the lay staff is not being replaced.

Women should be allowed to be deacons and priests. Priests should be allowed to marry.

Hoping it will become gender neutral. This works well in other denominations and has historically.

There is no good reason for denying ordination to anyone based on sex or marital status. There are many examples in the gospel of women and married men serving in priestly roles. Peter was married. Women were apostles. If married Episcopal priests can convert to Catholicism and continue to serve as priests, what sense does it make to not allow other married men to become priests? The question I always ask about any decision I make is, "Would Jesus do this?" In this case, would Jesus deny the sacrament of Holy Orders to women, the only sacrament denied to them because of their sex?

All the people of God share in Priesthood.

While responding to this questionnaire, I felt new life and energy in creating such communities.

The church has to stop turning people away. Stop using the sacraments as weapons. We are ALL welcome around the altar. Get back to small community gatherings. We don't need cathedrals - sell them and give the money to the poor.

While I would be in favor of ordaining women and married priests, I personally would not necessarily seek ordination. I do appreciate being treated with respect. Ordination is a privilege, not an elite club. People have asked why I did not want to be ordained and I say that I wouldn't want to be spending my life on ministry, but they are quick to point out that I work as much or more than the ordained. I feel a calling and am committed. When I change jobs, I seek another ministry position, even though I am capable of doing other work. The Church is my calling. It has been since I was called 26 years ago, even though I had a good marriage and children. I am proud that I have been influential in 6 young men who went into the seminary (2 are still priests), 4 deacons, 9 lay ministers who have been formed to lead the Church. We must respect each other's calling as being sacred.

The Church will die if they keep refusing to ordain anyone who is not heterosexual, single, and male.

It needs to be inclusive.

Pastor needs to share responsibility for parish life with the parishioners.

It is all about the TEAM There is no I in team.

The celibate priesthood has become an idol, and we appear to be sacrificing the church on its alter. We are without meaningful pastoral support, and we are losing all of our young people. No pastoral time to do outreach. Our retirement age priests are being run ragged. The tail has wagged the dog just about to death.

I think we need to look critically at the sacraments and explore ways to expand them. For example, reconciliation can be a holy encounter for moving towards deeper union with God and examining what are our blocks in our spirituality, but when it is only male priests who can administer this sacrament, we are missing the opportunity for spiritual mentors who are not ordained to also bless mentees with God's love. I think there needs to be more emphasis on how we all show up as priests whether we are ordained or not. For example, I am a young artist, and my creative practice is essentially a sacramental process of giving birth to the yearnings of my soul for God. I engage in baptism, reconciliation, Eucharist, each time I show up to paint. I think it is important to see artists as equally important spiritual leaders. I want to see more of an emphasis on going deeper into our spirituality and the relationship to religion. I want to make sure we honor a diverse ways of worshipping in our tradition, and trust the priesthood not to monolithic, to not be solely concerned with preserving Catholic identity and truth.

Female and married priests seem to do very well in other congregations and we will need

to move this way if we are to continue to have enough folks to minister.

Change has to come and soon. We need a return to the vision Jesus had for the church.

I am not sure that the priesthood can continue to exist as it is. I believe we need to work toward a much greater sense of community and community responsibility.

If the priesthood continues to be limited to men, particularly very traditional, hyper clerical men, I see a dim future in a vastly diminished and impoverished Catholic Church.

Because of the number of people who are remaining in the Catholic Church and willing to offer be informed and offer assistance like Future Church, I believe the priesthood Catholic Church in the Church will change and be improved.

The priesthood may have become an obstacle to the people's faith - and souls are in peril!

Thank you so much for today's presentation. The priest who spoke had some GREAT ideas for our Catholic parishes!

The priest clerical model should have been

There are so many with so much to offer who have left the Church, it is not clear that they can or will come back. I have tried with my own children and their experience with priests -- who they had no respect for, who they did not admire, and who they found un-Christian -- makes it seem unlikely that people will return.

Like many others, I believe the current priesthood, bishops, cardinals, dioceses, etc. -- the whole "system" is very outdated and probably must implode (and burn) so that the Spirit of our Living God -- New Life -- can emerge and make all things new.

Change the seminary training to emphasis on prayer, service and working with parish communities.

So many qualified women are erased in the Catholic church today are not allowed to lead Bible Studies, RCIA, etc. Because the deacon will do it. It is painful for us.

Be open to change. To possibilities!

Appreciated the thoughts from Fr. Newton and the suggestions for small communities of 100 or so families.

Due to a lack of priests, we will continue to close parishes. The church may be forced to ordain women and married priests.

Training must change from the 1964-1970 experience I had & involve more pastoral areas. Screenings should weed out those without a pastoral spirit. Some very dysfunctional men are ordained.

Opening the ministry to women and married men. Establishing the maturity of the candidates and giving them a quality education that includes an understanding of Vatican II and the changes needed to implement it and bring the church into the 21st century Please let me know if you can't open the attachments.

Celebration of the liturgy with "full, conscious and active participation" is getting lost. Younger adults and youth are being drawn into a more individualized concept of worship and I see no prompting from clerical leadership to enlighten people otherwise. Most young adults have not even heard of Vatican II, the impact it made on our Church and the reason why we worship as we do...in community being sent forth as Christ's disciples. Some priests can become too focused on rubrics, doctrine, dogma, rather than how the liturgy can shape our lives. I see people, including some clergy who are confused between what is tradition (big and little T) and traditionalism.

How are folks being shaped by priests with a more devotional rather than a liturgical bend in celebrating the Eucharist?

In our liturgical celebrations are we following the letter of the law to the detriment of the spirit of the law? Literalism seems to have crawled its way into some priests' interpretation of the GIRM. Do assembly members understand the Mass as more than a gas station where we fill up with Jesus and that's it? Do they understand the Liturgy of the Eucharist where we take, bless, break and share nourishing us for discipleship?

Do they understand that we are to be transformed as well as the bread and wine? Do we really believe our mandate to be bread broken and wine poured in this world of opposing camps? How can we be Christ like in this volatile culture? Would Christ buy into the individualism so prevalent now or into the acting for the common good?

Are we hearing homilies about this understanding of Eucharist or are we being given a lesson on doctrine and dogma with no application to present day life? Perhaps a review of the prototanda to the lectionary by clergy might be helpful.

Polarization in the ecclesial world mirrors what is going on in the secular world. People seem to hear and see through the eyes of right or left only, with no middle ground. In this culture even homilies about gospel values are being politicized. Folks need to be catechized about the best kept secret of the Catholic Church – the tenets of social justice as well as what it truly means to be Eucharistic people in the real world.

Priests are human and sometimes need an intervention for therapy. This must be done sooner rather than later, not only for alcoholism, but also other dysfunctional behavioral tendencies resulting from pride, e.g., an inflated ego, fear of relating, of being vulnerable, or a sense of empowerment. It is time for the windows to be reopened, it's

getting stuffy again. Perhaps the Holy Spirit is telling the Church something...it's time to take a look at how the Church forms priests and how they help them to grow as a person.

If the current conservatism, pre-Vatican II mindset continues, people will seek spiritual support outside of the Catholic Church. We are only as good and as welcome as our church leadership. The change must happen at multiple levels; Catholic Schools, Seminary, Dioceses, and churches in concert. The support of all holy orders is essential.

As the first female lecturer at a Malawian seminary (two years in 2018-2019 (recruited by the Sulpicians), I see the absolute need to have females involved with the training of seminarians. Sadly, No other female has been located to be a part of St. Anthony's Seminary. In that situation, a congregation assists with the kitchen, running the farm (YEA!!) And being responsible for the accounting, etc. This is a norm in Zambia (I was with two other projects there...with Jesuits and the Franciscans). By the way, I am a mother, grandmother and a great grandmother.

Celebrate liturgy as Eucharist as a meal, gathering of equals, priests receive last, no kneeling to receive, more participation, not one man show but gathering of equals participating in a meal together, go back to early church.

Candidates for the priesthood, male and female, must be educated in Life Management, including domestic violence, all forms of sexual/physical assault, including victims of clerical sexual abuse, unjust canon laws and relationships. Promote a Christ centered church open to all.

Unless we are serious about reform, we are going to see the complete dismantling of our beautiful faith tradition in the United States.

Priests do not need to be handling the "running" of a parish, for which they were not

trained. Let them do their pastoral work. They should not be the "final say" in everything having to do with the community, everyone else being advisors. There needs to be a consensus among the community members, especially those who actually care.

I am very hopeful for a much more inclusive priesthood with a real emphasis on serving the people of God and no emphasis on titles and privileges.

It will have to change. It should be made up 50% female and male, who work together. Male priests of the future can be married or not.

The situation is extremely complex. With fewer young men going to the seminary we must collectively come together to find a solution. We must do this with open minds.

I still see a role for the priesthood in the Catholic Church but it needs a TOTAL MAKEOVER using a lot of lay input.

While this comment is a bit off topic, I believe the Catholic church needs to greatly improve on how they treat and care for our nuns. They are committed and assist the community/ church greatly but left to 'fend' for themselves, esp. As they age/retire.

At a certain point if you have been called by God to priestly vocation it is You, whether you are "officially/ ritually ordained in a ceremony or not. You BE a priest by the way you live and are present. Lacking one thing as did Jesus , being. At. The "table" of rule making. And authority BUT Jesus just did his healing. And loving anyway with his band of "non priests" Some of us are doing. The same but often "under the radar . What would happen if all that were "outed"?"

If the priesthood continues as is, I have little hope in it or the future of the church.

All priests regardless of their orders work together in unity in the building up of the Church.

We need priests. All kinds of priests to serve all of God's people.

Women are treated as lower class members. They should be given equal access to the priesthood and other positions of power within the church.

The recruiting of young "celibate" men who are immature in every way (psychology, sexually, emotionally, spiritually) with no leadership skills and separating them from their peers and laity for their training- and filling their heads with notions of ontological changes coupled with misogyny and homophobia has spelled DISASTER for my Diocese (Austin TX) - NEED HELP

We can't put new wine in old wineskins. It is important to restructure the entire system into new wineskins before a new more inclusive priesthood can be established.

Most priests around here are white, but there are a growing number of non-white priests - many of whom are refugees.

If called, discern and seek the opportunity to serve others. The inclusion of called laity, married or not extends serving actual needs!

It needs to reflect the needs of the people. Married women and men, unmarried women and men, priests that desire celibacy and those who desire to be married -all should be allowed to pursue priesthood if that is their calling.

There has to be a change and soon...life in the church must not continue as is...we are losing all our young people

No one begins preparation for ordination (if we even keep it) without at least a college degree and 5 years of work/life experience, and proven

interest in and ability to minister to others. Abolish seminaries as we know them and train people in co-ed settings. Open up ordination to women and married men (we already let in transfers from other churches). And there are more ideas.

The scarcity of priests is the work of the Holy Spirit trying to wake us up to the fact that we have refused to welcome 90% of the church membership to the priesthood. The answer is right before us, but the powers that be are too concerned about preserving a faulty understanding of who can serve in the priesthood.

Fix it or abolish it!

Will there be no more Vatican II priests being ordained from American seminaries? What are our seminaries teaching? Why the return to "clerical" garments, robes and lace by the newly ordained? They seem to signify a more esteemed status and "power," and a church of the past, rather than the Church in the World.

How do you eliminate clericalism? It's a deeply ingrained attitude. Unfortunately it will take time before current priests with that attitude are replaced with new candidates of a different mindset.

If they don't change soon, there won't be a Catholic Church to be a part of.

I think it needs to be open to any qualified person and be servant-minded.

Sadly as priest continue to wear their cassocks and make proclamation that alienate the people they make themselves irrelevant in the whole scheme of eternal salvation. They are remnant of the past that need to die so a creative and risk-taking church can arise.

Priests should be allowed to marry and women should be allowed to become priests.

Celibacy leads to self-containment, failure to relate to life and women in general.

To act in persona Christi is not gender specific, in my opinion. Once we enlarge our vision as a Church, the supposed shortage to the vocation to the priesthood would lift.

Priesthood is a human invention that is no longer working as it is currently done. Priests and laity both are not served well. I don't think the institution of priesthood can be reformed from within since power never gives up power voluntarily in human history. Reform will have to come mostly from the demands of laity.

It must stop limiting the sacraments to celibate males. End of story.

There will be no future priesthood if the Church doesn't allow women and a married priesthood.

The church's sexual problems would disappear, or at least be minimized if priests were allowed to marry and allow women to be ordained. Now it is a boys club who want to be regard as wise men. It doesn't wash!

Thank you for giving me a voice.

Best education for priests in all areas. How to work with women and respect them. Lay leadership. Pastoral

People are needed who have ability to adapt to the people & communities at hand, and flexibly celebrate in ways that are inclusive (language and participation), and to honestly share and empower skills in all people. The church ministerium needs to cleanup its act and be truthful, honest transparent.

I think there are some people already to step up for consideration after a guided discernment process. The "team" priest has to be a priest open to it.

Heard from a priest recently, "Remember, we are the Church" And he was not referring to ordained priests, but the whole of Christian community.

With a stroke of a pen...women could become priest or deacons!!! That's my hope!!

I don't know about women priests, but I do know that our current clergy need to be more inclusive. I have seen priests struggle to give coherent homilies, meanwhile religious sisters and lay women sit in the pew willing to give reflections that more than half of those present (given that more than half of those present at Mass are female) would understand.

Need to stay focused on Jesus and His mission. Not pet projects.

I fear for the future of our Church because we seem to be losing the wise insights and reforms which were beginning as a result of the Second Vatican Council. From what I hear and have seen, we have already lost so much of this wisdom because it has not been adequately taught and instilled in seminary training for at least a couple of decades. Our church will suffer because of this lack of balanced and open spirited formation.

If dioceses keep going back to the ways of pre-Vatican 2, future is dim.

I believe that the priests should be allowed to be married. In the Jewish community, I saw how the married rabbi (men and women) were able to relate more to the community as equals and they were also able to really love more the people, especially the children.

Clericalism (power over others) must be replaced with brotherhood sisterhood.

Bishops must recognize the problems.

I wonder who will be left to turn out the lights!

The admission of noncelibate persons to ordination, the support of these persons/families by the church would significantly change the nature of relationships in the community. Celibacy should be a choice not a mandate. A priest needs to truly know the life of his/her people.

The priesthood has lost its legitimacy. We don't need strutting peacocks, or child abusers.

It needs to change to include women and not discriminate for any reason.

Not grounded in new-testament - would be no loss.

I have experienced the mutual respect and support of shared ministry. Priesthood simply cannot be exclusively for men, excluding the life experiences of more than half the church. But women should not simply make ourselves fit into clericalism. By assuming additional responsibilities of leadership in every level of church life, women can bring our own wisdom to what is currently a rigid and ineffective style of leadership. Priests may be folks who take A role of priesthood while also being in a career or job that helps with their own, and the local community's financial needs and generosity. Priests need to come from the communities that nominate them. Melchizedek may have been a priest forever, but that doesn't necessarily describe the needs of faith communities in the 21st Century.

We are desperate for women in the priesthood.

I believe that if someone wants to be a priest they should be able to do that. I also believe that a priest should not have to be celibate and be able to get married or have a partner. We all know that many if not all priests are celibate.... none of us were born yesterday. Priest have sexual encounters and so do nuns. They have for years. So, by not giving them permission what does that solve???

The future of priesthood would be enhanced by ordination of married men and inclusion of women. Previously ordained men who left to marry should not be discounted, they could initially be allowed as deacons. Celibacy should be optional with possibly marriage being allowed 5 years after ordination.

Radical changes which I have mentioned will take time and will cause major disruptions in the laity and priests. But it is time to work on it.

We should ordain those who are gifted and called to ministry. Limiting ordination to a particular gender is suicide.

Ordination does not confer managerial talent. Those who are gifted managers should lead administratively.

The sacrament of Holy Orders is discriminatory.

We need women in leadership.

Let God do the calling!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The decreased number of young men entering U.S. seminaries bodes unfavorably for the Church. Doesn't anyone connect the dots?

In general, as I look over my life, I see what the Women of the Church have done in bringing our Hospitals and Schools and Social Services to the PEOPLE. On the other hand, although there are so many "Good" priests, priesthood connections as pedophiles seem to have destroyed the image of Church which in reality is more than the priests, but because of their hierarchical insistence, with their tumbling off pedestals, so too has fallen the credibility and respect for this role of priest. With Pope Francis seemingly attempting to resuscitate the V.C.II and awakening us to the Holy Spirit's Presence through it all and birthing Church with our identity of Church being the People of God all of whom are called to Holiness. Despite the priesthood we have come to

known of late, just maybe this Church can be resurrected as the Laity are invited to hold fast to the Robe of Baptism and function with the clergy as “priest, prophet, ruler”... Holy one, visionary, and servant... Equal partners in the universal circle of love.

Without a major change of the ecclesial culture, we will have more men using the vocation of the Catholic priesthood as a means of escaping real life, or as a means of hiding out. How is it that leading members of our hierarchy are still preaching celibacy? What has been taught in our seminaries about human sexuality? Changes must be made. Women must be on an equal footing and respected by male clergy. Marriage and family life must be encouraged, but not at all required. Male and female clergy must reflect very authentically racial and cultural diversity. Their calling by the Holy Spirit must be honored. Why must it take so long for these changes to be implemented. These decisions do not hinge on doctrine and dogma. Or on Biblical exegeses!!

The definition of priesthood needs to be more clearly understood. It is not exclusive to single men, that is not what that terms means and the sooner we understand that the better chance we have of being the vibrant, living church that God calls us to be.

I think it must be opened to all who feel God is calling them. I don't know how the seminaries are run but I think they must change. I know there must be many being called to the priesthood who have gifts to share but the preparation and discernment must be led by the Spirit!

The Bishop of the Diocese that I live in sent out a letter to all in the parish saying there “ is a very real possibility that there may be only one ordained priest to serve the Catholic population of Nanaimo in the future “ (city population 91,000). We must face the reality that lay ordained partnerships are ESSENTIAL

The church cannot survive as a closed, male autocracy. Time is running out.

It must change. No more “old boys club.”

The priests don't all seem to understand how to interface with their community. Better teaching in the seminary seems lacking.

COME HOLY SPIRIT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Priests who have an inflated sense of importance are harming the church in all its aspects. Some priests seem to believe the only role of parishioners is silently filling the collection plate! They are not modeling Jesus!

Celibacy should be an option.

Priests need training as parish administrators.

Priests need to understand that the parish belongs to the people! They need to stop changing hymnals, upon their arrival as pastor, unless the people want the change. They need to stop closing down the groups and guilds and food banks that people rely upon.

When women were allowed to lead the Communion Service, surprisingly, people liked it best. Before long, only deacons could lead the service - and only in an emergency. We were not surprised.

Prayers and more prayers by all are deeply needed.

Thank you! Blessings to all!

The current hierarchy won't change it. I'm kinda done hoping for change from within.

In the US, inclination to priesthood appears to be declining. The diocesan priests tend to be aged, overworked and stressed out. Ordination of women would address this problem. Meanwhile, priests might do better if they turned over managerial tasks to lay people who

do a professional job of it. Budget allocation for staff may pay for itself in better financial management and higher donations in response to transparent accountability to donors. (No, we don't believe you when you claim that none of "our" money is going to pay for sex abuse claims/awards.)

The priesthood existed prior to the Christian Era as it says in Acts "Many priests converted." However, I believe many of those priests were actually women who came from converting pagan faiths at the time of Christian early beginnings. Patriarchy got in the way. Patriarchy must be the first to go, its time is at an end. But, if women do get ordained, staff meetings cannot be spent discussing 48" candles vs. 60" candles.

When the last priest in the last church turns out the light, our faith will live on without bricks and mortar. WE ARE THE CHURCH.

I am so tired of hearing about a priest shortage. The Holy Spirit is calling us to open our hearts to a change in operational definition of who is eligible to be ordained. It isn't a true shortage; it's a restrictive mindset that excludes many talented and called persons because of their gender or marital status.

Change is desperately needed. Come, Holy Spirit!

I think I said enough.

Completely transform the seminaries. They are men of God but not God!

The handling of the clergy sexual abuse is itself a heinous crime, complicit in the on-going suffering of its victims.

Come down from your pedestal. Priests are not closer to God than anyone else. Religious clerics are not closer to God and men are not superior to women in God's image / view.

OUR STORIES

Session III

Women in the Church

- | | |
|---|-----|
| Q1. Share a time when you were disappointed, hurt, or angered by the treatment of women in the Church. How did it affect you? How did it affect your relationship with your community of faith? | 1 |
| Q2. Share a time when you felt empowered or hope regarding the role and status of women in the Church. | 53 |
| Q3. What is the most pressing issue the institutional Church should address immediately regarding women's full participation/equality in the Catholic Church. | 86 |
| Q4. What is your personal hope and dream for women in the Catholic Church? | 108 |
| Q5. Please add any other comments you may have regarding women in the Catholic Church. | 129 |

Q1. Name a time when you were disappointed by the treatment of women in the Catholic Church.

When the church continues to bring missionary priest to this country with all the problems that men of other cultures. When we have so many who are called and are gifted.

Religious sisters not treated with same respect as priests and excommunication of woman who ordained as priest. Made me conflicted and sad

Cannot be allowed to preach in our diocese.

Pastor fired a very talented, popular and personable female pastoral associate. I believe he was jealous of her: he needed to be he "top dog"

It distresses me to see only men as priests whenever I attend mass.

(1) summer 1968 when Paul 6 banned contraception against the advice of a lay group.
(2) pope Francis saying to the European parliament that Europe was like a grandmother, old and no longer fertile.

It amazes me that we still have women in the church.

I determined that I would speak out more.

I was provincial administrator of the sisters of mercy when sr. Agnes Mary Mansour was asked to leave her appointed position as director of social services in the state of Michigan - even though she had been affirmed in that position by the archbishop and by her congregational superior - very discouraging to learn the church has no system for collegial decision-making and/or problem solving - strengthened my resolve to reform the system

I was very hurt by the apostolic visitation of religious women. Because we were not getting many new vocations it was assumed we were doing something wrong. This was very hurtful after centuries of working with the poor and marginated.

When denied the opportunity to give the homily at mass. It was frustrating and alienating.

The intentional suppression of women's voice in parish life doesn't honor baptismal call or respect the many gifts that women bring to our communal life. I am angry and disappointed on my own behalf but also on the behalf of all the young women in my family and every candidate that I have stood with at the baptismal font or at confirmation.

The clergy should take a page out of the sisters book and begin to practice active listening skills. They should also take a hard look at the many other denominations who have ordained women.

Too many to recount....in general, bishops who promulgate!

I was outraged by the doctrinal assessment of women religious.

Scripture proff in the seminary described simple matters a suitable for women and children. (about 1959).

Getting no response from the bishop at a request to discuss women priest issues.

I ignore the hurts and continue in a progressive mode

As a qualified, certified pastoral associate, I and my views were frequently challenged and/ dismissed.

I am so tired of repeating the struggle for women respect with every new priest

that begins work, of having to defend the indefensible injustices of the church, now also defending pope Francis

Our previous pastor challenged my views and forbade the circulation of a report prepared by a group of parishioners regarding the future of the parish

Today. Hearing deb's opening comments angered and saddened me. Women have been the doormat of the catholic church. It must end and full participation must be given or the church is a clanging bell of hypocrisy.

I don't have a specific event, but the refusal of the church to even discuss women as deacons or priests is very disappointing. I have been in groups and heard priests/bishops/cardinals questioned why can't women be priest and have never heard an answer that made sense to me. Even bishop barren who is very well spoken, just answered the question to say women have always demonstrated a leadership role like Mother Mary and he also named some women saints. That was not answering the question.

While preparing for a retreat and while presenting a retreat I was yelled at and berated in front of a group by the head priest. I ended up leaving that church....when this priest would come into the office, the entire staff (all women) were on pins and needles due to his sudden outbursts.

Also, I worked as a church secretary for 5 years. The priest was very chauvinistic and was not receptive to any of my ideas or thoughts.

No women except on Sunday since covid

Disappointed by the lack of possibility to follow what I believed to be my call to ordination

My wife as a teacher of art was very unjustly fired from her teaching position in our catholic parish school - simply because a few 8th grade

girls were "shocked" by what abortion really was as they were decorating luminaria for the pro-life group. She will probably never recover from the experience and I am deeply saddened.

Vatican response to LCWR

I was really angered by the investigation into women's communities and the intent to bring them into "line" with the institution. At times I feel like a marginal catholic in the church but very much on the border.

I can't think of a particular occasion, but I know so many committed and spiritual women who would be wonderful leaders in the church and a denied the opportunity to do so.

There have been many things over the years, but what really struck me was the case of Roy bourgeois. After priests who molested children were not defrocked or excommunicated, he was, for supporting women's ordination. That's where women rank in the institutional church - less rights than child molesters.

In Chicago, when after the death of cardinal Francis George, the new archbishop did not meet with the lay ecclesial ministers. When parishes in renew my church who were being consolidated needed administrative help, unqualified (male of course) deacons were being called in to help and women were not asked, although many were far more qualified.

Over the years I've seen the humiliation and pain that my female parishioners have been subjected to just because of their gender. These are faith-filled, intelligent and very competent women who could serve as wonderful priests and bishops and at the highest levels of parishes and in the catholic hierarchy.

As a religious not to have someone from the community give the homily at profession/ vows/ etc. Also, the incessant preaching about

abortion and not the right to life is so harmful and near-sighted.

Archbishop said no more women sacristans or altar servers. We had been sacristans for years. Hurt that I couldn't be a deacon. No woman could be a deacon even though they were <the> spirit and drive in the parish. Hurt to see other women even more worthy than myself constantly put aside or pushed back.

I am saddened when I consider women who are called by God to a service denied them by the patriarchy of our church. Such patriarchy and clericalism diminish the richness of our lives and denies the reality of an inclusive world.

Was on committee re. Clergy abuse, painful to hear how the church dealt with those harmed, re. Cover up and inability to hear and care for abused

Most of my 50+ years in ministry have been spent in education. However, I spent 3 years in parish ministry. During my last year, a newly ordained priest arrived who had power over the pastor. He distained and ignored us women. Consequently, one priest, the dre and I left. Oddly enough, he did me a favor because I ended up in a high school where I worked for 33 years. However, it is sad for our church that one male cleric should wield such power!

I have not been directly affected - thank heavens. But I am saddened and struck by the stupidity of not recognizing all those women could contribute to the priesthood and leadership of our church.

Current pastor largely ignores women. I was eucharistic minister and he never acknowledged me or my service

My whole life I was hurt by the institutional church by the exclusion of women from all the sacraments.

Two sisters were the pastors (administrators) of our parish. They did great work. New bishop and new ordinary pastor come in. The work is basically dismantled. One sister retires and the other returns to her mother house.

Oh, so many times. When the woman theologians were censored for their writing. When the religious sisters were censored, the sisters did so much for all of us. I had the same experience of Deb when the preacher at the pulpit was only speaking to the male.

I felt called as a child to speak the truth of god's love for all people but serving in the church for almost 18 years was very difficult as a woman of faith. Priests with whom I served ranged from very traditional to more liberal. I still minister within the marketplace of life while maintaining my love for the eucharist in the community. Faith is beyond the institution with all its patriarchal and clerical dimensions. Hope for women is urgent as the discrimination makes people run from the church.

We got a new bishop John Meyers and he removed all the women from the diocesan positions of leadership. My mother had been the director of the RCIA in our parish and we were all upset and knew just how much we were losing. It was horrible and depressing. But we have found ways to be creative and participate... like futurechurch!!!

Have observed paternalistic attitudes at times, and also anger when a woman continues to advocate for support of a parish ministry and does not accept no. Relationships must be the heart of parish life, not obeisance to hierarchy. The structure is withering and does not serve the body of Christ. We need to let go of what does not build up the body.

When I was in vocation ministry, I invited the vocation director from the diocese who was a priest to be part of a vocation support group that met monthly for women and men. In his

talks he was very male oriented and seem to forget that the vocation group was meant for women and men. It was very difficult to talk to him about that as he just didn't see it - that was very discouraging for me.

I studied in the pastoral formation institute and heard lecturers, teachers, wisdoms of amazing women. They brought the gospels to life, life today as we live and know it. Yet the priests never acknowledge qualified women, they are not allowed to preach the gospels. I do not believe that God requires a penis to have his gospel messages proclaimed.

Talking down to the women from the pulpit and making them second class it seems. Just did not seem right

Omg, the gag order on the national group of sisters, under p. Benedict, disregard for the commission on women-one with Phyllis Zagano - their findings were not mixed, it makes me want to leave the church and find a faith community that embraces the full gifts and inclusion of women.

Ignoring the strengths and talents of women who are very able to mentor, lead, share faith, proclaim the mass. Women have much more strength and ability to do anything a priest can do, plus nurture and be ready to meet people one on one in matters of faith. We are the nurturers of society

A pastor I worked with (in the 1980s) had decided he was not going to renew the contract of the liturgical musician on our staff because she "didn't have the education suited for the position." she had been on the staff for 19 years, and a member of the parish. It was his first year as pastor there. I was angry enough at his actions that I told him I would not like my contract renewed if I had to work in an atmosphere that so disrespected this woman. He hired a young man friend to take her place.

During a very difficult time in my marriage, I sought out pastoral counseling from our pastor. His advisement was that I work harder to be a better wife, to support my husband's role in our marriage. Subsequently, when I petitioned for an annulment from the church, the tribunal of our diocese the first review of my deposition concluded that I needed to focus more on the marriage and make it work.

When the bishops change the wording of the mass back to exclusive language after having about 10 years of inclusive language, I felt it as abuse and left the official church. I have since joined a small community of progressive Catholics where we do everything without ordained priests.

The investigation of catholic sisters in the U.S. by Rome. The laity beyond catholic sisters were a tremendous support. The investigation made catholic sisters more cohesive and rooted in their faith but certainly disillusioned by the official church. Another instance was when Rome threatened leadership in a community over their pastoral work to hear how women viewed tubal ligation.

The dismissal of women seeking ordination is hurtful, not for me personally but for all those who do not have priestly ministry because of shortages. There are many people, men and women, that the spirit has gifted. For example, hospice nurses might do anointings. Lay people can preach. I think if god gives gifts, the community should call them forth and send them.

I was part of a lay faculty of women in a small catholic parish where the pastor abused his authority over us and verbally misused us, demanding sometimes awkward signs of our "obedience." we appealed to our diocesan leadership, but they did not believe us. Many details will not fit here, but as a result of our voices not being heard, we resigned as a group of 8 women teachers. We hired a sister who was a canon lawyer who urged us to write our story

with affidavits about all our experiences. We sent a copy to the nuncio, our own bishop, and to the Vatican, we did not receive a reply from anyone. We continue as a strong wisdom circle of women, supporting others and helping each other to heal and grow in spirituality.

I refuse to be a victim and recognize the full appreciation of the rightful role of women is a growing edge in society as well as in the church. In the 50's and 60's most women could not do the many things they are doing today. It took courage and working against the grain, a bit of rabble rousing, legal battles and taking the first step to gain our rights in society and it will take the same thing in the church. I do not feel disappointed, hurt or angry. I feel the time has come and we need to take our mantle of power, not wait for it to be given to us. The church never pronounced a decree on anything until we have already been doing it for 100 years. In the meantime, we can assume the pastoral authority, given to us by Jesus Christ, exemplified by the women in the early church. The church will accept ordination of women in our lifetime. Of that I am certain.

New priests come out of our seminary with pre-Vatican II views of women. One in a Hispanic parish prevented women from serving on the altar, protest from parishioners followed. I wrote to the priest with my protest and copied my pastor about the role of women and the universal Christ.

Not feeling heard or listened to. I left that parish after 10 years and have found an ecumenical parish.

Studying for the diaconate with my husband at our seminary; wives were encouraged to attend everything...classes, workshops, liturgies and retreats. Husbands and wives together studying and learning together, drawing closer to God and each other. Then the men were ordained and women were...nothing. Seemed to not matter for anything; make your own way. When the bishops came to the parish for

confirmation ceremonies, there was not enough room at the table for the wives at lunch in the rectory afterward. Only clergy were invited. "no room at the table..." is how we felt?

The lack of inclusive language renders women invisible. I have been recently disappointed with its use during eucharistic liturgy, especially hymns chosen for mass. I expressed my disappointment to the presider and the incident was excused. At the time of the liturgy, I disconnected from "presence." and my enthusiasm for participating in this particular liturgy has since waned.

We had well-trained lay preachers for several years until it was no longer allowed. One of the women was the best homilist I have ever heard. Our community lost the insights of this lovely mother of 5 sons. It was a travesty.

When I left religious life in 1972 and enrolled at a local parish in Philadelphia, I volunteered as a CCD teacher. They rejected me because of my background. My brother-in-law suffered the same rejection of using his talents in a parish when he left the priesthood. I simply moved on with my life. I did eventually marry and my children are baptized Catholics. Recently I am questioning myself why we did that but I am fully committed to Jesus and the people in my community.

Incredible anger sadness disappointment that this church that I love so much could value holding onto power as more important than freeing the gifts of over half of its members. If this isn't sin what is.

A number of years ago at mass, a man was being ordained a deacon. The priest spoke in a very patronizing way about how his wife was supporting him. It was disgusting. I hadn't realized before then that women couldn't be deacons. I got up and walked out of church down the middle aisle.

When the Vatican wanted to investigate women religious, it angered me even though I no longer belonged to a congregation. I was glad that the observer sent to the Adrian Dominicans found their daily schedule so spiritual.

Attended soa in years past. Two times there were women priest celebrating the mass = each time with a male priest but it was clear that the woman was the main celebrant. After the first time, the Jesuit priest who had taken part was not allowed to say mass anymore.

I heard a woman say that she felt called to be a priest but was laughed at by her pastor. That was very demeaning and hurtful.

I have to say I have been more disappointed in the people, than the clergy. I find many of the men more conservative than the priests in Canada. However, bishops now leave much to be desired. They have become inaccessible. Also, foreign priests are not up to our cultures and often push parishes backward. But people have become strong against this.

When I was 27 my husband left me with a 16-month-old and filed for divorce in a no-fault state it turned me against my faith community when the priest said the church could not condone that yet I could not stop it.

My friend was silenced and dismissed from her position because she raised questions. It was hurtful and caused divisions.

When divorced being rejected. Thankfully finding support, but not through the parish. Started to drift away but found religious sister communities with support.

Just now listening to experiences shared. It's always anger producing. I believe I'm beyond it weakening my faith. But am continually led from anger to frustration with the present situation in our church and its slow movement to change.

In a parish I realized the pastor wanted control of my speech, so I spoke up further and moved on. A new opportunity came up

In my work, there is a great disparity in recognition and in value. But in my younger life it was no different. Things have not changed and the sad thing is that we were taught "to give it to god" so that whatever the issue, we were doing what we did for the greater glory of god. With the shortage of priests and lack of mass times available, now is the time for a restructuring of how we serve the people in our church. It will take a mind shift on the men who are our current leaders and "servants".

Too many to count. The church's stand on my friends who are not heterosexual, the church's preference for the dignity of the male, etc., etc. When I left my husband for multiple problems and was told it is possible I will not be included in my church community. This year, "7 non-negotiables" in our diocese for the synod process; instead of listening to all voices, there is a cardinal- directed process on his agenda.

Haven't had personal experience but have heard of the pain of others.

When I was teaching in a catholic school my husband and I went to the pastor to let him know we were going to get married. He was a former Jesuit priest and I was a former sister. He immediately excommunicated me, fired me on the spot and said I was a moral scandal to the parish. This was my first time being thrown out of the church that I love so much.

History of parish in last 30 years includes male clerics abusing youth and stealing from parish. These priests were removed, but replacement priests just carried on the same old roles without apparent growth. The diocese missed an opportunity to empower women. The pastoral assistant was a woman who was very pastoral and effective but she retired. I think she would have stayed had she been given more

power to lead. Parish is 2/3 Hispanic and the assistant pastor is Hispanic, but his English isn't good enough to be promoted to pastor. However, several Hispanic women have all the gifts needed for the role of pastor.

In 2012, I was quoted in an article in the Philadelphia inquirer supporting women priests. Months later, I attended the funeral of a friend's mother in that parish. The pastor refused me communion. After mass, I questioned monsignor. He said, "it's apostasy!" I explained I came to stand in solidarity with Mary Beth, whose mother had died. In effect, I was ostracized by the leader of the faith community I had served for decades.

A sister of St. Francis who worked at our parish was put in a position of having to leave. A new priest felt that he could not work with her. He replaced her with a music minister but no one who could assume the jobs she had done. I lost a friend and mentor who had really helped me grow and stretch myself and many, many relationships were like mine. I did work with Father but I just felt the way she had been pushed was unfair. No recourse, though, in our church!

During aids epidemic in Africa when diocesan congregations were asked by their bishops to make their sisters available to priests as sisters would be "safe"

I have not experienced a specific incidence. But, I am so disappointed that the church fails to acknowledge the ways in which women could make this church so much better. My favorite saying is that "we are playing with half a deck".

I recently returned to my home parish, where I used to be a cantor. The organist (male) refused to allow me to return as a cantor and the priest supported him. There have been issues in the past between the organist and myself where the priest has been able to make him see reason on things, but this time the priest turned against

me. (I can sing!) There was no discussion, no option for me to appeal. This is patriarchy and clericalism at its worst.

Generally, the whole women are not allowed to be priests angers me. It is offending the holy spirit to not allow those called to priesthood to be ordained.

I am always on guard for language and actions sanctioned by the pastor that is offensive to us as women. When a woman is chosen to speak at the homily time and the priest feels he must speak first so no one will accuse him of allowing a woman to speak I am deeply offended. And when the woman speaks with love and compassion and gets a standing ovation and the priest cannot even say thank you to her, I am deeply hurt that our church would allow such silent abuse

We (catholic sisters) were replaced by the bishop in our 80-year ministry in a poor, rural, black community without our participation in the decision. (Occurred in another diocese not my present diocese)

My congregation has a cardinal, and it is a very large parish. He is ultra conservative and in no way willing to advance the role of women in our diocese, even in small ways. I have stopped attending and frequently participate in online services from other faith and occasionally the mass.

It saddened me when a community member who was active in the church wanted to be a priest. It was not possible. However, she was ordained by another church. Her gift was denied us.

I am disappointed and get angry when I hear it defended because Jesus had only men.....except for all the women he worked with as well!

Celebrant stopped sermon to tell women to leave mass and take babies outside.

Lots of parallels with the institutional church's treatment of women and bipoc community. I have stepped away from what I considered my parish family, mainly to avoid offending pious folk!

Always have recognized women. It's been an injustice that women have been treated unjustly. Male dominated church was not god's intention. It's time to change that and to listen to the spirit guiding us.

I experienced a pastor that did not appreciate the role the women in the parish had. Personally, I was put down for my ideas on several occasions. At that time, I backed off from some of the activities I had been involved in. I have since become more involved again. I will not take a leadership position again.

I am female. I was a eucharistic minister of the cup and was pulled away at mass in front of the congregation from my station next to another woman, minister of the host, because two women were not allowed to serve without a man with them. My whole experience with the church has been mixed. My brothers were encouraged to be priests. I was not encouraged to be a nun, I was told I'd be a great housekeeper for them. Still, there is a great holiness present in so many Catholics, men and women.

There have been so many-when I and a religious sister from Uganda were asked to leave the church house we rented and asked to leave our ministries within the parish when a new priest came in. I was a volunteer! No review took place or a new position offered. The other time our parish priest gave up working with a family wanting to become catholic when he couldn't address their issues of sexual intimacy leading to possible birth (she had had a horrible previous birth experience). The family was breaking up because of trying to follow antiquated rules that left women out of equation on sexuality

and birth control. I was their RCIA director. They left and fell off the grid.

A priest refusing communion to a woman who he felt was excommunicated because she was ordained a deacon

My dad, a catholic priest who left the priesthood to marry my mom, became a stockbroker. Many years later, he worked for the archdiocese of Philadelphia as an internal investor. He put the archdiocese into blue chip stocks when the Dow Jones industrial average was at 810. (33,845 today). His health began to fail, and he wanted to teach someone to take over for him. When he went to the archbishop to see if he could train me, he said no, because I was a woman. He asked "why not one of your sons?" That hurt. It could have been the opportunity of a lifetime for me to learn from my father. And help the church. The archdiocese needed a big successful investment portfolio when they had to pay out millions in settlements to victims of sexual abuse by clergy. The sexism must end. The misogyny must end. The glass ceiling must be broken. Women must become full and equal partners in the leadership of the church in all dimensions.

Angry over sexual abuse of women. Disappointed at the disregarding of women's voices, experience and values. Hurt when women belittled, ignored

The daughter of a then associate member of our religious community married a woman. Both of the women, being nurses and in the health profession adopted children with disabilities and extreme health challenges. One of the children died and was refused burial in the church because of having lesbian mothers. Another of the children was refused for first communion because of the status of the mothers. Such decisions and actions cause me extreme anger.

I was abused by a priest in confession. When I reported it, I wasn't believed and he went on to abuse many more women.

Distanced me from church. Never completely trusted church again.

I was fired from my job as re coordinator because the pastor wanted a religious friend to have the job. He told me I was a mother and needed to stay home with my children. The diocese stepped in and made him advertise the job, have an interview committee, who recommended me and he put it in a letter that I did not get job because I was a mother. Obviously, I had to deal with great resentment, loss of income, and had to change parishes because I could not worship where I was not wanted.

When a new bishop in the diocese, slowly dismantled the center of pastoral life and ministry. This was a collection of 8 people, mostly women, working to bring about the vision of the church of Vatican ii.

The 'investigation of religious women' an affront to the church; the local laity stood up to support the religious women!

Just this past Ash Wednesday when the parish learned that we would only have mass at nine am and none at seven am for working. We have two full time priests and two-part timers. When I questioned the pastor, he said not enough people attending. During lent more than fifty attend. I was most upset and told pastor about people across this country who are so upset by priest who don't want to work and do their priestly job that only they can do. Pastor not happy when I confronted him. I have ministered in this parish for thirty years I will continue to work with people even though I am 83.

Working people

I had been breaking open the word at weekend eucharists on a regular basis. A new bishop was appointed to our diocese and immediately forbid me to share the word at eucharist. His reason: I was a woman.

When the Vatican was trying to discipline the communities of nuns. I was furious. They are the ones out with the people...serving, helping and being the face of Jesus, not [putting medieval hats on their heads and parading around like kings. I could not believe how they were treating the sisters in the trenches. I had less respect for the hierarchy and wished that we had more voice and influence as women in the church.

When our diocese began an diaconate program - wives of deacons also participated in the program as an accompaniment, but of course could not take on the roles of deacons. At the same time many women dedicated to serving the church were not only denied the role of deacon but replaced by deacons.

I know of women religious and other women who were dismissed from ministry by pastors who were jealous of their competency. They had no recourse to stay if the pastor said no. This happened to me also.

I felt angered when the bishop of a diocese forbade the sisters to preach at mass during a weekend meeting.

I was first disappointed by the treatment of women in the church when I studied in a Jesuit university that women theologians were not as honored as male counterparts. This also included orders of women religious throughout the centuries who ministered to people (social justice service) and kept the faith alive in the people they served. I came to realize that's the way it was and was likely to remain since men were in charge and would not let go of their roles. They relished being clericals in charge so clericalism had a stronghold that was not going to let women share in priestly

ministry. I realized this probably was not the way Jesus intended, but the church became an institution. As a recent speaker said, Christ is not an institution, and it is Christ that keeps me in the church. I have been a lector for years and on parish councils but have experienced that the priest was really the controlling “vote” on parish councils.

I was a Franciscan sister at the time. I was working as a secretary in a public school district. I was co-leading a retreat at the motherhouse. The bishop celebrated liturgy. Afterwards when we were seated at a table he asked me where I was ministering. I answered “in a public school district as a secretary.” he raised his voice and said, “and this community has approved that as a ministry?” I stood up and excused myself from table. I continued in this ministry for another 30 years. These were my most fulfilling years. I experienced myself as a person among people.

When Agnes Mansour was not able to serve women in Michigan as a vowed religious woman. It was clear to me that she was considered subservient to the male hierarchy. I was seriously challenged in my commitment to the catholic church.

I was told by men that I spent too much time on the altar because I was a lector and eucharistic minister. The mass I attended was often short so I served almost every mass as one or often both. I have also been told by men I could not enter the church unless I signed their petition. I had a deacon with whom I was having dinner with on a church cruise who got so angry when I spoke about universal health care that he tried to flip the table over on me. He couldn't because the table was bolted to the floor. As he stormed away he said “charity is too good for those lazy bastards”. After 15 years I left the community, covid hit soon after I found a community online that has been feeding my body and soul. When it ends, I may try the roman catholic priest parish in San Diego.

I was fired after 15 years as a pastoral associate and offered an n.d.a. in spite of the fact that the archdiocesan delegate admitted they understood what was going on. It made me stronger—I know consider it a badge of honor to have been fired at 79 years old. The spiritual life study group I had started 14 years before has now moved to zoom and has expanded to include participants from 6 more states.

I am hurt when women's voices are not being heard or their God-given gifts being used to address the needs of people in our community.

When women are not allowed even to vision their full inclusion, I feel pain: for them as an issue of human/ civil rights. For the community— that we are deprived of 52% of the wisdom. For those priests and hierarchy—that they may stand before the returned Christ asking “when did I see/ meet you?” And hear, “when I appeared to you as a female!”

Gender is not a first hurdle in the process of discernment for vocation.

Well the latest hurt was at St. Francis of Assisi here in SA, our former pastor Jim Henke included everyone in the easter triduum but once he left all the men (especially the deacons and one in particular referred to the handbook as a way to exclude women and of course it turned into a “men all dressed up to be seen” Friday service. They also had to be the ones to “sing/if we can call it that” at the easter vigil. All women were left out after having been “seen” and invited in. So many of my personal friends, just don't attend church anymore nor do we give monetarily like we use to. It seems that our presence makes no affect but hopefully our collective lack of money that we give will. I advocate to stop giving to anything the archbishop wants as a sign of solidarity for all women.

I feel that every day. But I felt it most impactful when capable, intelligent, faithful women

(religious or lay) were not even considered (allowed) to teach, preach, minister, lead... When there was nobody else to do so. Rather than serve the community, the catholic church chose to forfeit the needs of the people, because those who could, and wanted to- were/ are women. The community was sacrificed at the altar by patriarchy.

Our school closed literally in the midst of covid and the 500-year flood in our area. Although we say it is because of money, it is really because a diversity of voices were not brought into the conversation. It was largely white men in power meanwhile the mothers on the school board were not allowed in the meetings after asking repeatedly to be included in the conversation up to and including the superintendent insisting to hold the final school meeting while the dam broke and 10,000 people were evacuated including our school families. That was a huge eye opener for me on the lack of equality and inclusion in our parish. The outcome - trauma, people have left the parish, left the church entirely, changed for life. When we needed each other most we were torn apart. It was incredibly difficult to step into a church again anywhere. I chose to stay and fight this battle when I really just wanted to walk away and be done with this ridiculousness forever. It breaks my heart. I am also disappointed every time I see only boy altar servers, only men involved with the church. If it is continuous, I must assume the women are not invited as it is statistically unlikely that no girls volunteer as altar servers.

How the church has treated those that have divorced, practice birth control, and had abortions. It has made me angry. The Jesus and God I know would not handle it the way the church male clergy would. I suffer with my community of faith.

I belong to can we (catholic women for equality). We were standing outside the cathedral in saint john n..b. Before the holy Thursday mass of blessing of the oils. A few

of the priests who supported us acknowledged us many priests snubbed us as did many parishioners who said nasty things as they walked by. I did not belong to that parish so there was not any meeting of individuals from that church. It made me sad for their small kindnesses, but it did not deter me from standing outside the cathedral each year until moved to another province.

As a child I was repeatedly exposed to the menial servant work for the diocese performed by my aunt, a Benedictine nun. Nuns , with no voice in the diocese or church, were the unpaid mainstay of catholic education. Women are treated like children in our catholic church as a whole. Our primary role is to birth children and especially males.

I am older, so even in my protestant upbringing, women were excluded from being pastors (though their wives held serious ministries.) Over the years, the protestants have been in the cultural growth of opening that door, but with my conversion to Catholicism at about age 30, I was in a less open setting. I do not have a personal call to priesthood, but the failure to include women affects my own experience of church. A recent experience involves my current pastor, who at that time was in his first or second year with us. The call went out for men to be in the holy Thursday foot washing. (we've always had men, women, children.) I was livid, and met with the priest, who explained it was just his discomfort with touching women's feet. He was clear and unmoving, but not personally nasty in any way. The next year I was invited to foot washing, but as the only woman, and I believe it has returned to men only. My response has been to celebrate holy week in more inclusive parishes. I have not yet changed parishes, as I am deeply into friends and ministries, but I will join a new parish soon.

A gifted black women who had a gift for preaching was not allowed to do that in a Chicago area church, and in effect was exiled

in 1990. My family and I protested outside that church and left that church. We found a new community of faith. I had a small daughter and son at that time and could not let them grow up in that environment.

There have been many and thinking of an outstanding one being a woman who was denied being a eucharistic minister because she was a lesbian. Other times when women were fired from catholic school as teachers because one had an abortion and another married a woman, or stood up for social justice issues (not “the right. Ones”) in parishes or schools. For women of color and single mothers, those who were addicted, for those who were smarter. And more gifted than their male coworkers. For women who joined unions at catholic hospitals and were ‘let go’, \. Any time a woman who is a great preacher has to defer to “father” because he is father but not really a good preacher. Priests taking credit. For work women have done and proclaiming “I allowed her to do it”(opps just realized I was in capitals! Maybe the holy spirit??)

A pastor not accepting women as Christ figures in educational activities; or hearing that the Vatican didn't approve women as lectors; or having something to say and being ignored. The church's stance on women has always made me feel defensive & apologetic to others and angry within myself about the clergy & bishops in particular.

I had to resign from a church council due to the blatant disrespect that the pastor, who had been assigned to our church less than a year prior, showed me and the other women on the council. He only cared about what the men on the council would say. It made me want to never volunteer at my church again where I would have to engage with that pastor.

Two painful experiences: 1. Non-inclusive language used in catholic liturgies 2. Women excluded from serving as leaders making decisions about the life of the church

The great variation between parishes' acceptance of women's gifts, e.g., only able to present a “reflection,” not a homily, or not allowing young women to be altar servers. Why should any be denied? It's a question of justice and injustice always should be disturbing.

I'm fortunate to be in a progressive parish with priests who understand. If I had to be part of the other kind of parish, I know that I couldn't stay and wither away.

All the examples of women not being accepted are like bites out of my soul.

The diocese was not doing anything about the synod...a brief mention in the dio newspaper. I read about free copies of commonweal where they would give churches 200 copies of the November issue that explained about religious men and women who followed the vii recommendations re their structures in community etc. I received the copies and met December 4 with the deacon who is acting as pastor in the parish. He said now was not the time to pass them out. He would pass them out when the synodal process in the diocese began. It has begun. Still no magazines to the people.

When future church was having s. Maureen O'Sullivan speak on Vatican II asked the deacon could I use the parish hall to show the webinar to those without computers. Was forbidden to do so as future church stands for women's ordination etc. And he would not allow any such thing to be shown in the parish that goes against what holy mother church teaches. Luckily, I had already handed out copies of what future church was offering to those who did have computers. He also emailed me his response and cc:ed to a priest in the chancery. This did anger me; I suspected the deacon was looking for brownie points.

Shortly, thereafter, the diocese did begin to have 3 sessions of introductory sessions about what the synod was, their plans etc. By that time the

deacon was in Boston for by pass surgery. (the pastor is away for medical reasons. He was to return in this past January. He did not return. We were told he was not “healed” and would return next fall or winter. This left two parishes without any true leadership. It was like two ships at sea with no one in charge.)

Seeing the deacon had sent my request and the response of no to the priest in the dio offices, I emailed the priest to ask if I could now pass out the magazines. After waiting 1 1/2 weeks with no answer I emailed him again {in bold letters in the subject line and asked if he was irresponsible in performing his duties - bad on my part). It did get his attention. He resounded that he did not receive my first email it had gone to his junk. He also said he did not appreciate my questioning and obviously did not think of him much. He did not give me an answer!

No one has ever told me that my email: crohloffusa@netscape. Which I have used since the early 80s ever went to junk mail.

I have e email addresses. So I wrote again asking the same question but this time sent 3 copies....sent not only to him but also to my spiritual director, the bishop, my provincial and to a trusted friend. Still have not received a response from the priest or the bishop!

I am angered at being lied to and also at not receiving a response. Being treated fairly? No!

When the synod did begin in the diocese the deacon was going

Vicariously, I experienced the deep disappointment of my mother, patty crowley, as the news of Humanae vitae reached her and my father.

Having been welcomed to the diocese and my preaching role at the Newman center of osu forty years ago, I am now not allowed in the sanctuary for preaching reactive to the “new”

missal of 2005. I preached for eight years as a member of the campus ministry staff. During that time a new bishop called to say he’d received a letter specifying that a woman was “proclaiming the gospel and preaching the homily”. Because it was in writing, he would send a letter saying it had to stop, but also sent the diocesan liturgical director to help us through and maintain women’s voices. I began offering a ‘reflection’ after the priest said a sentence. Increasingly the bishop was under pressure from conservatives, and I left the staff, earning an msw. Five years later, a new director of Newman, asked me to return to preaching on the regular rotation since the community told him I knew how to preach! I did this for an additional ten years; but with still another director, this one conflict-avoidant, I resigned from preaching due to the directive in the “new” missal. At that time, I prayed and talked with a gay friend, a theologically prepared liturgist, and we initiated an intentional eucharistic community, simply catholic. This faith-filled community of resigned priests, women and LGBTIQQ folks has been celebrating eucharist (3 our of 4 presiders are women), caring for each other, keeping each other informed of service and justice opportunities for seventeen years this Pentecost. I refused to allow my anger to consume me, and directed it towards assisting the church to grow in a new way unavailable to the institutional church.

Ran a scripture studies program for 10 years, the only adult education at the parish. Pastor invited several times and only one time did he drift through but never stayed. Maybe if a man would have run it, it might have been different.

In the 60’s, recent training in teaching the sacraments was guiding prep for first communion supporting a delay of confession. The pastor would not believe that and refused to let us minimize confession till later. He insisted we were “not able to teach it” so that’s why we wanted to wait. I had to agree to readjust and work around it. I count that I my

first experience of prejudice and hierarchical injustice.

Recently I retired from 17 years as pastoral associate in a parish. In returning I saw some behavior that was experienced by those in ministry as demeaning their role and frustrating, since the pastor had to be in full control of everything down to giving people the information they needed to do their part. I tried to make a mention of it and received a patronizing response. I felt dishonored and angry and all I could do was give my support to the persons involved.

As a woman religious woman, teacher, director of religious education, wife and mother, there have too many experiences of disillusionment to cite. But with a strong supportive group of women and husband, we have empowered each other.

I was in a pastoral ministry master's degree program while continuing to work a fulltime job in dietetics. I paid my own tuition. While in the ministry program I went to a conference which included people not in the pastoral ministry program who were working as pastoral ministers. We discussed salaries for pastoral ministers. Many of the pastoral ministers were single women and many were single mothers. I knew when I started the ministry program that the salaries for master's degree prepared pastoral ministers were low in my diocese. As I progressed, I began to realize that I would not be able to make my mortgage payments on a minister's salary. I brought up the salary issue for pastoral ministers in the discussion group at the conference. One pastoral minister, who was a single mother, said that she recognized that she was receiving a low salary, but considered this her way of contributing to the support of the church. Some women accepted low pay because they were married and received fringe benefits through their husbands' salaries.

I mentioned before that I was working as a dietitian. I have held dietetic positions for 35 years. The dietetic profession is very

similar to the pastoral ministry profession. Both are made up primarily of women. As a dietitian I was used to poor salaries. Married women in the dietetics profession could do the same thing that married women in pastoral ministry could do. They could accept lesser salaries than single women in pastoral ministry could, because the married women could get their husbands' insurance coverage. This unfortunate situation can drive a wedge between single and married women in the above-mentioned professions. Women need to support each other in fighting for just wages, not undercut each other. Whether a female pastoral minister is married or single, with or without children, the family breadwinner or providing supplemental income to the family should have no influence on determining a just wage. In the Cleveland diocese pastoral ministers had to be certified. I am not sure if it is still the same or not, but when I was working on a degree in pastoral ministry you could be certified by completing the diocesan training, whether you earned a degree or not. That might be fine for a simple job with a few hours a week of work. If a person wanted to go to another diocese or state a bachelor's or master's degree could be transferred. If they are just certified in the diocese of Cleveland, they might find that they had to obtain a college degree in pastoral ministry before they could work in the field. If people are going to work with parishioners on psychological issues, on marital problems, juvenile problems, then that person has to be prepared by educational and professional standards like any other profession. Pastoral ministers are often given much more work than what fits into the hours they are paid. When one pastoral minister asked for a raise, the pastor said that she was not the breadwinner in the family. Actually, she was the breadwinner. Her husband was unable to work!

How did it affect you? How did it affect your relationship with your community of faith? Because I decided that I could not afford to lower my salary and give up my pension, I withdrew from the master's program in pastoral

ministry. I would not have been able to make my modest mortgage payments! I feel that my efforts to become a pastoral minister were not in vain. I learned about theology, pastoral counseling, liturgy, moral theology and ethics and about the bible. I also felt that I had grown in knowledge and understanding of what women suffer from injustice in the catholic church. I did respond to my pastor's suggestion that the pastoral ministers who were members of our parish and those of a sister parish could volunteer for certain duties in the parishes. One thing I taught my dietetic students was never volunteer in your profession unless everyone in a job or activity is also volunteering! I told the pastor that women put themselves through college degree programs in ministry at great expense and then are paid poorly! The suggestion for pastoral ministry volunteers was never carried out!

My pastor's inability to own a bad decision and say he is sorry for the pain he has caused. I have left the parish and feel like I am homeless.

Many times, when women's voices were ignored.

We had a female parish director. The priests of the neighboring parishes treated her like a pariah. They worked hard to make sure she and our parish would fail - such as when she said we had to pay our employees a just wage, a pastor at a neighboring parish said he wouldn't touch just wages with a ten foot pole. When we tried to set up a Sunday evening mass, none of the priests from the other 5 parishes would participate and we ended up hiring a priest for the mass. Our community was strong but now the archbishop has put a Vatican 1 pastor in place and we are dying.

Just many gifted women who I know who have been denied the use of their gifts simply because they were women

I had worked for the church for about 10 years but had to leave working in for the church so I

could keep my faith. Some of the priests were just too difficult to work with.

Overall subservient treatment of women by male clergy

Annulment

I was fired from my ministry in a former parish because I spoke up on issues.

Women do the work of keeping the parish running physically but are largely voiceless and invisible in the teaching of the church. Do as father says. Women just let it happen too, and don't speak up.

I was deeply disappointed/hurt when Barbara Fland and Louise Ackers were silenced and lost their positions in our church.

When our pastor humiliated and forced our faith education minister to resign.

Hearing incidents when women were sexually abused by a priest and the priest was reassigned.

When I was facilitating a group of high school students a priest publicly said he heard I did not know how to teach the "sex" portion so he would do it for me. I was angry and felt this priest was misusing his power. I spoke with him to tell him I thought his behavior inappropriate. I also told him I will teach the session.

When I headed a parish and was told I could not give a homily, or a reflection at the Sunday eucharist.

Women not allowed to preach but give reflection. Often not part of decisions.

Decisionative in ici

I am hurt every time the liturgy is spoken in male-centered language. This doesn't happen in all parishes but it certainly does in mine.

Liturgy language, homilies, decrees of intrinsically evil and ex-communication, treatment of women religious, unacknowledged service of women on multiple levels...etc.!

Former pastor sent the nuns away. Didn't want to pay them

The Vatican's scrutiny of women religious, questioning their loyalty to the church. I was very angry that the male officials in the church stooped that low.

Too many times to describe. Reading Joan Chittister years ago kept me hopeful.

One memory that I have from a few years ago, is not being allowed to take the part of Jesus in the reading of the passion during holy week.

The day a pastor fired 8 women staff members. I regret not doing more about this situation when it happened.

One of the sisters who was serving in the parish left abruptly and we were given no explanation.

I have not personally experienced the mistreatment of women in the diocese or where I worship.

First communion training we asked that the special day be filled with appropriate music, prayers and that the young children participate - we were given the emphatic no!

When I was in training for spiritual director, I went to my pastor to see if he could help me find someone to meet with from the parish. He connected me to a 95-year-old lady who was only interested in having company. Later when I completed my training, I went back to him to tell him and his only comment was that now I could charge 65 dollars when I met with people. He has given me no support in the 15 years I have been meeting with people.

Every Sunday I see a system of domination and subordination by men over women performed in the mass, with a male priest presiding. Many of my friends no longer attend mass because during the trump administration in dc, they couldn't bring their children to witness yet another example of women being treated as inferior. Also, as a child I wanted to be an altar server but I am female and therefore wasn't allowed. It hurt me immensely because I felt a vocation to serve on the altar. That was in 1975. It still brings tears to my eyes.

Having a program I was running from the diocesan office cut by a decision of the bishop's' advisory board of priests before receiving the very positive evaluation of the program done by one of the brothers in the diocesan office.

When a new pastor refused to allow women to give the homily as previously done. These homilists were usually nuns who had theology degrees and were much better than the priests who usually gave the homilies. We were told that the church did not permit women to give homilies. I was very angry.

Nothing really personal but, I was very dismayed when around 15-20 years ago I saw no more women included in the holy Thursday washing of feet and no more girls as altar servers.

While this has no effect on my relationship with my community of faith, it is disappointing that women (I know one in particular) cannot serve as priests in the church. I feel shortchanged by being denied their wisdom.

I was told that I could not read the gospel to the participants of my prayer meeting - I could only administer holy communion - it remains a crazy decision based on clericism - fear of their jobs????

Not allowed to be an altar server in grade school. Boys voices heard first. Men's voices given preference.

I have been an administrator of parishes that did not have a priest. Everything went well until an opus Dei priest from a seminary in Rome was given to me to be the sacramental minister. The people in the parish were horrified and complained so I set up my own web site and put a homily on it every Friday morning.

I only came to the awareness of this only during my time when I was assigned in a province during my seminary formation. There was this case of a catechist who was sort of being overworked as the priest gave her a lot of work even if it sacrificed her personal happiness which led to a breakdown. Other than that, I felt women were given much leeway in the private sphere of the church but not in the formal leadership of the church within the public sphere.

Certain clergy are very selfish, not even trying to be Christ-like. There is no way for parishioners to make their priests be accountable for their performance. Clergy have no requirements for continuing education, although pastoral associates do. Such a stupid system! One would think that bishops would want their clergy to grow in their ability to minister. Parishioners get stuck with underperforming, sometimes undedicated priests.

One of our local parishes recently put out a very strict dress code for all servers, lay ministers, & choir. The women in particular are being called out for wearing what I would consider appropriate clothes. It was very demeaning.

When I have attended male priest ordinations and when men are mentioned to receive the call to ordination and not women!

Being on the parish council & realizing no matter what I said or thought was going to make a difference. This council was a paper tiger.

In grade school, my brother was an altar server and I was told by the priest I couldn't be. Throughout my life, as a woman I'm excluded, minimized, patronized. I now worship with faith communities that are inclusive, collaborative and focused on social justice. Seldom are those communities roman catholic.

When people - including women are shut out of serving in the church. When gifts are not recognized or allowed to be used for the greater good of all the community - and the church.

A current situation in my parish where the pastor is unable to reach out in empathy. I am so angry that am considering with others in leaving both this parish and maybe even catholic church. Tired of women's voices and experiences being squelched

We had well educated women who were allowed periodically to give the homily at mass on Sunday. This was stopped by a former archbishop who said only the priest could give a homily. It was a real loss for our parish, which has only one priest and wanted the congregation exposed to different views. I am pleased with my local parish, not so much with the hierarchy.

When I lost a child and was given very little support from a priest who felt I had "disposed of the body" incorrectly...no compassion, no understanding of the gravity of the loss

My beloved aunt was divorced but couldn't get an annulment and she couldn't go to communion because she remained, but I think the marriage was celebrate and it hurt her tremendously how the church denied her communion

Women being denied the ability to preach, be deacons or priests. We are denied the ability to share our gifts.

Disappointed when women faculty at the seminary no longer had the presence and influence on priestly formation.

A gay couple was unable to have their child baptized during mass. This couple were very involved in our church, and it was extremely hurtful. I don't feel our pastor was able to make his own decision, but it really hurt our community. The couple left our church and started one of their own taking several parishioners with them.

I was in a theological college because I was discerning my own vocation. During a dance at the college I remember asking a young lady if it bothered her that the same vocation is not an option for her. She explained that she truly felt called to the priesthood. That is not the only time I have seen that pain.

I am a religious that lived through the exam of religious life by our male church. Then we witnessed the lack of celibacy and exploitation of our youth which is still unresolved by our male clergy

Priests that individually decide that women cannot preach (or as is permissible give reflections. I was more determined than ever to work for the fuller participation of women.

Since I'm a senior citizen I can say waiting for girls to be allowed to be altar servers was hard on me. I was happy when it happened years ago in ca but shocked that it's not universal all this time, I thought the diaconate process would have included women as the wives do the same work as their husbands trained not ordained as one put it

As eucharistic minister some men go to the line of the priest instead. It makes me wonder how open they would be to women's full

participation in this male patriarchy system we have.

Not to me personally, but any instance of abuse or denial of the talents of women in the church diminishes my sense of belonging in the church.

A macho, superior, dictating attitude subdued us to submission. Feminine wisdom and relational qualities would win more to Christ.

When women are not allowed to preach after the gospel.

I am continually disappointed that women are now allowed fall participation. My community of faith shares that concern, so it strengthened relationship.

Use of 'brethren' at the eucharistic prayer rather than 'brothers and sisters' with the presider refusing to choose the latter and continuing to use 'brethren'. This angered me but it only made me more closely aligned with my parish community and in particular with its women.

As a hospital chaplain---when I can't "officially" anoint a dying catholic person and have to stand in the background and call "the priest" who many times is not even available.

Very young. I felt called to live a life of service in God and discovered I couldn't be a priest. (but my brother could...) I "should enter the convent." which I did.

I cannot use my energy on such happenings..... just keep on doing what I do now

Mainly my disappointment comes from the pastors who think they are the 'end all' for all things. Hearing ideas from others/women seems to fall on deaf ears....and not considered.

The "investigation" of women religious in the U.S. was particularly scandalous and offensive.

Though I was not personally or directly impacted, it made my respect for these women that stood up to bullying by the hierarchy grow 100 fold.

The very fact that women are restricted from full participation in the church. Which leads to excommunication if a woman is ordained, which happened to someone we know. Felt angry.

I was always disappointed that our sisters (religious congregation) have not been allowed to preach at our eucharistic liturgies. They were given the opportunity to share reflections only after communion here and in the Bridgeport, CT and Brooklyn/queens, NY dioceses

As I shared in our breakout group, I see no theological reason for emphasizing gender as constitutive of standing 'in persona Christi'. Of all the characteristics Christ carried and lived in the world, why is his maleness a "dealbreaker" that forbids women from being ordained ministers?

This, I think, is close to the root of clericalism -a setting apart from- of priests; and has turned it into the decay that is driving the church away from god's people now.

Groomed for a ministry leadership role. Particularly with women and children!

Some of our sisters going all through the seminary and then when it came time for orders they were excluded. That made us very sad and angry. It created a barrier in terms of the possibility for women in the church. Those women have done great ministry and filled people spiritually anyway.

It's always hard to go to funerals and marriages and Sunday liturgies and see only men n the altar. I have always felt excluded in my church. Not good enough because I am a woman. I've gone to ordinations and have felt so distant

from the ceremonies because not men are there in their glorious garb putting on a show of their power over everyone.

Seeing the clericalism in general in the church where I worked in general. The religious congregation of men with whom I worked was wonderful, but the rest - so clerical. I got angry, frustrated, asked myself the theoretical question as to me leaving the church. But despite it all, I knew I would never leave the church. So much good, so much strength also comes to me through my life in the church

In the mid 80's the pastor of our parish had a terrible relationship with a sister who has his assistant. I was at a meeting where he showed great disrespect for her. I felt terrible for her and great disrespect for him.

I was very disappointed when the diocese conducted a "revitalization" study to look at realignment of parishes, etc. There was no mention/option that well-trained laity could be parish administrators.

When religious sisters were chastised for speaking out. Those women were speaking out for the real truths of our faith.

The time of what I have called the inquisition of the sisters in America, based on what was perceived as their not focusing enough on abortion and focusing too much on the poor! It disturbed me greatly as I had wonderful nuns in my grade school and now in the high school where I teach who were working miracles with their service and their work was denigrated by this event.

I was serving as director of faith formation in a parish. A child in the group preparing for first eucharist had missed over half of the sessions, so I tried to contact the family to see what could be worked out to support the little boy. The next Sunday, a large, very irate man confronted me in my office, where the pastor

and I were having a conversation; he was the boy's father and saw no reason why his son, who was "a religious genius" (!), had to attend classes. He berated me loudly and ended by announcing that "no woman is going to tell me what I have to do." And as he stormed out, the pastor just sat in silence.

There are too many instances where I have seen women be treated as 2nd class in the church - small and big ways. I admire women who keep struggling in this present form of the church toward renewal and a new model of church (the assembly of god, called by god to be witness to the world of the new kingdom/reign of peace, love and justice that Jesus proclaims and embodies.....). Clericalism, patriarchy is slowly but surely dissolving.....

When I was young preparing for confirmation in grade school a priest told the group he was leading through the newly built church were everything was going to be as we walked through the sanctuary, we were told that woman were not allowed there and could touch the altar. I broke away from the group put my hand on the altar and said aloud my god! Even then I knew the priest was wrong.

When the new archbishop was installed and thanked everyone from the cardinals to the janitors but never mentioned women religious who have staffed the schools, the nursing homes, the hospitals in the city throughout its history. It seems he did not do his homework.

Deacons are taking the place of laity (both women and men), overpowering and over shadowing. Seminarians have learned how to "jump through the hoops" to get through seminary and then act without consultation with the laity whose church and community they are serving (power and authority abuse), foreign born priests are being brought in without cultural/pastoral training to work in American/Hispanic culture. Clericalism is alive and thriving! People accept the priest because they don't want to live without

sacraments--but we deserve better. Also, if women had been at the table during the discovery of all the sexual abuse of minors (and of women), I don't believe it would have been swept under the carpet, hidden and colluded in by so many. All male is not healthy!

I often tried, to discuss the sermon with the priest, since I have a degree in theology and Jewish studies and they often said things in that area that were not correct, but usually they were too busy to listen. Women are just not taken into consideration in the church, except as cooks or cleaners etc.

By a young newly ordained priest who was assigned to our parish as a parochial vicar and was arrogant with every other staff member and thought he was superior to all of us, but especially to the women on the staff. My relationship with my community of faith was not affected because I did not allow him to intimidate me.

As chaplain in hospital ministry, the sacrament of the sick cannot be administered even after being certified in the national association of catholic chaplains.

I am always disappointed about the mistreatment of women in the church. We are not even treated as whole human beings with many gifts beyond motherhood. We need to see the Christ in all of us and realize that the spirit is muzzled when it is not allowed to speak through women.

I don't have a specific instance. My hurt/disappointment/anger is due to the secondary role the church relegates women to. I am so saddened by the older catholic women who believe that they will not see progress in their lifetime. The church is alienating the very backbone of the church.

It is difficult for me to re-count just one experience as I have felt during my entire lifetime as a practicing catholic that women

were not treated as equals “holding up half the sky”. Even when the priests let go of many of their roles in parishes as their numbers diminished who did they hand off to?? Men who were parishioners and it only seemed that women were considered for these roles when the pastor couldn’t find a man to do the job then a woman was considered! And I am talking about both faith and administrative roles -- participants in our “ceremonial” church and managing the parish itself. Very disheartening that so many decades after Vatican ii and the renew movement that so little has been moved forward.

From my connection with many Dominicans, I have been told stories of how they do not feel they are represented as an equal. I have not felt that as I served as a lector and eucharistic minister at my parish masses.

When we were looking for a dre at the parish a man and a woman sent resumes’ she was better educated, had more experience than he but the pastor offered him more money because he was a man. I should not have been privy to that information but it caused me to lose some of my good feelings for that pastor and subsequently I resigned from my pastoral associate job because I found it hard to live with such an action on the pastor’s part.

The two associate pastors at my parish refuse to use inclusive language when they read the gospel. They said that because a few older parishioners wanted to read along in their booklets, changing the language to make it more inclusive was confusing and not worth the effort. As if their self-esteem rested on them being “in charge” mattered more than the women’s ministry who complained that we weren’t being included. How rude. How clerical. How un-Jesus like.

As a pastoral administrator I had faculties to lead the liturgy, etc. I led funeral rites, burial rites, marriages, but as soon as a resident priest was assigned I could no longer do any of it.

My gifts were not important even though the people of the parish requested it. On another occasion a man came threatened me with a gun because I had installed a girl altar server and because his son had also served his son was going to hell. Extreme but this is still thought today. Today a German bishop said women could baptize, because there weren’t enough priests - not because women have the ordained call to baptize because of their own baptism. Liturgies which call for the male ordination - I walk out.

When john Paul ii stopped the change to inclusive language in liturgy and refused to allow even the discussion of women’s ordination, I was so angered I became involved in efforts for women to become more involved in the church.

My sister-in-law took a course taught by rosemary rather. She read all the books. Then she quit the church because she said there was no room in the church for women. As a brilliant female, she could see how limiting the church’s view was. I felt sad that she left instead of working to make things better.

To see so many of our sisters who were doing a great job as parish ministers were dismissed or asked to leave. They were then replaced by men.

Early on after Vatican II, we (ordained, lay,) were learning together what gospel community, our beginnings could become alive, inclusive reaching out...etc.; then bang! Back to “father knows best and everything!”

I’ve watched trained, educated women with true vocations and pastoral gifts ‘kicked to the curb’ by men ordained to be bearers of god’s love in the world. Disappointment in the church’s treatment of women is a lifelong experience. My kids - and now my grandkids - have asked for years why I stay.

During the LCWR investigation I was then a member of the national board. I was able to express my sadness and frustration. Together we were able to support one another and hopefully also our larger church.

I am so deeply angry to see the blatant denial of women by the “church” when we know from the gospel of Mary Magdalene, archeology, paintings, and other writings of early Christianity that women were co-equals and full participants.

I have not had a dramatic encounter, but I do feel shut out on the larger stage of the church. Men have made decisions for women, and this is especially true in regard to their bodies. I do not believe in abortion, but I feel strongly that women should have the right to prevent a pregnancy. The choice should be theirs.

Constant cognitive dissonance due to the overt discrimination, clericalism, speciesism & sexism.

Holy Thursday - when the focus is on the ordained men in the catholic church. Feel left out.

With the continued dismissal of women’s contributions by the American hierarchy, I felt as if our effort to change the status quo was not worth it. I felt distanced from my community.

During lent, etc. One pastor had women who were very involved in the life of the parish to give reflections (very meaningful) during paraliturgical services. The new pastor would only allow deacons or religious speak. I was very annoyed, but I stayed in the parish.

The exclusion of women from priesthood his highlighted for me when I have attended eucharist with women priests. I’ve been to one mass at cta celebrated by Mary rammerman. I have been to some episcopal masses celebrated by women priests. I have been reading about the ministry of Denise Donato (bishop in the

ecc) recently. A few years ago, their was an RCWP in Manhattan looking to start a parish in queens but it never got off the ground. Tonight, I felt the pain of this reality of women who are called to ordination and cannot be priests in the rc church. The talk by deb brought tears to my eyes. I feel called to be a priest -- I am a married man with two children -- and I think the women in RCWP and others who find a way to respond to the call are an inspiration. At this moment I feel more drawn towards the idea of “being the church we want to see in the world” as opposed to staying in the struggle. But also, as a catholic educator in an all boys school, I feel convicted of the ways I need to put myself on the line as an ally in this struggle.

When my husband fell in love with me and we married he was no longer allowed to continue his priestly ministry in the church. I have been denied opportunities in the church for the same reason. It makes my call to witness and advocate for an all-inclusive priesthood that much stronger.

As a burnt-out priest, I began to see how the hierarchical and theological structures of the Christian church had become detailed from being focused in life.

Exclusion of women in leadership and decision making resulted in very wrong decisions regarding how to handle sexual abuse scandal.

I was angered once when the bishop would not allow sr. Joan Chittister to speak on the campus of the catholic university where I worked. Her ideas on women in the church were to bold and untenable to him and some of the other priests. I was at the point of no longer going to mass as the priests had nothing they wanted to hear from women but subservience. My community of faith was appalled and made us more convinced women really weren’t valued or had gifts to offer unless the gifts reinforced the system.

Being ignored by the male clergy after being appointed to a diocesan commission

Many Catholics of the old school still blame the victims of sexual abuse if they are female. I cannot say what happened to me and I feel that I don't belong in the church.

When women were restricted from offering the homily. That there is no path from lay ecclesial to deacon. When the pastor is not open to dialogue and seeking consensus.

When it comes to women in the church the disappointment is not a one time, one instance. It is the approach of the clergy from the pope down towards women. It affects me profoundly because I see how much this approach is hurting the people of god being deprived of so many gifts women could serve the with.

I do not have one time. It is just that feeling that I am always trivialized. The attitude I have encountered is one where I was tolerated. What I thought was unimportant.

I am angered by the church's view on birth control. The pushing of nfp does not make sense because to me that's still birth control, one that is a hard process to follow, especially if you already have little kids. The church needs to let married couples come to their own conclusions with the brains god gave them what is best for their families. Women should not just be viewed as baby machines and the idea of the more kids the better should not be an accepted view of the church.

I am disappointed and hurt when I, as an endorsed lay pastoral leader in the archdiocese, am not allowed to exercise my ministry in a parish because the priest is not willing to work with a lay leader, much less a woman. This is more commonly the case with foreign priests.

Our pastor forbade girl servers, women lectors, and was generally patronizing of women and

girls. He spoke rarely of Jesus in homilies and much about the then pope.

Also, friends of mine in religious community were silenced when speaking their truth to lay groups about domination over religious women. These and many other examples leave me frustrated, angry, saddened. I remain steadfast and faithful to my baptism.

Years ago, in my parish, women were included in the ritual washing of the feet on holy Thursday - until a rigid, new pastor was assigned. The practice of inclusion ended and only men, financial supporters, deacons, etc. Are "chosen". I no longer attend that beautiful and meaningful mass at my church but go elsewhere.

I was angry when one of our sisters was ousted from her diocese because she had gone to an ordination of women! Ridiculous! So much fear among the clergy to let women be ordained! And such a waste of talent and goodness to keep them out of the priesthood.

I was a parish minister in Maysville, ky. Because I knew of an attempted rape in the parish of one of the parish councilors, the new pastor would not renew my contract for the parish. I worked with the police, so not enough evidence, so no arrest. Of course, all was in confidence so the small town did not know anything about it. The women who were from another community knew and the pastor demanded she leave the town and be reassigned.

When the pastor scheduled an anniversary couple at a mass in which the Hispanic community was having first communion even though he knew what the Spanish mass was set for many months. He refused to talk about anything with me even though I did everything in the parish other the say mass.

So disappointed not to be included in decision making for the good of the whole church.

Seeing women called to be priests be ex-communicated by the bishop.

The continual limitations placed on women by the institutional church- ignoring their gifts, or frightened by them

Our former bishop was deeply committed to lay involvement - he had a long history with the movement. When appointed a bishop he established a pastoral team including a religious sister, a married woman who shared all decision making. It worked well. Interesting not one other bishop in the country ever asked him how it was working.

The most recent time was December 2021. Our pastoral associate for liturgy and music, after 30 years of service, was put in a position where she felt that her responsibility to develop liturgies that were life-giving for the parish community was being compromised after years of no support for competent sound management. She resigned and the narrative simply was that she had resigned willingly right before Christmas. The whole music ministry community was destroyed. The parish community has been deeply hurt. And the single reason is because she is a competent, hardworking woman who is passionate about serving. I have been a music minister for close to 30 years, but I left this parish. At the end of the day, this has all been about clericalism and the lack of respect for women's role in our church. As a music minister for close to 30 years, I myself experienced clericalism; music ministers are not seen as equal partners by presiders, but as rivals before the assembly.

Probably the most hurtful time was when the Vatican initiated a probe of the vowed religious women. After all the centuries that we were faithful to the church and did so much for the church, to be treated like we were a very hurtful experience. Even though many of the leadership in many communities stood up against the process, the fact that the very church that we have been faithful to,

thought of us as suspicious people who needed the hierarchy to be put in their place was devastating.

When pope John Paul II came out with the statement that women could never be priests-ever. It seemed that we had come so far and then had the rug pulled out from under us when he said that. Also, hearing from people that women were not made in the image of Jesus or that women don't image Jesus. One archbishop told me that women could never become priests because they were not at the last supper. It angered us deeply. It didn't keep us from worshipping with our communities of faith, but it put a strain on our love of the church. Further, it makes me think I would never have voted to make JP II a saint.

Oh, so many. I will share a time from my childhood when the parish priest stopped by our home to ask if my two brothers were home - he wanted to speak with them about becoming priests. I said that I would like to talk with him because I would like to be a priest. He was dismissive and condescending in his response. He stated that the priesthood was not for girls. Only men. He could not even look me in the eye. I remember thinking, "that can't be true. God does not work like that." I was 8 years old.

Many times! One in particular when a bishop took the side of a priest re an incident that he, the priest was lying about!!

I am a religious sister and I was using inclusive language in some of the prayers. Our pastor heard this and did not speak to me but called my provincial superior and said that I was disturbing the mass by my using the inclusive language.

Women in leadership positions in dioceses and parishes are fired without apparent cause or redress because of political or financial power of ultra conservatives people.

We needed to bring a few problems to the hierarchy. They met with us and quickly dismissed us. We felt discounted and discouraged. It is important to know you have been heard. Same experience in two dioceses.

I was not treated well when I went forward to those at the diocesan level as an adult to report being inappropriately touched by a priest to whom I had gone from counseling at a difficult time in my life. I was just 18 and I was told that, because I was an adult, it was not important. I asked that the priest involved next be told my name, but he was. I had a speak to a psychiatrist for the diocese who told me that this was not important. I abused all over again.

I was very angered by the investigation of religious women by the Vatican, and I have been angered a number of times when women were censured and prevented from offering their gifts to the church - Agnes Mansour for example - and women theologians whose writings and preaching have been investigated for example Beth Johnson and Joan Chittister.

Some of us had studied the preliminary documents for preparation for the sodality movement. We were never invited to plan, to help organize the consultation sessions.

Starting the healing art center in complimentary medicine. The bishop sent an investigation team, and said we were to close. The leadership in my community backed down and did not stand up for us. I consider leaving religious life with my congregation. I discovered a different god. I am still trying to get use to this god. I feel distant from the institutional church.

I was deeply disappointed and hurt when pope John Paul II not only declared that women cannot be ordained as priests, but that we as faithful Catholics are not even allowed to talk about this issue! (even though many theologians, and even some bishops, have said that there are no good biblical or theological

reasons why they can't be ordained to the priesthood). This "ban" is authoritarianism at its worst!

I was disappointed when women weren't included in decision-making groups. Women's perspectives were not valued. I placed less value on decisions made by a select few who did not represent the wider church.

I can't think of a time when I was not disappointed or frustrated. Recently, it has included anger. The main effect, though, is a gap.

Although I don't personally feel called to ordination, the fact that women can only receive six sacraments instead of seven is reflective of the inequality and patriarchy in our church.

When I attended the ordination of a friend as a Roman Catholic women priest and had to sit in a designated section to avoid losing membership in a particular parish.

By the parish coordinator.

I was in my 20s at daily mass with the oldest priest in the parish. . . No altar servers were there, so I went up to hold the plate and he turned to me and said, "women are not allowed up here". I went and sat down. . . It didn't affect me because my friend fr pat always welcomed us. . .

I experience disappointment, hurt, anger every day from the institutional church as a woman. Examples include lack of inclusive church structures and leadership, lack of women priests, lack of women deacons, lack of women in leadership structures that are respecting women in the institutional church, disregard for women (my mother) that had to get a divorce due to safety, lack of opportunity for me as a woman to be able to be recognized as a full person in the institutional church, discrimination against me as a woman in the institutional church, emotional abuse from

the institutional church, dictation of control over women and reproductive rights and birth control. I still consider myself catholic but can no longer actively practice my faith in the formal institutional church without radical transformation.

One time the bishop scheduled an ecumenical presentation at our parish and his guests included two female pastors of protestant churches. I thought, at the time, that it was insulting to catholic women. Perhaps, in retrospect, our bishop, who was very much pro-Vatican ii, was trying to show us what was possible. He always thought the diaconate should be open to women.

Hispanic nun, hardworking, -----associate pastor jealous of her--- she finally resigned before he became the pastor . I am not that nun but gave her as much support as I could---that associate pastor did not speak Spanish but even now three years later it has been nothing but power grabs in that parish some associates have asked to be transferred and many of the parish members go elsewhere on Sundays---there is no life in that parish. It is sad

Women religious following laws that men make for women's orders

I've been disappointed that clergy from other traditions were disinvited to give homilies at our Sunday liturgies during unity week; that our parish leadership backed down when faced with pressure from the archdiocese regarding lay led programs in our parish.

I came to realize I couldn't trust clerical leadership to respect women's gifts and I found that many men trained for church parish ministry were immature and not grounded in their own sexuality; and unable to be comfortable sharing leadership roles with women. I grieved for my church and my lost sense of trust in male leadership and have carried on turning more to women trained in theology and church roles as spiritual guides and no longer expect men of the cloth to

take stands against discrimination of women leaders.

Recently, I was alarmed/angry when the young (very clerical) parish priest we now have, spoke about "those radical feminist" in a homily in a derogatory way (can't remember the context); and just his general exclusion of women, esp. Of readers, from ministry in our parish.

Graduates (130) of a lay ministry formation program....only a handful were empowered to serve. Koc are only asked by the priest to serve as greeters and at funeral liturgies... only male lectors and cantor at the live stream mass. I am deeply discouraged and saddened. My relationship with my parish (next door) has waned. I loved my parish....spent 5 years on the building committee. To build this beautiful building...but there is no life. It is very, very sad. I now go elsewhere to be nourished (online with bishop jane Krzyzewski) rich liturgies!

When the priest/bishop sexually abuse women / girls/nuns as if it is their right. I lost my trust on those abusers and did not want to be near them

The Canadian government honored my appointment as r.c. chaplain in several penitentiaries ... But the church did not. I was able to minister as a woman, but recognition from the official church would have been a blessing.

I am a male, but I don't like injustice. I don't like when religious women are look down by priests. I don't like the fact that many religious women that are highly educated are doing role of servitude in seminaries, priest houses etc. They are cooking, ironing their clothes, cleaning their houses, etc.

I have been disappointed all my life by the fact that I have not been seen or heard by my church. Because of this, I have not bothered to speak up. I stayed in my community of faith

only because I associated with like-minded prayerful people.

I was charged by the police after a bishop intervened in a conflict to help me, and the diocese was backed into a corner. My life has been ruined because a small, conservative diocese is run by a small group of people who won't give up power. I was a sincere convert, but they would not hear me. I really needed a bit of time to get adjusted and acculturated, which I so desperately felt called to do. The priests and staff had no experience with unchurched people; a lot of the problems were because they didn't know what they didn't know and were not curious. For them, church = social club, tradition. For me, conversion was really unsettling, and it was like they had no idea what I was talking about. Online I found a lot of compassion and encouragement but unfortunately the experience in the parish was harsh.

Whenever woman theologians are censored for their work. It angers me. I belong to groups where women support each other and can protest together.

As a very young woman I was disappointed and angry when I worked with a couple of women planning a monthly children's liturgy and we had to get approval from a young parish priest who refused to give us one hour of his time on his day off. Myself and the other women were caring for children and a household and worked hard to find a time when we could meet with this priest, and none of us got a day off. This experience made me realize that priests were no holier or more committed to the church than we women were.

Most recently, the sister working at the border with migrant families and the sister Dorothy g. Working on behalf of the lgbtq members of our church

Introduction of new English translation of ordinary of the mass and lectionary etc..

Not so long ago - work of language scholars of long standing, overridden by few men at Vatican with tin ears. Violation of due process, disrespect for language, impoverishment of meaning and beauty in liturgy

Disturbed by reports of women being mistreated or barred from offices in the church, but have not experienced this firsthand.

In the Seattle archdiocese bishop hunthausen had implemented the pastoral life director program which essentially enabled women to become pastor/administrator (sans eucharist) of the parish. Our pld was a much beloved and pastoral leader. She was moved abruptly, in our estimation, because the parish was too progressive for the diocese. When she left, we ended up with a good priest - which was good - but - the way she was moved, and the later downgrading of that program - is a major step backward. Overall - I'm constantly disappointed and angered that women are not allowed to be deacons or priests. I love my catholic church, but the exclusion of women is a source of constant pain and frankly embarrassment.

I was stopped in my ministry of empowering the laity at least three times when the priest wanted to control everything.

Our pastor was removed. The diocese sent in a priest who shut down many of the ministries in our parish who were serving parishioners but also those marginalized in the larger community. It had taken years to build relationships. I was angry. I stayed away from the church for almost 7 years.

The pastor refused to visit the sick and anoint them in their home when I asked him. He said he didn't want me as a pastoral associate but wanted an ordained priest associate. I was hurt and left the parish and had to get therapy for my depression and lack of self-esteem.

I am disappointed in the lectionary that erases women found in the gospels, acts and epistles from the versions read at eucharistic celebrations. It saddens me that priests who raped children were allowed to celebrate the eucharist, while women are not even welcomed into the historical role of deaconesses. Until women are welcomed as co-equals in the church, we should expect sexual abuse by priests to continue. I am also concerned about the number of priests who suffer from alcoholism and obesity.

Too many to mention! Women do 90% of the actual work in any parish, both as paid staff and as volunteers - 1 priest simply can't do a fraction of what needs to be done. And yet, the institutional church acts as if we should be grateful to have any role at all - and whether or not I am valued or listened to or respected is completely at the whim of my pastor.

It is so demoralizing to experience the limitations the church places on us (at a theoretical level) and so hurtful at a personal level to be overlooked and disrespected by male pastors on a regular basis.

Disappointed that women can study and take the same courses in a seminary as a man and not be ordained.

Women theologians were “not allowed” to speak at the seminary! They were thought “dangerous!”

I was terribly hurt and angered when the investigation began about the leadership of women religious. I was not the only one. We said that if the sisters were split from the roman catholic church, then we would join the sect of the sisters. That is, if it took a schism, we knew where we would be.

When a new pastor assumed leadership at St. Matthew in Champaign in 1994 he removed the head of religious education (a Franciscan) from her office in the school. He placed her in a

“closet” type room in the parish offices. She left and parishioners got her a job at the university of Illinois. The following summer the pastor had seminarians throw 25 years of Vatican II religious education material in the dumpster.

When a clerical abuse was presented to church authorities, the bishop and archbishop in charge of the priest was silent, evasive, defensive and in denial.

I was angered with the response, and I still pursued the case, until a commission was formed to handle the case. The result was not very satisfactory in terms of justice but I was glad, groups of women were made aware of the abuse of the clergy, they helped put pressure against the priest and the bishop concerned and that it became a rallying point and common concern to help address clericalism and abuse in the church.

I am angered by the way women in the underground church were treated when the soviet union broke up. These women risked their lives over and over again to keep the faith alive and they were slapped down for it. It made me lose what little faith I still had in the bishops and popes. It made me seriously consider leaving the catholic church!

When women having served successfully were fired without cause.

For many years, I lived with it. Vatican II and the women's movement moved in tandem development...as I became aware of the inequality and all that goes with it, I moved forward when I knew it was necessary. Gradually, I dropped out of parish. I found my community with the sisters who were truly doing the work of the church. My husband left the church because of the lack of acknowledgment and stopping the terrible abuse of priests with young boys/girls and even sisters and the closing of parishes in the inner city and more. Our children were grown and moved for our home and community.

I was telling my young daughters about all the careers they could have and when I told them they could be just about anything they wanted to be except a catholic priest, I could not think of a good reason when they asked me why they couldn't be a priest if they wanted to. That chipped away at my faith.

Hard to name just one time. I was a music minister. The men acting as “music directors” argued over and made fun of inclusive language on some of the hymns or psalms. On easter vigil, when I was baptized 31 years ago in a different more conservative parish, the church did the 7th reading from Ezekiel that talked about sin as a “menstrual rag.” I was stunned. I went ahead with my baptism and confirmation, but that blew me away. Some other issues have affected me personally but not necessarily because I'm a women. I'm turned off by clericalism in general. When the Cincinnati bishop combined the parishes with the “beacons of light” program, no priests or lay people were consulted when he arbitrarily said there shall be no more pastors over age 65. The laity supposedly had a 3-week window to write comments on the parish families that were being merged, but I doubt they read any of our comments or cared. I'm glad you are doing this and by-passing the local bishops who would censor what people are saying from their own sodality discussions. I am between parishes right now, and perhaps between faiths too. I am disillusioned by the cover-up, the clericalism, the changes in the local seminary (eliminating lay pastoral program where women could study to be parish administrators), and catholic social teaching. Arrogant professors write about getting rid of Vatican ii and can't wait for the older (vat ii) priests to retire so they could make the church “as it should be.” then they said all “employees” had to take a virtue training (for no extra pay) to attend a 3-hour meeting and then get monthly emails and questionnaires to fill out, just to earn \$50 per weekend. Not worth it, so I quit and went volunteer. I stayed with it 3 more years. Between the pandemic,

the very far-right emails from one musician in particular, and the power-grab right now of the archdiocese of Cincinnati, I have left for now.

I am continually disappointed by the failure of the church at large to acknowledge, accept and foster the graces women are given to minister and lead.

The sadness of listening to a person's pain and unable to offer reconciliation.

Every time I attended mass. Culminated when it was decided to close the only diverse parish in the diocese. Last straw for me.

There are so many examples that I could share and that have really saddened me. It seems that each experience only deepened the hurt and disappointment. Women are the ones who have kept these parishes and missions together all of these years, but the native American women very seldom are recognized for the great witness that they are to the catholic faith, and their ability to speak the native language to the elderly who do not understand English. Women are the life blood in many, many of the parishes yet are often treated poorly. Women by virtue of their baptism should be welcomed to the priesthood, prophet, leader (king)

Xxxxx

New bishop arrived, he cut off two sisters who were working in the diocese. (Alaska). They were not needed. One was pastoral associate other did religious ed in many distant parishes.

I have an intentional eucharistic community for the last 40 years. All the unjust ways the church treats women anger me.

Clergy dismissed input from women and used authority to keep women in their assigned roles.

When sr. Joan Chittister was prohibited by the Vatican from being a speaker at a conference in Ireland because the topic was a feminist one.

Ban on contraception. Seven children. Oldest still three when we had four. Husband with recurring major depression. Rhythm took a while to learn.

Several close friends of mine, former staff members, have experienced intense clericalism and worse, confronted the priests, involved - only to have been discounted. The current bishop has seriously aggravated some situations.

When, as women religious, we were asked by the bishop to administer a large parish (over 9 years) as there was no priest available, and not permitted to participate in the diocesan meetings concerning parishes because we were women, and not priests. It was then that I realized the full extent of women's dismissal within the church, not recognized, used for work, but no participation in direction, planning, - no voice. Feminist theology, and study of biblical women was an enormous, hopeful help. Working with small faith communities (ceb's) was important. Working to bring about change is empowering. Hope.

When a highly respected nun in my parish who was first part of a rural ministry team, and then served as the co-pastor of a parish in our valley with another nun when the priest had been removed for alcoholism was withheld communion at a funeral mass where she had just delivered the eulogy. I, along with many others, was outraged and wrote a letter of protest to the priest with copy to the archbishop. I was furious and heartbroken and struggled to continue participating in the mass and stopped contributing financially. The priest ultimately apologized to her and said he had made a mistake and that he had not received training to know what to do. This amazing nun since left her order after 33 years and is estranged from the church that she had served so faithfully and well. I am still grieving over the rupture I felt with my church.

For years women have been involved with the church, doing anything that is asked of them. They are many times the influence in their families for involvement with the church. It is shameful to see women used but not accepted as equals. There is much corruption and secrecy among the hierarchy of the church, too much patriarchy that has gone on unchecked and unquestioned. The hypocrisy is apparent and therefore, the church as a whole is suffering. God created man and woman in his image, yet there are those in the church that ignore that and only include the male of the species. I believe god is wiser than man, and therefore, we should recognize that both men and women are needed to make the whole. I have lost trust in the catholic church because of the hypocrisy and how men have ignored following Jesus, who always included women as equals. Men placed themselves above women, and that is not what god intended. God created us to work together and thus be whole.

I have been disappointed, hurt and often angered by the lack of empathy, often accompanied by arrogance, displayed by some priests over the years. No room for dialogue... no interest in listening... Whenever confronted with those situations, I left seeking a different parish.

Women in my parish are always asked to prepare and clean up after parish functions. I have been involved in ministry to my parish for over 50 years but rarely receive a thank you. I was asked by my pastor to serve on the finance council because he "needed a token woman". When the current pastor brought in a new administrator, he took over the duties of the finance council without even telling us.

My whole life I've been seen as "less than" the hierarchy, that the holy spirit speaks to me through the priest, bishop, pope. I have had individual priests/pastors who valued me as an equal, but I have to search for them.

None

General lack of interest in hearing women's concerns by hierarchy. Some churches I attend are receptive and progressive, but they are rare.

My memory broke open to violent sexual abuse from my parents when I was 52. I have worked to heal it ever since and have at the same time been working to heal other abused in spiritual direction and healing of memories. The more healed I have become, the less I can tolerate the scandalous lack of mutuality in the church. The church is abusive and is openly living the isms. Since covid I have not been able to go back to church.

Eucharistic ministers were always welcomed to give communion at mass however one Sunday I was requested not to as some would receive only from the priest

I was hoping pope Francis would be more open to women ordination. I was disappointed that he hasn't. It didn't affect my relationship to my community.

I was principal of a parochial/catholic school and was at a board meeting where salaries were being discussed. We had one male teacher among a number of female teachers, some of whom were longer employed by us than the man was. The pastor and some of the board men decided that the male teacher should be on a higher wage scale than the women. When I asked "why?", it was clear that it was because of gender. I was upset and declared that we women are not to be considered the servants of church men. I believed this was rooted in the payment/stipend that was given to religious sisters who were teachers before the day of lay teachers. That made me look deeper into the injustices dealt to women in church.

I am a Catholic sister for 65 years. I have a master's degree in theology and offered to help teach a bible course on st Paul in my parish. The pastor approved the textbook but I brought other books in and expanded the study to

include more information. One of the students reported me to father saying I was teaching things not in the text. The pastor informed me that I could not bring any information in from the outside and that I had to follow the chosen book. He didn't want to teach anything that might be controversial even though it was accepted by the church. I never went back to the parish classroom and started meeting in the convent introducing new theological interpretations. I have never been asked by the pastor to do another class.

At a recent synod the international male superiors offered 5 of their 10 votes to the international women superiors. The Vatican refused to allow the women to vote. It was one of most concrete expressions of the formal church's commitment to senseless misogyny. Male church leaders seem blind to the damage that excluding women does to the body of Christ.

A friend who went through the diaconate and was ignored by the men. A bishop who encourages women to be omitted from lectors, eucharistic ministry, positions at the diocese. Etc., etc.

The wearing of the habit, for some bishops no longer here was the entry to acknowledgement as a person. As ministry to the poor engaged collaboration with both men and women of mixed faiths there was some openness, but still a question of full acknowledgement questioned because of no habit. The habit does not make a vowed religious woman or man, nor dress a committed lay person of faith.

When a parish shared she was being touched in an uncomfortable way at the kiss of peace by the pastor. I told her how to be safe but it upset me and I could not shake hands with him anymore nor go to mass there for a few weeks.

Being seen as second class, not worthy to stand at the altar and serve as equal to the priest. It really drove me away, because my gifts of

service, passion for justice and social issues are what the spirit is calling for at this time and place. And those gifts are being discounted. I no longer attend mass on any regular basis.

It was holy Thursday. 15 eucharistic ministers were needed. Most of us who signed up were women. About 20 minutes before mass, the priests from Jesuit high school appeared and filled most of the positions. I was angry at the men who assume that it was their right to take the women's positions. And I was saddened by the women who cheerfully stepped aside. My disenchantment with the superior attitude of the Jesuits increased. And I saw the results of centuries of women's second-class citizenship in the church.

When the cardinal kicked our religious community out of all his diocesan schools and got the Vatican to stop our community from being canonical.

In Colombia where I grew up women were more repressed than in the U.S. but many did not know it; when I came to this country & observed how women were not given leadership positions except in the charismatic movement for those immigrant communities if the pastor approved of their movement. For me it was difficult to discuss my feelings freely with pastors in the church except with the Jesuit professors & they supported me in my theological studies. Many of my women friends could not speak with their pastors about how they felt as women: treated like they were inferior to the men in the church.

For many years, I was active in religious education in my parish. There were times when the priest conducted some experience tied to religious education that the women who were actively involved with the students would have been the better choice.

I worked with a priest on a liturgy committee who considered the women on the committee to be his workers. He wasn't interested in

having the women contribute ideas for good liturgies.

I took it granted the priests and pastor were taking us for granted. As long we walk the walk we had the okay.

The church's treatment has angered me most of my life. Vatican ii offered real hope until it was sabotaged, starting as soon as pope john xxiii died. I was very excited about the church's future as Vatican ii approached, waited for progress to be made and it never happened. The upshot: I simply don't trust the catholic church, not now and probably not ever. This has not affected my spiritual life as much as it might have because I am part of a 50-year-old intentional community of like-minded Catholics who see the message of Jesus as more important than the foolishness of the institution.

Dismissed as « oh yes she is one of those » more boldness, more prayer, more study and trying to love my brothers into wholeness

My wife served as a hospital chaplain for 28 years, but church policy designated using that term only for priests. Blessed by her presence and prayer some patients asked how they could come to her church to hear her preach. Serving as an official leader of prayer, some elderly men refused to be served by her, while a 95-year old male, disgruntled by abuse scandals, said he would only come back to the church when women (my wife in particular) could be priests. Restrictions on who could share "reflections" (preaching reserved for ordained); or serve mass (our best servers were girls.)

Feeling called to working in the church, I optimistically left a good, steady, teaching position of many years, to study theology, believing this would lead to employment within the diocese. I paid for the studies myself. A Master of Arts, (theology and pastoral care). During the early stages of my studies the bishop said he would find a job for me. I had a

letter to support that also. However, this did not happen; not during my studies or when I had finished.

I had made decisions in good faith that affected not only me, but my family, based upon this understanding of diocesan employment. During my studies I had been offered my old teaching position back, but I declined, believing what the bishop said to me. There would be a job in the diocese for me.

After my studies & no employment, my new parish priest, and also my spiritual director, a nun, spoke basically of the bias against women being employed in our diocese and of their own negative, personal experience or understanding of it. There was little support for woman in most roles. Nuns they also did not have to pay. The church had become a male business also.

Had I known the true picture I would have accepted my former schools offer to go back to teach.

I was very disappointed, and the event did change the trajectory of my life.

In 1975, women eucharistic ministers were turned away at the altar, though approved by previous pastor/ bishop. We challenged the new bishop through our parish council which he then dissolved. We appealed to Rome and they sent a mediator. During this process, 200 families kept doing their family religious education, practicing social justice and going into dc for Sunday liturgy. This was good shepherd parish, Alexandria, VA

A lay minister was removed abruptly without consultation from her role because of a disability.

I get angry especially when I see services on media with hundreds of male priests all together. When I hear about shortage of priests.

I'm offended that that women cannot preach the gospel. When I was ministering in a united Methodist church, I could do more in that church than I could in my own. Sad.

Our pastoral associate who is an amazing, inspiring, compassionate woman served as a hospital chaplain prior to accepting the position of pastoral associate with us. She told of times when she had ministered to families and developed a deep relationship with them during their hospitalization only to have to call a priest in the middle of the night to administer the last rites when death became imminent. It was heartbreaking for her, the family, and me when I heard her story.

During the recession of 2008, our parish reduced the salaries of only the female employees to make ends meet. Or when a colleague claimed sexual harassment and was fired, sued and blacklisted. Each instance distanced me from the cc.

A while back I started a group about women in the church. The pastor laughed and said "they are a bunch of lesbians". He didn't even know who was in the group when he said this. I think most priests see feminism as something negative and destructive and composed of women who did not accept their place that either or both the church and wider culture has given them. The culture has moved considerably in a newer direction but I think our clergy has not.

When archbishop burke excommunicated a nun because she attended a women's ordination ceremony. It further distanced me from the catholic hierarchical church. Also, when women chaplains were told they could not use that title of chaplains even though they even better training than seminarians in working with the sick.

Too numerous to isolate the instances where women in perceived leadership have been dismissed by clergy. The catholic church

seems to be going backward. There is less welcome and opportunity for women in leadership roles in my own parish. Our current pastor (18 years is too long) make draconian changes in the pastoral associate's role and finally eliminating the position. The negativity associated with the authoritarian leadership is a distraction from the ability to fully appreciate the community of faith.

Unfortunately, for most of my life I accepted the status quo.

When I realized that women are not allowed to give a homily. The priest must first say something, so it doesn't count as a homily, just a reflection. This makes no sense! Seems like something the pharisees would do.

As a lector I once offered to serve at a mass when there was no one assigned thinking I was offering to use my ministry to celebrate with the priest. He in turn said to me "oh we don't need you." needless to say my respect for this priest went to zero. It was humiliating and I felt "less than."

I was at daily mass a few months ago, and one of the people attending came up to me afterwards, looked at my modest shorts, and said, "you know, you really should cover up your legs, because," glancing up at the altar, "the priest up there, really doesn't need to be tempted seeing that." it would have been bad enough if she had told me to do so for Jesus, but the fact that it was for the sake of the priest needing to control his desires was incredibly hurtful. During that service, I hadn't looked up once at the altar because the pain of not being able to celebrate the sacraments was overbearing. Afterwards, a friend who witnessed the situation told me she was sorry. And at first I said, "that's okay." but then I thought about it a moment more, and realized that it's not okay. And I took the strong reaction to the comment as another movement of my spirit to sit attentively, openly with the call to ministry as one that also involves attentiveness to the

questions of ordination and priesthood. Since then, I have had a much harder time going to roman catholic liturgy, even though I have been involved in alternative catholic liturgies, and the sisters of St. Joseph. I am feeling grief at losing the trust I once had in the church. And through recognizing the limits of the church, I have greater appreciation for the gifts I have been given from my communities of faith, and the urgency to make space for transformation within the institution.

No specific time, but a overall awareness that we don't count...that we're not of value. Starting as a child realizing that girls could be altar servers and continuing onward from there.

I was invited to be the lay representative at the diocese initiative in around 2003 to address better relationships/communication between clergy and laity. It was very apparent that most of the priest that were participating really didn't even want to be there. I attended all six of the sessions and at everyone say was either cut off by a priest or was never even acknowledged. It was after this experience that I realized as a woman there really was no place for me in this institutional church of patriarchy

I am deeply offended by the church's assumption that women cannot equally image the sacred as can a man. It has made my embracing of my true self so much harder than it had to be. I don't buy this attitude. It sets women out as second-class, which is not god's view. I ask with Jesus, "why do you harass the woman?" the basic approach of keeping women out of ordained leadership is discriminatory and spiritually abusive. I stopped in 2008 allowing that kind of thinking to define me, preferring instead to explore Celtic spirituality and to meet and connect with believers in Jesus and the spirit alive in creation outside the roman system. A community of diverse Christians, including Catholics, and some from other spiritualities-- ordained me in 2012 to serve in the "priestly ministry of Christ's church." I continue today

to do that as a spiritual facilitator of a Celtic Christian focused community, Brigid's circle of compassion, as part of an interspiritual team. I also am deeply disappointed that the local Jesuit university trains women to be ordained spiritual leaders and yet won't speak up publicly in opposition to local diocesan roman catholic leadership for the right of roman catholic women to be ordained. I find this a betrayal. I no longer knowingly give my time or my money to organizations that don't fully respect women, catholic or otherwise. To do less, is a sin against myself and all the other women out there trying to be true to who God made them to be.

It has been very disappointing when women have not been able to give a homily at mass. When women are treated as second class citizens. It has been heart wrenching to be with women who feel called to share their gifts and talents and that sharing has been denied.

Disappointed every Sunday when I look at the altar and say no women priests or women deacons. Therefore, no women bishops or cardinals making policies and decisions.

I am disappointed every day I hear about the clergy sex scandal or experience the pervasive preference for "maleness" on our church.

Pastor says, "I don't need any help". I am educated with mst degree and experienced: pastoral administrator, bible study leader, returning Catholics coordinator, RCIA director? Stewardship director, pastoral associate. Can I lead a women's morning seminar? No thanks was the reply can I lead a bible study vkk lg ass? No thanks bo's was the reply

Some years ago the practice of silencing theologians who were priests and religious sisters was the order of the day for the cdf. I see this as a disgraceful act.

When the intensity of my work as music-liturgist in a parish was not understood after

asking for part-time help. I was told to look for volunteers. It did not affect my relationship with the faith community. I left my work the next year and never went back to working in a parish.

In 2019/2020 a young priest was assigned to our welcoming, dynamic, spirit filled parish. We knew him (or at least we thought we knew him) as a seminarian whom we had welcomed into our faith community. Little did we know he observed that we were doing many things that were not liturgically correct. Sadly, the spirit of discipleship which the people of Saint Mark's totally embraced as part of their baptismal call had no part of his preconceived plan to introduce a number of changes that reflected a very conservative pre-Vatican mindset. It was not until he quietly and gingerly introduced his desire to have altar boys as opposed to altar servers that he crossed a line. The fact that any priest would dare to say young girls serving on the altar would intimidate young boys is blasphemy. I spoke directly to the priest on this matter and he defended his statement by reciting a number of U.S. sites which would back up his claim. I explained in no uncertain terms that we the people at Saint Mark's are not and will not be called to ministry by gender. The bottom line was there were enough people from Saint Mark's who stood their ground that he abandoned the idea. Many folks myself included who have been active members of saint mark's for 40 years realized the spirit on which we built our vibrant, welcoming, faith filled and spirit filled community was being eroded and replaced with a pre Vatican ideology rooted in the law to the point where the original hand carved wooden sculpture of the risen Christ hanging behind our altar was taken down in accordance with the law.

There are so many incidents. A pastor wished to be rid of me in the parish where I was employed as a pastoral minister. I was living in a house owned by the parish which my religious community was renting from the parish. The pastor left a message on my

'phone that he needed to bring sisters from another community whom he thought would be more subservient to him, to inspect the house in my absence with a viewing to their renting it. I asked a parishioner to accompany me on an unannounced visit to the rectory to witness when I would challenge the pastor on his treatment of me. He tried to pull rank on me. This did not work for him because I stood up to him, and so I was not evicted. It was difficult to do, but it bonded me even more to the parishioners. They were being exploited by a series of pastors who belonged to a religious community. I was being edged out because I was too outspoken about this treatment and encouraged the parishioners to do the same. Most of these pastors were used to walking over their parishioners, especially women. Women were just useful to them for doing the donkey work.

Many years ago, the episcopal diocese in anchorage was elevating/ordinating a person to be the new bishop of their diocese. They didn't have a large enough church in which to have the ceremony. The catholic church did and so invited them to use one of the Catholic's large churches. Then, the archdiocese discovered that the current bishop of the United States was Katharine Jeffers-shori!! A woman! And the archdiocese quickly rescinded the invitation almost at the last minute. So, the episcopals had to find another venue at the last minute for this important occasion for their community. I have never been so embarrassed at the lack of generosity shown to our sister church. Thankfully, the Methodists were generous enough to offer their much smaller church but nonetheless, the ritual happened. I went to that ordination, and I'll never forget the sight of both men and women priests in the procession. But when I saw bishop Katherine in her robes, miter and staff, it was all I could do to keep from sobbing. It was only then that I realized on a gut level, how marginalized and dismissed women are in the catholic church. I am on the periphery of the church now. I don't attend mass or anything and am marginally

associated with my local parish. I just can't go there. I love my catholic faith and the parish community, but I do not love the institutional church.

In a previous parish the pastor would not allow women to be sacristans or readers.

A woman had been added to our summertime Idaho parish (serving a bit like a deacon) because our priest had a very strong accent and it was difficult to understand his sermons. She spoke on scripture - not from the pulpit - and serve our parish well. She enlivened it and many of us love and respected her. Not sure who wanted to get rid of her but suspect it was older male parishioners after about 9 months she was gone. She now preaches and serves in an ecumenical community. I was quite disappointed personally and mass became less meaningful. I do feel it was probably well-heeled male members who got the bishop's ear.

When I heard the stories of my sisters who were dismissed from pastoral leadership in parishes when they finally got a "real priest" to assign to a community. When I learned of the silencing, public humiliation and professional censoring of one of my sisters who dared to say to the class of seminarians she was preparing to do what she was not permitted to do that she thought the topic of women's ordination was worthy of discussion. And another of my sisters removed from her professorship at a catholic university because someone reported that she had been spotted in attendance at a woman's ordination ceremony. Heartbreaking, frustrating each and every ongoing time, but ever more determined to stay, like women always do from the day under Christ's cross, through the persecution and challenges. We will rise, and all god's people will rise because of it.

I served for nearly 20 years at a Jesuit parish as the pastoral associate/director. I gave the best years of my life with generosity of time, treasure, and talent only to be belittled,

humiliated, and harassed by one pastor for 12 years. We even went to mediation. Agreements were made to each other. Lip service only

New to catholic school in the 5th grade and impressed by the sisters teaching and the Jesuit priests who came quite frequently to teach religion class, I said to a group of girls that I thought I would be a Jesuit priest when I grew up. Of course, they all laughed and explained that none of us could be priests or even altar boys(servers) at that time. For my part, I immediately thought that it was unfair, an injustice and still do. Becoming a sister of the holy names of Jesus and Mary was a blessing for me because we are women who try to right the injustices of our world, especially for the women and children of the marginalized of all peoples.

In my first position as a member of a parish council, I was actually replacing a person who had chaired the committee on social justice. This was the work I most wanted to do for our church, so I was looking forward to it. At the first meeting I was told that that I would chair the hospitality committee. I was incredibly disappointed but also a little angry that there was no discussion invited or allowed. It was just decided by the chairperson. Clearly, I had no voice. While I carried out my work as hospitality chair happily getting to know more of the older women in our parish, I was acutely aware that at the time a few men controlled the parish conversation. It was a difficult community in that it was quite set in its ways and there were few people from my generation present. We were fortunate to have an understanding priest who did his best to create good relationships with the parishioners.

All of the handling of the sexual abuse issues. Lost all confidence in any decisions or edicts coming from bishops or hierarchy.

A friend was receiving encouragement and training to be a homilist. All that ended with the arrival of a new pastor. Years before at

another parish, a group of us were asked to pack up the belongings of the pastor who was being moved to another parish. At the time it was not a problem but looking at it from this side it was ridiculous. That was a woman's job!

Especially as a young child, I realized that the sisters that taught me were better educated, kinder, and reachable than the pastor. He restricted their lifestyle (even electricity and heat in their convent). What I, as a child, assumed was the vow of poverty, proved to be a form of abuse.

Pick any time you tell me a woman can't be...deacon, preach the sermon, lead the communion, be a priest, etc. Etc.

I'm am pained every week I sense the absence of women preaching at the pulpit of our parishes. I know faithful, capable, spiritually prophetic catholic women who have discerned a call from God to break open the word and break bread in a faith tradition which no longer regards these gifts with equality and justice.

The theology of complementarity (developed from St. Paul's teachings rather than Jesus' directly) also consistently harms me and the women in my life through unjust standards of norms and behaviors and skills place on us because of patriarchal stereotypes around gender (provider/leader vs. Receiver/servant). This limits my ability as a cisgender male to fully explore my fundamental calling to be a caregiver in my family and community.

In both of these instances, my response has been to find solace, confirmation, support, and comfort in personal prayer and community of believers outside of the institutional church/parish which does little to nothing to challenge these biases and fully engage with an expansive and inclusive idea of God and the participation of the ecclesial community.

I was leading a retreat day for women and one of the women was upset with the way I

was bringing in the Samaritan women and questioning what caused her to be isolated from the community. I questioned the role of the men in her life and how she had been treated. The upset woman and a few others told the pastor at the lunch break and he was very rude to me and told me to “stay in line” in my presentation! It was a very hurtful situation. Others in the group were grateful for my sharing. However, a letter was sent to the bishop and all the deacons in the area saying I was unfit for these kinds of programs. I have been teaching classes and giving retreats for many years in the diocese. However, it has been 4 years since anyone has asked me to do anything - other in my own parish.

The bishop never responded to the situation.

When bishop dewane came to a parish we knew that no girls could serve at mass or women be lectors. Disappointed and angry!

It began when I could not be an altar server. At the time I just accepted it. This was the 1950's.

Very hurt (not angry) at how women continue to be treated as third class persons by the institutional church.

Have decided to stay within the catholic faith, when over half of my catholic women friends have walked out in the last 30 years. There are times that I just want to walk out but staying in for a more embracing church for my great grandchildren. Let women give homilies, ordain them as deacons as minimal steps.

I am the director of music ministry at our church. I have a masters degree in music education. In liturgical events, the head of the ushers gets public recognition, where I get a thanks to the choir.

I was deacon but was not given a key to the gates to enter school property. Every Saturday I had to call the priest and ask him to come and open the gates. I always had the keys in my possession with the former pastor who

had died. It made me feel not trusted, totally disempowered, like a child and angry. It caused a great disruption because I was delayed on entering the premises and could not get order so that I could speak with the parents and the children as they entered the building.

Unwillingness to ordain women

When the Sioux city diocese celebrated the centenary of Catholic education at the first catholic school, bishop Mueller spoke about an hour without ever mentioning sisters. It didn't affect my relationship much. I had always thought Mueller was a jackass.

I feel clergy in general don't get that we women are viewed as second class citizens of the church. I get angry, but I've numbed myself to the reality.....like an abused child does to survive.

At the time when women excluded as servers and from giving reflections and certainly today from diaconate and priesthood. It angered me as such exclusions takes away their pastoral ministry and is so not in the line with Jesus 's inclusion message.

Most recently at a diocesan event where all of the altar servers, priests, and bishop celebrating mass in the sanctuary were male.

When women are overlooked or not included in decisions affecting their church or parish; no visible leadership positions or co-equal collaboration.

My best friend & I wanted to be altar servers as soon as we began attending mass with our catholic grade school classmates. Our hearts were broken when we watched some of the boys leave our classroom for training, funerals, at the altar. My mother was active as a volunteer & officer with groups of women sponsored by the church. Other was a week organized motivational leader & a good speaker, yet she was never invited to serve at the altar. Sadly,

my current church (which is huge) has almost all men in leadership & administrative roles (the women are almost all in the work of the school). I know women religious thru my friend who teach seminarians & advanced to high levels of education & administration - but not the altar. The thought of women being hidden in the gospels appalls me)

Whenever I see women in pain in the roman catholic church. When I see their calls dismissed, when I have encountered talented women ministers or rabbis or priests other than male roman catholic priests and I wonder why ordained roman catholic male bishops and popes are so firm that they cannot ordain roman catholic women as priests and that god doesn't want women ordained in service in our churches. It is becoming more common to have women ordained in other denominations and our roman catholic male bishops are more frequently in public roles with ordained women bishops and priests from other faiths. Do they diminish these women in such roles, too, consciously or unconsciously? Women have been treated as second class in society for centuries, and when the roman catholic church exclude women from ordination, it is sending a condescending message about women to all the world and reinforcing sexist discrimination against women in the world. Please let your consciences be raised and please begin to listen with your hearts to women who say they feel a call from god and try to begin to trust both women and god on this subject. First do no harm. Please think about this sincerely.

There are too many to recall and record here. The one that stands out today is when I was in seminary, I was not allowed to take the sacramental rites course with other seminarians because I am a female. I was told I could enroll but would have "special projects" since the priest would not let me learn about the rites with my male colleagues. None of these other students were ordained. I wanted to learn all of the components to sacramental celebrations, just like my peers. And I was denied. I still

do not think that is legitimate. None of my classmates were ordained. Yes, they were ordained after we graduated, but why allow me to enroll in a master of divinity program if you are denying me access to all of the courses? This made me feel angry and detached from my school community where I had invested three years of my life.

Nuns blocked out of the decision-making process, women not allowed to be priests or deacons

I can't really isolate one time that treatment of women affected me personally. For me, it's really about a lifetime of witnessing women treated as second rate citizens of the church. It took way too long for the "modern" church to recognize that women were more than capable of doing what was considered the important work in the church. Women were pretty much relegated to cooking to make money for the church, cleaning the church, rectory or school and occasionally "allowed" to teach religion classes to the "publics" if nuns or priests weren't available. Even nuns were never made to feel as important as the priests in the parish. In my formative years, it didn't really upset me because it was pretty much the accepted path for women. It wasn't until after Vatican ii made it acceptable for women to take ministerial and liturgical roles within the church that I could see we had a place there. When these "privileges" than began to be eroded, discouraged and removed during the reigns of pope john Paul ii and pope benedict xvi, it became and continues to be a cause of concern and also resentment towards the patriarchy and clericalism in the catholic church.

The pastor came into a campus ministry (although quite a large church) and implemented a sexist ridiculous dress code for the young women on the altar and then put men (campus ministers and staff) in the sacristy to police the young women - looking them up and down and humiliating them if

they weren't dressed according to their 1940's standards- totally disgusting

A group of both religious and lay parish life coordinators of parishes we're not recognized equally, with preference to deacons by bishop Ricken.

I was on staff in a small parish in the diocese of Crookston. Our new pastor was a priest from India who had not been enculturated by the diocese into the ways of living in the United States let alone into the faith culture of the local church. Armored with self-righteous, thinking he ought to be treated as a king and with no people skills, the breakdown in communication between him and his educated female staff was soon apparent. It was the lone male staff person, the youth minister, who finally brought it to the attention of the diocese. At a meeting with a diocesan mediator, the pastor admitted his discomfort with relating to women. He felt like he was dealing with "mother superiors."

This was the first time I felt the sting of such prejudice, feeling dismissed, even though I had more pastoral experience than he did. Unfortunately, there were those in the faith community who relished his traditional, and clerical ways. It was that small faction who later, with the approval of this priest, "hijacked" a meeting with the parish councils and the vicar general of the diocese. This episode was the final straw as my effectiveness as a pastoral minister was left wanting. I pursued employment elsewhere.

The pastor said he could no longer afford a sister. Leadership in parish councils are illuminated because their roles and education were not prepared. Because of these things the life of broader outreach and effect of the secular area of life is limited.

Holy Thursday, only men were invited to have their feet washed, when there are women of the parish who represent the majority of the labor.

Just last week, I was at a meeting where women serving the church were not even mentioned rather totally unmentioned and overlooked. It happens daily on a small scale and on a more public arena.

When one of the women was ordained in the RCWP group she was totally rejected by her parish after faithful years of service to that parish

I am getting very tired of hearing god described in masculine terms only. I feel invisible and diminished and disinclined to participate or engage at the parish level. In particular is when, at the easter vigil, the reading from genesis is read by several people and the person reading god's lines has the deepest voice they can find.

There are many instances I have read about. One that pertains to me relates to my changing the language of the reading I was doing for that Sunday mass and was severely reprimanded. It was what the pastor said that really mattered without any consideration to the fact that half of the church community are women.

Our former bishop, now deceased, refused to let a lay woman continue in her role as a eucharistic minister, reader, religious ed teacher because of her dissertation (with fr. Bryan massingale as her advisor) in which the bishop said she supported the ordination of women. I felt angry about the bishop removing her participation in these roles; I felt he was unfair and harsh. I felt affronted and dismayed that he was unwilling to even listen to her explanation of exactly what she had written.

My mom was a teacher for a special needs kids at our parish. Because of the health problems she had one summer, she was not allowed to return to the program that fall. We left the parish - the parish that I grew up in, at which I first received the sacraments of eucharist and reconciliation - because of that. Mom still believed, but she rarely ever attended mass for

the rest of her life. Dad and I didn't go back to regular mass attendance until about three years later (after 9/11).

Several years later one priest said that only men could have their feet washed on holy Thursday. Supposedly, that was because the apostles were all men. (what's ironic is what those men did after the last supper: judas betrayed him, peter denied him, and the rest left him. Only some women and maybe a few men stayed with Jesus or did anything for him when he went through everything.) Anyway, it's one of the things that got me to consider going to another parish (which I did a year or two later).

I am affected by the treatment of women in the church every single day by the mere fact that they are not permitted to practice their baptismal right to serve the people of god in the ordained ministries.

As a woman, I am reminded every Sunday of my second-class citizenship.

Being told we could not homilize (as we had done in the past). Stopping inclusive language in the Sunday readings. Not allowing women to be priests. Being told I could be excommunicated for attending the ordination of a catholic woman priest.

All my life (I am 81 years old) I have seen women as second-class citizens in my church. It is especially true of the way I have seen priests regard consecrated, religious women who are primarily responsible for building the church in the United States. It is an abomination!

Religious orders of nuns restrained from giving their own homilies.

When pope Francis opened the role of acolyte to girls & women I asked our pastor if he would train some of our older women to serve mass because our weekday masses and funerals had no school-age boys to serve he said no, that

some parishioners complained that the altar servers were contaminating people with covid, and the bishop said we could just do without servers.

A friend of mine had to leave to follow her calling for vocation and it caused it to make me realize the sexism

I was not allowed to participate as a reader at my aunt's funeral. I was angry, hurt and marginalized by my church.

When LGBTIQQ women were told that they could not receive communion. We are not a welcoming or engaging community of faith.

When I felt called to priesthood. And during the sexual abuse scandal. I left the church and came back but I continue to feel pained by the treatment of women

When my ministry positions went from being contractual to "agreements", my husband was quite angered given that I was now employed, but not secure beyond the whim of the pastor, or supposed budgetary cutbacks. I had one pastor change my job description in such a way that it was impossible for me to continue without leaving my young family for days at a time in order to attend the college classes newly required. Travel time one way was 4 hours.

The pastor let me know thru the business manager that I couldn't be paid for a week off because they needed to hire a janitor for the new building who needed to be paid at least 10 thousand dollars more than I was getting paid because "that's what it takes to get a man to work there." I was making \$28,000 to run the family faith formation program for 1,000 families, with two masters degrees one in theology and one in religious education. (both of these degrees I paid for myself.) Needless to say I left there.

In 1967 a deacon in my parish mentioned in a homily that at his seminary they were saying

that someday women would be ordained in the catholic church. I was so excited about that! However, I am hurt that it has not happened yet in the church. We need the symbolism of women at the altar, showing that God loves women as much as men. We need women's gifts and graces. Today I go to mass online with women priests from the association of roman catholic women priests as well as going to mass at my local parish. I am 79 now, but I wish women would be ordained in my lifetime.

When 2 friends were not ordained but had taken all the diaconate training with men who were ordained.

When attending graduate school for my theology degree, I was told by two deacons and a priest that "you will never make it through. It is not for women." the lack of support and recognition of my "call to ministry" was the beginning of my leaving the parish I had belonged to and been involved with for over 25 years.

I have been hurt by a pastor and his male business partner as they removed me from my role. It did not affect my faith, but the action divided the faith community for a time.

I was working as a volunteer in charge of the RCIA with a priest who valued my contribution. I would guide him through each of the various stages of the RCIA, all the parishioners (a small parish) were involved with the catechumens, and we all worked as a team. One day the pastor was moved, and a young priest replaced him. From day 1 everything stopped--the RCIA, the dramatization of the gospel, carrying the bible aloft in the entrance procession, etc., etc. The priest said all that was not allowed by the church.

Once when I was on retreat the sister who was conducting the retreat was going to speak at mass...she was only allowed to speak at the end of the service and only allowed to call her words "a reflection" even though she

was giving a true homily which she was only allowed to present at the end of mass but not after the gospel!...also I had noted to the pastor of my parish that there were no adult women altar servers even though there were men up on the altar...I commented that little boy altar servers get to see men being servers but girl altar servers never get to see women altar servers...I was told that was because the men were "acolytes" which was a step toward becoming a deacon even though I knew that none of those men were heading for the diaconate...so I asked to become an adult woman altar server and was granted permission, but told I wasn't to call myself an acolyte...only an altar server...I referred to myself as an acolyte anyway each time I shared my joy at this new "privilege."

No opportunity for women to give homilies. This policy is evidence of lack of full inclusion of myself (a retired speech/debate coach) and who taught for 2 years at philosophical seminary in Malawi.

Lack of embrace as a full human by the institutional church

I am currently in a state of disappointment, hurt and anger due to recent changes enforced by the bishop. It has drawn our bible group closer, but has driven away less active worshippers.

Investigation of women religious by the Vatican

Almost every day. I've worked in the church as a laywoman and then taught in a Jesuit university as a laywoman. Not a day goes by when I'm not "put in my place" as one who is not enough. The biggest hurt, though, comes through my daughters and granddaughter who do not find themselves welcomed in any way.

I have heard priests discount women in less than kind ways. As a male, it filled me with shame.

A pastor changed after he built his new church. In the old building, women were allowed to serve and do the readings after we moved into the new church he no longer allowed women on the altar at all. It felt like a step back in time prior to the second Vatican council.

When a full-time theology professor with tenure was forced to sign silencing agreements to receive benefits to secure her family's financial stability when the theology department was closed at a catholic university and funding went to establishing a football program. To think of all the young people who will not have the gift and blessing of this amazing mentor's presence in their lives as they travel through their college years makes me feel physically ill. Our bonds and braiding of faith based small justice ministry, bible study group and connections to online catholic communities and resources has grown and developed and are strong as a way that balances this injustice.

Every time I go to mass and see no women at the altar, I know Jesus feels hurt as he always welcomed and affirmed women and I feel victimized. At mass whenever a priest mentions about "vocations" or prayers of the faithful invoke more priestly vocations I say loudly "and for the full inclusion of women to serve our church". Also, have stopped giving and encourage others to not give a donation to diocesan annual appeal / capital campaign that further supports clericalism and oppresses women in the church. Over the years I have come to feel more marginalized, seeing the rise in clericalism, especially among recently ordained priests in the archdiocese, and also being denied to serve as a pastoral associate because a change in policy by the archdiocese to prioritize deacons for pastoral associates and parish life directors. Feeling the call to be a priest and know just because of my gender I cannot be a priest

As a missionary, assigned to speak in parishes, it was up to the pastor to tell me when I could make the appeal. First of all, in many

areas, priests were disappointed that they got a "sister" instead of a priest...because if assigned a priest they could have the weekend off. Some pastors were very welcoming and "allowed" me to make the appeal at the time of the homily. Other parishes would only give me a couple of minutes at the end of mass...or at the beginning of mass. I was well prepared to give the homily including the readings for the weekend as well as making the appeal. The parishioners in most churches welcomed me and my homily and many commented after mass how much they enjoyed having a woman able to give the homily. So the pastors who would not "allow" me to speak at the time of the homily or gave me two minutes after their 20 minute homily saddened me.

When the Vatican representatives investigated the united states women religious about their faith response to church teachings. As a former nun it angered me that seeing and experiencing the good works of the us active sisters that the church would question their commitment. I questioned the churches' commitment to women's status and empowerment.

Oh so many mornings I rode my bike with my brother to 7:00am mass so he could serve as an altar boy. Why could I only participate from the pew?

When the LCWR religious were placed under a microscope by the Vatican and used a conservative branch of religious to investigate/question them. My parish, a Vatican 11 parish began in 1969, were outraged.

I can't comment on it. At the moment I can't think of an incident where as a woman I felt intimidated.

New priest from other country insults parishioners, gossips., got ride of parish council, finance committee. He is in charge of everything. I am tired of such priests and

clericalism so backing away. Bishops encourage such priests.

Our parish used to have women homilists on a regular basis. It was wonderful, hearing the feminine perspective! Then, we had a change of ab and that went away.

When I was vice-chair of our parish pastoral council, the other members (priest, chair, associate vice-chair, were all men. At meetings, I was talked over, never feeling they were listening. Then, I told them I was sick of “the good ole boys ‘club”. They seemed shocked that I would feel that way?!

A change in pastor brought a very changed vision. Women on staff were a threat, in my opinion. After a year I resigned, several years earlier than I would have liked. I felt lost. It took several years to rebuild a sense of some community, but none with the pastoral leadership.

When women were not allowed to enter the sanctuary to read the word of God. It deeply hurt me and I was very disappointed. I began to doubt the integrity of the official church and prayed that one day women will be ordained.

Every time a priest makes a crack about how he’s not a good homilist and I know that there are women in the pew who could give a decent reflection on the readings.

When sisters were not permitted to read from the altar. The affect was heart rending.

Women are seen as secretaries or little people who are not leaders. When I went to speak to the priests and asked them to be supporters of a march on racial justice in the town of old Lyme, I was dismissed, and they did not want to hear more from me.

A priest from India showing respect for the laymen in the parish but not respecting the women’s opinions

In general, the fact that women are not allowed to be priests or deacons is enough to make me angry.

The absence of women preachers, deacons, even priests, in our church, especially when the need for priests, deacons, preachers is so great and evangelization also needed. It’s a question of respecting the talents god has given to women as well as men, and the expression of them that I think he expects. I don’t think he expects 50% of the church to have no authority in it. This has made my look to other churches that honor women by including the in their clergy. The Old Testament, and the new, is full of examples of women leadership, strength, and eloquence.

I have served in one capacity or another in the church for 50+years. Many good experiences, some deplorable experiences. (I am new resident in Wisconsin, so only interview experience here. One very fine, with diocesan personnel; one with young inexperienced priest who designed process for his own outcomes.) Nor parish interviewed me, a woman, with 12 people, all men. It was inhumane.

Benedict’s response to the pedophilia crisis, in addition to adding “those who habitually lack the use of reason” to the list of those who could be raped with impunity, was to invoke the greatest evil he could think of – women. It’s response to the pedophile crisis was to compare women who want to be priests with pedophiles. The mantra in the catholic church is that the priest “represents Christ.” So, it’s vision of Christ is a deranged predator of children holy solely because ze chose a male form when entering the corporeal realm. This isn’t the catholic church, it is the cult of Priapus, especially when all down the line from the pope to the bishops to the local priests they decided that the bestestest response to pedophilia is benne dick’s standard lecture on the sanctity of the penis. You should just see their little faces light up with joy on the subject. Per jean Vianney, they are now ontologically endowed to

be “right next to God!” They can conceive of nothing holier. The version in koine Greek was especially obnoxious.

When only a man/priest or deacon could preach from the pulpit and not during the liturgy, when family could not have the homily time at a parent’s funeral.

I was very hurt by the fact that I could not be an altar server growing up in the 60’s and 70’s.

Too many to list. The first time I felt angered was when I was ten years old and went to mass at a church out of state and saw there were altar girls. I had never seen such a thing. I realized that of course there should be altar girls. When I went home, I asked why don’t we have those, and was told we just don’t. I used to be jealous of the altar boys at my catholic school because they got to leave class to serve at funerals and they would get tipped a lot of money! But the main point of anger is that men are considered the only ones worthy of being priests and it’s just been a lifelong source of anger and sadness.

It took me years of study, hard work, and extensive building of experience before I became president of a catholic college. The bishop of the diocese met quarterly with the presidents of the catholic colleges which included: two women’s colleges, one university and the seminary. In our discussions, what the women had to say was not validated, but the men were heard. If a woman made a suggestion, it was not taken, but if a priest offered the same suggestion subsequently, it was agreed to. Women have consistently been treated like second class citizens in spite of our contributions to the church and to the people of God. Many of the sisters in parishes are considered “helpers” for the priests, even though they are better educated and more effective ministers of the gospel. This is not universal, but it is prevalent. Many, but not all, of the young seminarians being trained at this time have the same attitude. It is destructive!

It was very surprising to me to find the deacons I have encountered are even more dismissive of women than priests. My first realization came when I was co-leader of a Stephen ministry group and the deacon who was involved would not recognize my role nor that of the other women co-leader.

Being a student of liturgy, I have been hurt and angry when a new pastor discounted my knowledge and preferred instead to take advice from a male parishioner whose knowledge is inadequate. Firstly, I expected a priest with years of seminary behind him to be aware of liturgical practices, but to discount my brain because it belongs to a female was hurtful and I no longer want anything to do with this priest.

Decades ago, when applying for a youth ministry job in our parish, I was told that “I was just a mother.”

This winter I stepped up to the podium before the final blessing and asked that people please receive communion in their hands, not on their tongues, in order to protect those behind them for communion. I did this because I had felt a growing responsibility to say something, since our pastor was not taking care of us. I did not have the pastor’s permission to say this. He has refused to enforce our state or the bishop’s mandates at mass since last summer, even when asked to do so by a family physician in our parish. Our hospitals were at their highest covid patients ever this winter. There is one other time several years ago when I did a similar thing, from the pews. Our pastor had said during his homily that in the public schools “god is dead.” I stood up to defend the many Catholics and other people of faith, including me, who teach in our close-knit school district and where good values are strived for by all of our teachers. I spoke respectfully. After this recent time regarding communion, I met with our pastor and parish administrator. I was told that “many people came to him and said that I have done ‘this’

many times (??). I was not told what all these complaints were, although there was only the one other time, which I admitted to him. I was told that if I ever did “this” again, legal action would be taken against me and a restraining order or a no trespassing order would be put into effect. I have been a member of this parish for 41 years, where we raised five children, and where I worked as a catechist and with the youth ministry for 25 years.

Excommunication of women for getting therapeutic abortions. (see Olmsted, diocese of phoenix) canon law is discriminatory.

So often we are asked for our advice but then ignored. We are treated like second class.

I was told in no uncertain terms that no one can use inclusive language when reading but use the scripture as written.

Our bishop once said, “(ordaining women priests” will not happen in our lifetime.” Why are bishops and cardinals so afraid? A shift in power, perhaps?

Disappointed as hospital chaplain that I was not officially empowered to offer absolution, or the sacrament of the anointing of the sick to those seeking reconciliation and healing. Hurt and angered by preparing celebrations of the parish sacraments for the children and then having an alcoholic pastor (nice guy, but sick) not implement the service as planned, but botch it up. Over the years, I can remember making excuses for priests for what came across as ineptness, and yet, the people were thrilled with ‘father’. Again, I felt the folks being shortchanged in their religious experiences.

A new priest was assigned to my friend’s parish, in her new local: a faith-filled, contributing member of the previous parish in which we had shared our faith life for many years. She was active in several ministries, besides much lay volunteer work. Because of her sex, the new

priest removed her from any ministries around the altar; that is, lector and extraordinary minister of communion. She continued to be worthy enough to clean the church. Recently, a well-known bishop who stated in one of his writings about the sex-abuse scandal that it would be “naive” to think that allowing priests to member would in any way contribute to a solution to the abuse problem. In general, I now have no special respect for members of the clergy. I do not believe they are different from me. I have no belief in their “ontological” capacities. I do not feel they are spiritually above me. I feel sad that somehow, I am intrinsically unworthy just for whom I am as a human being. In the deepest part of my being, I am not equal before my creator. The synod of the amazon; women still not accepted as deacons. Women not reading the gospel, not preaching at our masses.

I just constantly see the ability of women and the lack of vision for women in our church, what a missed opportunity. Women should be deacons, priests etc. And the church will implode upon itself if change does not occur. I always loved the mass of the chrism and usually attended. Will admit I enjoyed the spectacle of the church/diocese gathering together, but a few years ago it struck me as I watched all these men process into the cathedral that it was likely women behind the scenes who made it all possible. The men just needed to show up, but the women did the work to get them there and for the whole thing to happen.

An ordained roman catholic priest was denied a burial mass in her childhood parish.

As a cradle catholic, the role of woman in the church influenced dramatically my perception of the role of women in society. As a child I could plainly see that males are preferred to females and LGBTIQQ persons had no role at all. Today, our young women are even more marginalized as the church is turning more conservative through these narrowed

forms of family and motherhood. It seems that there is a resurgence in the church for white male supremacy. I see women in my community relinquishing their independence and self determination to try to fit this image of the perfect image of family. Abuse in these homes is palpable but ignored. Children are raised under very tight controls that are stifling their growth and individualisms. Some are conforming, some are rebelling and some I fear are being abused into submission.

Hard to pick just one time, since it has been my entire life. Every moment has been filled with the church telling me “my place”, and presenting it as if it was a gift from them (male priests!) Women were the ones that Jesus surrounded himself with. Women were the ones that demonstrated complete loyalty, love and compassion for Jesus. And women were the reason the church continued in the days following Jesus’ resurrection and early years of the church. Only for men to come along and destroy what Jesus built.

I have been spoken to very rudely by a number of pastors. I think they were disrespectful to everyone not just women. I have been disappointed and angry that well educated women have not been allowed to preach from the pulpit.

Angered about the arrogant manner with which a priest treated a mourning widow trying to arrange a funeral mass for her beloved husband there was total lack of compassion, listening to her needs and requests and a complete emphasis on ritual and laws of the church only.

The synod process caused me to look at singleness in the church. Priest and married couples are given sacraments. The USCCB guidance on single is to offer reconciliation. Obviously single women are sinners in the eye of the male clergy. It is an insidious thing -- look at the liturgy language itself -- subtle but again and again we are told males rules -- take what they did to Mary Magdalen.

Women, although faith bearers in many roles have been erased because of gender.

Knowing there are roman catholic women priests unable to have a fulfill their calling is disgusting and sad. The Episcopalians and other denominations are thriving, when will the catholic church wake up. My community of faith goes beyond my parish to episcopal churches and Lutheran communities are thriving with women as full participants.

Went through formation program with the deacon candidates and during formation, I felt we were one community. There were some classes that were just for the deacon candidates but we didn’t feel very excluded. Until it was time for the men to be ordained. They (the men and their wives) got to have dinner with the bishop and had an article about them for our diocesan publication. Nothing was said/mentioned of the men and women who journeyed with them through the formation program. Since then, we have never felt included again. The wives of the deacons are more included than us. Feels like the church is not interested in having/utilizing formed lay leaders.

I am the mother of 5 daughters. Their talents have been ignored and discounted because they are women

We were not allowed to speak on social justice Sunday, promulgated by the Australian catholic bishops, even though part of a group in the parish for more than 15 years.

Every time I go to mass. Every time I volunteer for a catholic institution. Each time I served on a pastoral council. Every time I was prevented from full participation either by clergy or by other lay ppl who had to dominate. And turning my 12 years as a high school teacher in catholic schools.

Forty-five years ago when my 7 year old daughter asked me why there were 7

sacraments for boys and only 6 for girls. We both became feminists asking hard questions of any who would listen.

When I witnessed a catholic woman reporting abuse by a catholic priest to a church representative and realized she was being given the run around. This was her third in person interview and no woman from the diocese had ever been present. That made me angry. We knew that the other interviews had been recorded but when she asked for a copy some excuse was given that “they couldn’t do that at this time”. My feelings were all of the above. I knew these were serious accusations, and she was suffering from severe depression, asking for help and asking that they investigate and remove him from service to adults seeking spiritual advice in a time of crisis. How did it affect me? Well, it still does but I had a break from my community because of covid and it has given me time to think. She has yet to have any recognized response and I am disgusted and frustrated not knowing what she can do. Unfortunately, I have had other periods of disappointment in my church life but none this serious. However, I’m not catholic because of any particular priest, and I am still catholic because that is the faith I was given by my mother and by Maryknoll sisters and brothers and it is at my core. In the past, people have often asked why I stay but my simple answer has been you can’t change something from the outside. I have stayed because I have also experienced very spiritual and welcoming priests in my long life so I’ve had long periods of good experiences with priests who worked closely with me in teaching roles in our church. I never aspired to be a priest but I did want my daughter to be able to be an altar server which she was as well as a lector in youth ministry as was my son. I am always hopeful but I’m afraid I am too patient and I feel that this is a time to stand up but still don’t know quite how. I have remained silent on this because it’s not my story to tell and my community now gathering again is drawing me back in the service of justice and peace. Interesting. I have

thought of suggesting that she write the pope personally. She’s considering it but I’m afraid she fears the disappointment that might follow. Yet another trigger to upend her mental health.

As a child, I was not permitted to be an altar server. Cemented my perception that women are second class members of the church - although I know that much of the catholic expansion in this country is due to the education and hospital work of the sisters in the us.

Up until recently I accepted the status quo but of late I am disappointed and a bit angered by the limitations set on women in the church.

So many times! Over and over being told in official teaching that women can’t be priests - and being fed the line that women are equal but different.

An orthodox Russian trained priest was put into our catholic church due to a lack of male catholic priests and he did several horrible things in Christ’s name: 1) he told the students that girls and women should not step up on the altar or serve as altar-servers, eucharistic ministers, or readers, b/c the altar is for males b/c Jesus was male and god is male, 2) he literally tore off my niece’s baptism dress b/c he insisted that the baby should be naked to be baptized -- it was shocking and we/godparents & parents didn’t know what to do other than say it was never a problem w/ other babies before (he arrived) -- it seemed sexual him staring at her naked body and it was violent in his taking off her dress while she screamed and we felt helpless b/c priests are given too much power in the church. There are several more examples, but that will do for now. Besides accepting more conservative / orthodox priests, the catholic church has hurt women and girls from my first-hand experiences growing up in the church. I can say several more, but I will touch upon one that some catholic priests started to harp on constantly: abortion. As if nothing else matters and to suggest that

women/teen-girls are murderers who have an abortion -- no compassion, no fighting rape culture, no fighting domestic violence, etc. Basically, abortion seems to be a way for misogynist or ego-centric male religious to justify their subordination of women despite most violence in the world being perpetrated by men against men, women, children, animals, ... To claim to be Christ-like and followers of Jesus and yet to set up a patriarchal institution that allows men to get away with sex abuse and verbal abuse/etc. Against females is far from Jesus Christ. Shame on any religious who are complicit in this institution that has harmed my and many self-esteem, self-image (created in god's image?!), etc.

I have been disappointed, hurt and angry by the treatment of women in the church since I was a teenager. I am an older senior. From a young age I saw this injustice and have experienced it all my life. It made me journey more faithfully and lovingly with my faith community.

We were in a budgetary crunch and our priest chose to eliminate two pastoral positions as opposed to clerical. The people came out in droves. Both of these positions were held by women. How did it affect me? Well, I am still here being a thorn in the side.

Years ago, in the diocese of Lexington, when a former bishop took up his assignment, he dismissed all the women, including religious, that held diocesan positions, even the superintendent of catholic schools. I was angry and determined to support these women and others who had the credentials and right to lead as much as the men in the church. I refused to work in parishes where the clerics did not treat women fairly and recognize their abilities.

So many times that I'm left feeling that the church long ago lost its way, in its perspective and understanding of what Jesus came to teach about the reign of god. Jesus was inclusive of all, welcomed all, rebuked the purity codes

and legalism he experienced being practiced, expanded our understanding of who god is..... In contrast, the multiple, embedded experiences of excluding of women in the catholic church have left me feeling battered, shattered and that I have no place in this structural church.

Ever hopeful, I recently entered a conversation with the parish priest about another homily where he interpreted the woman in the gospel reading in a derogatory way, whereas she was a key figure of faith presented in mark's gospel. The pp sends out his recorded homilies via email. I carefully tried to explore with him what the gospel actually said but was rebuffed and the priest was closed to hearing any other perspective.

I'll not try again. I've tried for years to enter gentle respectful dialogue around matters that matter. There's no place for me in a church that refuses to listen or grow spiritually and ethically.

Every time I attend Mass, I am reminded that I am not in full participation with the church because of my gender.

It's too frustrating to tell an experience. The "church" doesn't want to hear it & will ignore it anyhow!

Consistently! Not being able to see yourself represented, hearing men preach about what it means to be a woman...this was alienating and showed there was no path to equality in the church

I am a catholic woman. Have been extremely active in ministry in my parish for the last 30 years.

* I was told I was not a team player because I declined to take responsibility as a volunteer for the previously paid position of running the RCIA program.

* a lem screamed at me at a pastoral council meeting because I suggested that it would

be important to have input from the laity (he mistakenly thought I had said the “ladies”).

* a deacon yelled in a loud voice at another female pastoral council member, in front of the entire council, that she was not allowed to ask questions or bring up issues - that the administrator would do the question asking. I have never heard him use this level of disrespect for any male parishioners.

* I was on the committee to research/vett the possible names for our new parish grouping. The deacon repeatedly stated that this would be laity driven. Yet he attended every meeting. I was the spokesperson for the canon law criterion. He over spoke me repeatedly during the meeting, declaring if something fit or not, etc. At one point I said in a joking voice he should stay in his lane and I got this. He did not respond. His behavior did not change. Why did my committee put in over 30 hours of research for this meeting?

* we had a most wonderful female pastoral associate. I repeatedly witnessed her being shut down in meetings, being mocked at meetings where she was not present, being written off as ‘caring too much.’

* I ran a garden committee for 20 years. We had to beg and plead to borrow tools, and each time we had to go to the main office and hunt down a custodian to turn the water on for us. When I resigned a male took over. He had no problem having hoses and water faucets left out for his use for the entire growing season.

* I was in a bible study once for the story of the adulterous woman. It was lead by the pastor at the time. He asked the group what was the first thing they thought of when they heard this story. I raised my hand and said, ‘where is the man?’ he was completely flummoxed and had no answer. I suspect he had never heard anyone ask that before.

* as a child in a catholic school I really did hear the speech about how we could not wear patent leather shoes because then we would be responsible for the sins of the boys in the class (sic)

* I asked a priest what happens to babies who don’t have a chance to be born (having suffered

several miscarriages). His response was that abortion was evil and women should not commit this sin.

* many times I have been in conversation with someone from the parish staff and another male staff person walked in, interrupted and was given the other persons (often a woman) immediate attention.

It has become so ingrained in the catholic tradition that women are lesser than to the point where even other women get into these mindsets.

It greatly affects my relationship with my parish because I feel disrespected and like I have no value and could not possibly have any useful input. Regardless of my education and life experiences.

I am grateful that I belong to two other communities of faith where this is not my experience. I found them on my own.

I really could write several more pages on things I have witnessed but wanted to stay on a more personal level.

A ruling by pope benedict xv way back when, that even after an annulment is granted a set amount of time is required for the former husband to agree to it, even though would have given ok before proceeding began. My relationship is with Christ, but something like this can turn people away from the church.

The lack of recognition of what nuns have contributed to the church and society - throughout history and developing community. They built hospital, schools, universities Community outreach. These institutions continue today. Male institutions receive so much more recognition.

Married male teachers earned more than women - worse it was supported at a union meeting -in the early 60’s

I've 'worked' in the church for 70 years. I was fortunate that spirit placed me in parishes in cities, towns and states with priests who were open to women as cantors. (Although, I was not musically trained, my heart was with the people and assisting their prayer. Surveys revealed the liturgies I cantored received the highest satisfaction levels - upsetting male music directors.)

From this beginning, spirit brought forth previously unknown gifts in many other ministries. These were exciting years of involvement, usually in a leadership role. I cherish the memories.

But the shunning and outright hostility was too often present. In one parish, I was the first female cantor 'inside the altar rail' and hate mail poured into the rectory. I had only been in the parish a month, but my strong singing voice was evident and I was immediately asked if I would cantor. They were short on willing persons, so the hate mail was ignored by the pastor and we kept singing. (I had been the cantor in two parishes in the Albany, NY diocese so was comfortable saying: 'yes'. I have a spirit - led story of those early years that is remarkable and comforting.)

When I was cantoring from the ambo near the altar, the resident priest would leave his mic on and sing a little faster or slower than we were. This was distressing to all. Fortunately, the pastor was friends with my young son with disabilities so when I complained to him he took charge and was presider at the liturgies where I led the singing.

Eucharistic minister - one pastor always gave his male friend preferences over the women ministers until I took our complaints to him. He was reluctant but stopped his practices.

Parish secretary and liturgist - in a small parish, I worked part-time as parish secretary and the pastor complained to the parish council that I would not prepare his meals!! No, I would

not! I had five children and a husband at home who needed their meals! He was generally not happy as his order had sent him out to a needy diocese when the bishop called for priests to help. These were tense times.

There were an abundance of times of being shunned by the priestly royalty. There are times it would have been good to have a support group for people verbally abused by priests.

More problems occurred from permanent deacons! Nastiness abounded. Jealously reigned! One was consistently nasty and presented himself as a canon law and liturgical expert - he was not! Unfortunately, for him, I had become more knowledgeable about liturgy than he. How dare I! Sadly, he was drinking too much and following a serious accident was guided to an early retirement.

I was the new cantor in a parish that had previously been a 'mission' church. The deacon was aloof and snippy from the start. At the closing of '40 hours', about a year after I was there, I stood at the front of the church as the organist next to me played the intro notes to the response to the psalm. Just as I sang the first notes, the deacon spoke the words and proclaimed the responsorial psalm.

A gallery of priests was sitting right in front of me watching as I stood motionless.

I learned the next day that priests complained to the pastor and the deacon was forced to apologize to me. I did not have any more problems with him - for the most part. A year or two later, the pastor asked that the deacon be transferred to another parish; he was.

A patriarchal priest was dismissive of my leadership of RCIA in the parish. I ended up leaving the parish after Pentecost that year. I am very wary of getting deeply involved in ministry at a parish now.

1. Becoming aware in 1987 as a child, of sexual abuse by 2 priests, one after the other, towards children (altar servers) only strengthened my resolve for positive questioning of why we have separation of men and women in the western (Latin) roman catholic church through the 1139 rule of clerical celibacy and restricting holy women serving at the altar of God.

2. Women are so often not treated with respect, love and trust when communicating with priests (celibate men) who have oftentimes, unfortunately, been brainwashed in seminaries regarding healthy sexuality. Oftentimes teaching in seminaries encourages young men to keep their distance from women, which can indeed foster not having normal and healthy relationships with both women and therefore- all people. This is being seen in some conservative young men being trained in seminaries. The things we have heard them say about women, and about love of God, and women, (divided hearts since 1139) etc. Is truly disturbing and needs to change for the future of our worldwide priest shortage.

Too often. First, we have no nuns in our community (I believe for 5 parishes in a county in Maryland). When we did, there was little support. Focus on donating to the retired priest fund, but never any ask for nuns. I had 2 aunts that were nuns. Despite the time they gave to their communities and parishes the catholic church provides then little. They are expected to care for each other as they age - why not the priests then? Why should I donate money that will only be used for priests and not for any nuns? I don't.

When I was in middle school, I loved playing basketball. My parish/school had a boys teams but not a girls. I tried out for the boys team. Many parishioners were supportive, many were not including the pastor (this was early 80's). We sued the archdiocese. The bylaws of the cyo didn't reference gender, only spoke to player. I finally asked my father to drop the lawsuit because parents were rude to me, the pastor asked me if I was "making

more trouble" (I was smart and athletic, I volunteered, had a paper route; graduated 2nd in my class). A 14-year-old should never feel so much hate from adults and inequality. To think that girls are still banned from playing on boy's teams in some parishes today, makes my heart weep.

I once had a pastor who seemed to resent having women active in key roles in the parish. After being put down by this man, I resigned a position as a chairperson of a community building committee that I had started and run for 10 years. I also resigned from the parish council that I had been a member of for 10 years. It took quite a long time and a new pastor before I came back to ministry in my parish.

Q2. Name a time when you saw women empowered in the Catholic church.

Then I worked in Miami and was able to not only preach but I read the gospel!!!!!!! I was able to have rich experiences with a forward visioned people.

When girls could serve at the alter and women were chairing the parish council. For the synod our bishop called women to tackle patriarchy

I ministered in the diocese of Saginaw under bishop ken untener (now deceased) when women could and did preach.

At the closure of the Vatican's "investigation of LCWR and us women's congregations. (I am a religious)

When I encountered Futurechurch.

Never.

I feel hope for women but not in the structure of the church.

When members of parishes commented on their appreciation of women on the staff. Their comments reflected that they observed women as leaders in the church, despite our non-hierarchical roles—perhaps because they are not hierarchical in the limiting connotation of that word.

Every time we (sisters of mercy) were able to create space/place for persons on the margins of church (divorced and separated Catholics, lbqt+ persons, alienated Catholics, etc.

When woman joined a man at the altar, and they celebrated together.

During this pandemic time, no priest was able to come and preside at our liturgy. So we began

to have communion services without a priest. Now that we have a priest, a number of us are saying that we would like to go back and have our own services which were very relational and human.

When a priest actually acknowledged the daily sharing contributions to the people of God church.

The sisters of st joseph associate in mission program gives me hope as a source of education around contemplative dialog and right relationship.

When I finally worked with a pastor who appreciate all women on his staff and treated them with respect and gave them positions which helped the parish.

It gave me hope when pope Francis was elected, and he demonstrated humility. I appreciated that he quietly made the doctrinal assessment of LCWR go away.

In 1961-64 I worked in a parish with Ursuline sisters from Paoli, Kansas. They taught in the parochial school. They were fantastic. Now that convent is closed. No vocations.

Attending a roman catholic women priest mass.

Still waiting for that empowerment.

Just yesterday when I read that a bishop in Germany has blessed 17 women to go out and baptize.

As a woman in the church, and as a woman of color, I felt I have had to steal any power or voice that I may have. Unless the pastor or bishop is pro-women, then it will be a hard way to go.

Tonight, and since the synod process began, it begins to feel possible..

Our current pastor is very supportive of women's efforts and has quietly adopted more inclusive language.

Today. However, I must admit that my confidence of the guys in charge opening the gates to women is low. I am male, by the way.

Pope Francis appointing 2 women to Vatican posts. He has opened the discussion which was never done before.

Accompanying youth as a chaperone to world youth day 2016. Leading a bible study for a group of women. Discovering Rohr (both his writings and classes) give me hope for all those the church oppresses.

Pope Francis work to include

With being given responsibilities for sacramental preparation programs.

My mother was a strong woman of faith, lived into her 90's, and I was taught in grade school by St. Joseph sisters of Carondelet in the St. Louis area. Can't say enough positive about their influence.

Listening to people today of their ongoing experience.

Seeing male clergy speaking for women and supporting priesthood for women.

The group of women I belong to give me a voice to share my concerns, and this gives me hope that I am not alone in this quest for equality. The presentation today also reassures me that things are starting to move in the right direction.

Women's religious congregations seem to me to be the magisterium of the church. Their work for social justice, accompaniment of the poor and marginalized, and non-hierarchical governance of their communities are based on gospel values and catholic social teaching.

When I think there's nothing the church can offer in the sense of moral teaching, I think of them.

When my pastor encouraged me to be formed in pastoral ministry and gave me credit. I am not looking to be a priest, but to be credible as someone who is dedicated and called to ministry was very empowering.

I have seen strong, competent, faith-filled women persist in their advocacy for equal treatment as well as persist in the work that Christ calls us to do in the world, in spite of their second-class treatment.

When the LCWR stood together when under Vatican scrutiny; when women have gotten higher degrees in theology and teach in seminaries as change agents

Years ago, when asked to have my feet washed. When I was asked to be the sacristan and to offer the weekly communion service; minister to the sick; high school youth education teacher.

I am very encouraged by the theologians of the church, such as Elizabeth Johnson, who are leading the way toward a faith lived in inclusiveness of all creation. They lead the way.

On some committees have felt appreciated, supported by my work on anti-human trafficking

I have felt empowered only in the context of my own congregation, the sisters of charity - Halifax. I have never felt hope in the context of church structures, a sad comment indeed.

As an associate of a religious community, I am in awe of what women accomplish despite being so restricted. Also, I have been exposed to many "sympathetic" priest who are much more open to sisters giving the homily, etc.

As religious director in a smaller parish the priest not only acknowledged me but asked my opinion and we worked as equals

When I met the faculty at my catholic seminary and later when I was led to an intentional eucharistic community.

Through participation in a small “intentional” community in which the women were very strong leaders.

The synod gives me hope.
The religious sisters taught us hope when they faced the Vatican so courageously.

Many women minister to the most vulnerable and do much of the organizing within a parish. Leading the rice from sept. To easter for a few years with a group of committed people gave us all hope for the future.

In 2016 my niece was getting married and she asked the chaplain at the hospital where she worked to officiate. Mary kay kusner is a wonderful RCWP and since then I have felt hopeful that there is a path for women to continue on following the holy spirit. We now have RCWPs coming to Urbana Illinois for a new small group who came together in sept 2021 to worship together.

I was invited to give a reflection at the Thanksgiving Day liturgy, Nov., 2019.

When I became involved with a pastor at a large parish who was very inclusive, open minded, compassionate and encouraged participation of the whole community. He started small community faith groups where we met once a month to share not only our faith and lives and also concerns for the whole church. His preaching was always inclusive and used catholic social teaching as his guide. Very justice oriented.,

I have hope only by joining groups such as this, future church, or vovf, or sometimes small faith

sharing groups. But I yearn to actually feel a part of my church, an integral and respected part.

Listening to some of their sharing and preaching. Also, how they administer to the needy. Women are nurturing - men dominate

Learning more about the role of Mary Magdala in the early church. 2016 Vatican recognized her as an apostle to the apostles. More women in leadership roles at the Vatican. Now we need them to be included in the USCCB. What a sad, sorry group of men...only a few good ones among them.

The inclusion of women to be lectors, eucharistic ministers, minister of care, etc. Officially it happened last year, but women have been in these roles for decades.

When pope Paul ii came to the U.S. and spoke at the national shrine, sister Theresa Kane publicly challenged him regarding the “intense suffering and pain” that American catholic women feel because of their exclusion.

Reading and learning from feminist theologians such as ilia delio and sr. Maureen Sullivan give me hope.

With another group of women and some men called catholic network for women’s equality. We gather and have prayer rituals, speakers and fun together. I have learned so much about the historic great women in the church from this group.

Glimmers of hope when I see women taking leadership in the ministry of the church such as catholic charities usa, catholic health association, catholic relief services (Carolyn woo)

This series has given me hope. I see a lot that is lacking in the church. This is a community experience for me. I am grateful for a way to participate in the synod.

Immediately following Vatican two....and sadly not since.

I have preached from the ambo at St. John the Lateran in Rome and I have taught priests how to be more pastoral, how to share from the heart and believe in their own dignity. I know many women who are role models of the faith in action, as well as men and children. Christ came to save us all and together we are the body of Christ endowed with all gifts of the spirit and sanctified by our heavenly creator.

The underground church is alive and well with ordained women priests in St. Paul/ Minneapolis. I attend mass, receive communion, and join in communal confession. And I am an active parishioner in my conservative parish.

Today, listening to 3 women in our breakout group. Two of them are religious and the work they do and their dedication to the church gives me hope that the church will recognize the gifts of women and ordain them.

I studied at the seminary for a masters degree in religious studies after my husband was ordained. Became a dre (director of religious education) in my parish and had a ministry so wonderful that I couldn't have asked for more. Hope for all women!

When I made my 30-day retreat in Gloucester, I felt hopeful that women spiritual directors were given space to share on the word after communion, and that the Jesuits themselves were also choosing to preach at this same point in the mass in an effort to demonstrate equality.

Today's presentation gave me hope. The idea of having female deacons is such a step but I still feel like the hierarchy are just patting us on the head to keep us quiet.

Recently I saw a need in my parish and suggested a new ministry which was not only

accepted but embraced. It has helped with my personal healing. The hope I feel for the future is that women are speaking out and not fearful of the male hierarchy

LCWR response to Rome.

The first time I attended the very joyful ordination of a woman priest.

Pope Francis's appointment of women to various positions of rank is a hopeful sign to me. May the men appreciate and listen to them.

Many years ago (more than 20) I was asked to be one of the people to have my feet washed on hold Thursday. The diocese of Bridgeport, CT used to have spiritual direction classes as well as admit program that women were included which I took part in.

Invited to become a lector since a gentleman retired.

I was at a call-to-action conference on women priests. I was inspired.

I have given 'reflections' at mass - even the Christmas day mass (because priest became ill unexpectedly and no time to get another.) In one diocese I lived in they had a regular liturgy of the word on Sunday each month and the priest sat in the back. It was always led by women. I have had a great deal of joy in presenting RCIA for 25 years and exposing much to cradle Catholics who have joined my team.

Three years ago, I joined a parish that is the most progressive of the 5 catholic parishes. Women take many non-clerical roles in the parish and there is a growing group seeking ordination of women.

Conducting communion services at a parish because there was a pastor there who was open to it and valued the gifts of women.

Hearing lectures on the role of women in the ancient church.

As I've come to know the folks involved with the RCWPs, especially the one who is our facilitator, I've found it easier to stay within Catholicism and appreciate all that's good about it and to have faith that the spirit is leading us in the right direction! I pray for patience!

Going to a Dominican woman's conference.

Having a welcoming pastor, one who looked for the gifts and talents among his parishioners was a great sign of hope. Being asked! That is empowering.

By the other people in my community especially our women's liturgy group and those who have shared leadership in social justice issues for all in and out of the catholic church. Just to note- I asked for "dialogue homilies" at our parish during the synod process but not sure it will ever be heard. we need much less clericalism!

Change has been slow, but listening to deb, the progression of the place of women is changing.

After I was ordained a roman catholic priest I was asked by a community of friends to celebrate the eucharist for them. This was 15 years ago. I am blessed to have such a wonderful community to serve and celebrate the liturgy with them. I am also blessed to serve the homeless in the encampments and now work with volunteers from other parishes in restoring the catholic worker house here in California. Women are moving ahead and speaking up. Their voices are slowly being heard.

Hope is in organizations like future church who make the laity aware of our history and give us a vision of what's possible.

When I discovered the intentional community of st Mary Magdalene which is pastored by roman catholic women priests (smmcommunity.org), I found an egalitarian community where every person's voice matters. I continue to be strengthened by the faith sharing weekly.

I was very excited during the amazon synod at the thought of women deacons. We seem to have trouble attracting sufficient men to commit to being priests and we have so many educated, strong women in orders.

As a religious and being an international congregation we are free from bishops' control and I have been empowered by my leadership. Do not see empowerment from priests.

In some of my previous "Vatican 2" parishes, women were very involved in various ministries and leadership roles. Their charisms and talents were welcomed. Frustration was the "elephant in the room" - women were excluded from fuller participation, ordained ministry and official decision making.

Some of the many things deb mentioned in her testimony. Women being given various assignments where they have never been before.

Pope Francis' actions generally regarding women and the synodal process is giving me hope. Things they didn't expect happened in vat ii. I'm hoping those who make the final decisions will open their hearts to the will of the holy spirit this time, too, so that her will can be done.

When I see women preaching.

The powerful response of LCWR to the investigation by the Vatican.

In the Jesuit magazine "America" which I receive online yesterday mentioned a parish in the us (Atlanta maybe) where a woman has

been 'authorized' to perform baptism with a 2 year term. That gives me hope.

I never felt empowered about the role and status of women in the catholic church. However, I have hope when I see how much women have contributed in so many ministries locally, globally and internationally and who have given us opportunities to further this work to make us a better, more loving world.

I am an associate, and we are essential to the church and we are basically a woman's mission but we most certainly appreciate the men who add their voices to the mission to preach the gospel with our lives.

Heard ilia delio lecture with Matthew Fox.

Not yet - ever since acts 1, we have formulated a closed, male-dominated model for the faith community - even the Greek word, eklessia from which the Latin eclessia/eclessium is derived, refers to an ancient Greek governing council of rich, male citizens - no wonder the church hqed in Rome by both location and composition is rich, old, male, European!

I have always been positively influenced by talent, gifted, educated, servant leaders who are women. I have worked in catholic education with faith filled women.

For the first 10 years of my attendance in a new Vatican ii parish (1971), I held a leadership position and was a member of the parish council. Women were seen as equals. As more conservative pastors were assigned, some of the roles of women in my parish, such as giving homilies, have been discontinued. My hope is that women will again be recognized. Ash Wednesday service was entirely planned by women, and a woman gave the reflection. It was very uplifting to me.

My parish has a strong women's rights committee which meets on campus. We have women who are powerful and active in

directing our activities, speaking during mass, petitioning the arch for allowing women to be deacons. My parish is in the process of being merged with a highly conservative parish even though we are financially sound, have 1,700 congregants, and 51 active ministries. I hope we don't lose our culture; I pray we change theirs.

When listening to and reading books by strong faith filled religious sisters who believe for the church to have a future women must be included at all levels within the church.

When I became a catechist, a eucharistic minister, and a lector.

Every time I am in a group of women who support each other.

During the implementation of Vatican ii in the late '60's and '70's.

Joan Chittister speaking in spite of pope's dictum
Participating in women's ordination
Women speaking their truth to power

Attending two international congress of catechists, in Rome and seeing women theologians leading key sessions confirmed to me that change is underway. The wider introduction and encouragement of synodality particularly in south America, parts of Africa, Germany, brings me hope.

Every time I read or hear about a woman making a difference in the church or world. Also, studying the history stories of women moving forward, making a difference.

When women, religious/lay, take a stand and voice the truth to confront bishops or others who demean women

When we had a forward-thinking pastor who stepped outside the box and ministered with his flock and made them part of "church".

As a missionary for 5 years in Brazil, I served 5 fishing villages with a population of 40,000. I felt totally accepted by the people and we were able to achieve so much together.

I love that there were women priests ordained but not recognized by the Vatican. I have met one of the women priests and one of the women bishops and I loved everything About their preaching, the way they related to the people, etc. I hope one day women will be recognized by the catholic church as priests, but I know I will not live to see it. I think we need it so badly.

Women spiritual directors who offered a sense of sacramental grace - reconciling, healing, anointing, preaching one to one. Women religious who have led the way in showing the true meaning of church as a welcoming, uniting, serving church.; the awesome women theologians of my time who inspire through a life-giving interpretation of the word.

I feel empowered and have hope in women in the church. Religious communities are committed to collaboration with others to support women in leadership roles in the church.

I greatly admire the role of religious women in recent years who have organized and approached Rome about a greater role for women. I say "hurrah" to them; they give me hope for who they are and for staying with the church they love, but also by challenging the status quo put in place by old, mostly white men who don't want to share their ministry, and who don't even acknowledge that these women orders have ministries inspired by the holy spirit.

Participating in an intentional eucharistic community where I preached regularly.

I was hopeful after Vatican ii when women were allowed to be lectors and eucharistic ministers.

I had hoped that would lead to women deacons and priests. I am very deeply saddened that it has not.

The pastor of the parish I left did uplift women and most of the employees were women. He was open to change and welcomed it. The men of the parish were always trying to confine him. They reported him to the bishop, stopped putting the money in the box at mass to ensure his conformity. He struggled with this behavior for 15 years and he retired last year in poor health. There are men out there who are not terrified of women. Our current bishop supports women and almost all of the higher positions in the diocese are filled with women.

Today in a special way and because future church exists!

When I was at the ordination of a roman catholic woman.

When I listen to one / or more women and am inspired to believe that a loving god sees each of us as uniquely a soul, not through the lens of only what a person may perceive!

Certain pastors are open: Jim Henke - San Antonio. Curtis half Mann (deceased) in Lubbock , TX. I have been so lucky to have known and loved these men. There are more but many have left the priesthood and I am proud of that but unfortunately, we are left with some with "questionable" morals, values and a thread of catholic piety that makes it hard for my kids to stay attached to the catholic faith. The fact that many kids (young adults) are leaving has me worried for our faith. I will stand as a "all are welcome" person, but it is hard!!!!

Every time I hear a woman preach, as with catholic women preach, or as we did today with deb rose... Every time I hear Mary Magdalene recognized as the apostle to the apostles, or hear it said that phoebe, deaconess delivered the letter to the romans, every time a new piece

of art depicts women in a priestly, holy role... I feel hopeful.

I was in the first class in my parish in 1984 to be an altar server. Feels that we have not progressed beyond that so many years ago. I did not realize at the time how monumental that was.

In our new school and the linked parish, the priest is very welcoming and inclusive perhaps because of his older sisters whom I coincidentally work with. Priests can make a difference but strong men in financial power can sway that differently as well. We need stronger checks and balances. Is our church about money or about faith? Too often it becomes just about money. I am hopeful that this will make a difference. We have so many amazing women with more to give if their voices are heard. This is the us. If our voices our repressed here, this is our best-case scenario, it is exponentially worse everywhere else. We must get this right and set on the path for our future or there will be no future of the church. Under bishop utner our woman faith formation director used to do homilies. At the time I thought it was odd because it was different. I now so appreciate what she did for us. She was a mom, a wife, someone I could relate to directly and a different perspective than always our priest. What wonderful hope and now she longer is part of the catholic church. Perhaps she gave up this fight....it is a fight....the other thing that gives me hope is watching the new crowd sourced series the chosen and seeing the women with Jesus, always there, by his side, helping him. I want to see our church restored to what it was originally and what it was meant to be by Jesus' example.

I feel the nuns have given me the most hope in the past, present, and certainly for the future.

I was a eucharistic minister and was able to be a eucharistic minister to serve ar a seniors

complex for women and men living in their own apartments to nursing care

I had the privilege recently of assisting at a baptism by reading what the priest or deacon normally would read welcoming and nurturing the families. I felt empowered by this participation.

I am encouraged by pope Francis, and the increasing inclusion of women in visible roles. I also observe the way that we women emerge to do what needs to be done, empowered by the church or not. My best church life now (& even some before the pandemic) is zoom calls, which afford an amazing way to speak and listen & grow the word. I do call it church, and there is room for everyone.

I am now a part of a lay-based community, where lay people are leaders, empowered by the holy spirit. Women and men both are leaders. My community gives me hope. My faith, prayer life, and spirituality have all born fruit in this community.

Any time I saw a woman take leadership, preach well, lead prayer, liturgical dancers. Women like nuns on the bus, 8th day center for justice and future church. Women leaders in any walk of life. So happy to see our dearest pope Francis recognizing women's gifts and placing them in leadership positions. Ritually ordained priests or not, women are the lifeblood of the body of Christ ...the church

Being a part of a staff in a large parish that included woman in important roles and in equal number where their contributions were appreciated.

Future church does it every time! Deb's talk was great. I would never have known anything about Mary Magdalene without this group.

This synod process gives me hope that church leaders will someday invite women to full

participation and equality in the life of the church.

Listening to the amazing women who have a way to speak always makes me feel stronger and more determined to have things change. Nancy Sylvester, carol Zinn, Jeannine Gramick, pat Farrell, Joan Chittister, Joyce Rupp--all give me hope. So does the marvelous felician sister who recently left our parish after many years as "associate pastor." she was the one who kept me connected at heart level.

I have also been present when an ordained woman celebrated mass. It was incredibly moving. Mary does not call herself "father Mary." that would be so ridiculous. She is just Mary who joins us in worship to the great love.

I fell hopeful with pope Francis calling the synod. I do not anticipate a true and valid report coming forth in the Albany diocese or the USCCB. I do hope enough controversial responses not in accord with the official Albany report will be sent to Rome to give a fuller picture. Submitting my concerns through future church, my religious community, and the LCWR also brings me hope.

The women's ordination conference experiences and the ordination of a good friend as a RCWP are two moments of hope for me.

Two striking instances. When I was on staff at Newman, the priests I worked with were collaborative and inclusive. I actually presided over the liturgy of the word, including directing the presider of eucharist on which propers to use. It was reaffirming and hopeful. I felt like I was contributing to the 200 year plan! Of course, john Paul's more conservative bishops in the USCCB issued a letter noting that there was only one presider of liturgy. Certainly, I was not the only women in this position. Second, some close friends of mine in Louisville KY are involved in a very progressive parish. Years ago, the archbishop sent an ultra-conservative priest who began

undoing the participation of the community members. There were two women on staff: one in a pastoral role, the other in administration. They gathered the assembly and asked what should be done. The community opted to request that the archbishop remove the new priest. When they delivered the letter to the archbishop, he threatened to "punish" the community by not sending another priest. The community responded respectfully that it would be fine. The women contacted friendly priests in campus ministry, hospital ministry, college teachers who jumped that the chance to be available for sacramental ministry. The parish continues to be vibrant years later.

I was honored to be a lecturer under a different pastor and was always shown respect and gratitude

Early after Vatican ii I worked with a pastor who treated me as a equal part of the pastoral team in ways that had not been done before. It put me on my feet as a minister.

Recently, 2000, the first pastor in the parish I stayed for 17 years as pastoral associate, fully included me in the administrative team. He invited me to preach one day a week for daily masses and fully supported my ministry with the people. He was an encourager and developer of all in lay ministry in the sprit of Vatican ii.

When the parish community gave a standing ovation of support and solidarity after each time a woman has preach the homily at the Sunday eucharist in our parish.

I was encouraged when I started classes at Ursuline college in pastoral ministry. Ursuline college centered their degree programs around women who were working full time jobs, taking care of families, caring for aging parents and in many cases doing all this as single parents! Ursuline college accommodated the needs of women, starting with the schedule of classes. I learned the truth about Mary Magdalene, not the penitent, but the apostle! I learned

to question my catholic beliefs and become a more mature catholic, forming an adult conscience.

When I served in catholic healthcare and my pastoral leadership was recognized.

When serving women.

When we had the lay female parish director - who was more pastoral than most priests I have experienced.

Preaching and doing retreats with women who had such a deep and powerful message of compassion to give.

Pope Francis.

We attended a few roman catholic women priest masses which were affirming and powerful.

As a missionary in Latin America.

Futurechurch lectures

I was the first woman reader in my parish when the ban was lifted in my diocese. Men walked out of the church but I felt deeply blessed.

When, in a parish, a collaborative priest 'allowed' women to participate in small groups

My pastor has always honored women and allowed as much as possible for them to teach, reflect on the gospel and participate more fully.

Seeing the example of other churches, like the episcopal church in allowing women to become priests.

I am a Franciscan sister, and we have special services for our missioning each year and our jubilees. These services are empowering and very hopeful and evidence to me of what church is

LCWR meeting in St. Louis when 900 of us felt the power of the spirit in response to the investigations of congregations and LCWR itself. The support given by the laity was phenomenal.

Every time I participate in my church's social concerns committee, in which men and women share leadership and responsibility, I know I am home.

Women eucharistic ministers/ lectors/inclusive language/women sharing their experiences in homilies.

We had a woman chancellor for many years.

The study of the feasibility of women deacons. (history tells us that there were women deacons in the early church.)

Groups like Future church and women religious and lay women who write, speak out provide me hope.

I felt empowered by the pastor that I was working with when he allowed me to walk with the person through the whole tribunal process.

In the early 1980's we had a pastor and staff that encouraged the women of the parish to take on more responsibility. At that time, we had elected women to both as chairperson of the board of education and the pastoral counsel.

When I am invited to preach the homily at Sunday mass

After 36 years of trying to find a church that was a community, we found a parish that was run by a parish coordinator who had a open-minded priest who came for all the functions who totally believed in the value and gifts of women

Once, many years ago our priest let me take the deacon's role in our Holy Saturday mass by singing and carrying the cross up to the altar.

Reading about discerning deacons, celebrating the feast of st phoebe, watching priestly women do their work through catholic women preach and some women religious I know who are so pastoral, and going to mass with Washington home inclusive monthly mass (whim) here in dc and witnessing an ordained roman catholic woman priest consecrate the host and preach the gospel! Beautiful and helps me see the creative power of the holy spirit.

When I was allowed to do a communion service in place of a Saturday mass when the priest was not available.

Admiring the leadership of so many congregations of women religious and the initiatives they help to lead in their congregations addressing contemporary needs and issues.

Hope at the 2018-19 Vatican meetings regarding women deacons. Especially since they were already performing the role in many parts of so America. Then disappointed at the final decision.

Only after Vatican ii did I feel hope. After jpii became pope, everything broke down. I love my church friends. They are the only reason I remain active in my church.

Worked with order of priests: holy cross and Marists. Great collaboration and connectedness, great respect for each other. Laity, religious and young people working together. That was church to me.

I am so pleased to see the recent appointment of women to responsible positions in the Vatican (old boy network).

When I was a eucharistic minister.

I am happy that a variety of dioceses have called me to be either the pastoral associate or administrator. There were always priests in each diocese that were supportive of what I was doing.

Women theologians who constantly walk the talk and empower women in the church.

I worked for a priest who allowed me to use my talents in ministry. We were a great team and the parish flourished!

Some years ago, when my son was little, I worked with a female director of faith formation who was very inclusive and recognized the gifts that women, mothers, brought to the parish. She had so many wonderful ideas.

My parish empowered me as a woman because we are very progressive and women friendly. Our Irish pastor trusted in me, and it healed many wounds, my experience at lmu when doing my ma also empowered me and gave me the ability to articulate and communicate better. My adult students have taught me more than I feel I teach them--it's a joy!

Vatican ii, seeing all the sisters marching in Selma, made me realize that I can raise my voice to be heard.

When I see woman doing what they believe, e.g., Roman catholic women priests; sister Jeannine Gramick opening space for gbtq women.

When women preach! We need more of this.

When I witnessed male canonical priests supporting and encouraging women in their calling to priesthood.

Historically the impact of women in their tremendous outreach and leadership in health care, education, social justice and other areas in

the church. But not always recognized for their impact.

I feel hope because I think God is in charge. Jesus said we were all one. Eventually I think there will be women priests, married priests once again because of necessity. I don't think I personally will see it but believe it will happen.

During the Vatican II time, when there was a lot of discussion of change. Now with just faith, a network that promotes social justice, and offers classes plus local events for getting out there as Christ wants us to do.

My spiritual director, sister Mary prose, was a very strong advocate for increased women's roles in an essentially conservative diocese but she flew under the radar or at least the bishop was not willing to challenge her openly.

I was president of my parish council and worked alongside two pastors very open to lay leadership. I also had the opportunity to be part of a group of laity who made up a pastoral council to then archbishop cardinal O'Connor. Upon his death, the council was disbanded by cardinal Egan.

Some pastors have really worked as teams with laity, men and women, involved. Some are now retired and their fervor no longer influences younger priests.

Our current pastor seems very grateful for all women do in our church and frequently thanks them publicly.

We had were a mission outpost in our village and our priest was not always there for Sunday mass. He asked myself and another lady if we would be lay presiders. Sometimes she took the role other times I did. There was hope!

My first time was when sr Theresa Kane spoke up to the holy father. Over the years I have experienced so many wonderful women preachers and may they continue

When archbishop hurley back in the 70's at my suggestion never held a diocesan planning committee without the women leaders of the diocese - women actually outnumbered men! And their voices were heard

Prayer groups retreats lead by women talks given by women plus the heading up of committees.

There have been so many positive women role models which have had such a big impact on my faith. Those women give me hope because we are all "the church."

I am hopeful this process will bring renewal. We need all voices and all talents to be treated with respect

As a teacher and organist, I felt needed.

Seeing many women as readers and eucharistic ministers. Girls as altar servers.

Every time a woman delivers a homily. Larger participation of women in various roles including parish council.

When I was 'allowed' to preach the homily at my golden jubilee of profession mass and at the funeral mass of a friend. In both instances, the bishop didn't know!

Found hope with the bold roman catholic women priests movement and their worshipping communities.

With pioneer women who have talked about women being as participative as men. So many beautiful great intelligent women...many of whom have suffered grievously at the hands of power-hungry men.

I am hopeful know, that at least the diaconate will be open to women with a calling, in my lifetime.

Working with spirituality on all levels

This is what gives me hope. Hearing deb's excellent, well prepared and delivered sharing said...yes, things are happening, ever so slowly, but we are rising!

When women were finally allowed to be eucharistic ministers in my diocese was a very hopeful time. I think it was 1980 or 1981 and I was privileged to be in the 1st group of women smes in my parish. When ken Untener for bishop of Saginaw, the role and status of women in this church was growing by leaps and bounds. When he passed, it seemed that all ended for this diocese.

I was part of a woman's group that put on programs that shared stories/background of women in the bible.

Hope-filled with the choices of appointments pope Francis has made.

When I was being examined for entrance into the Jesuit order, my province made a point of including women in the interview process, and of making a *point* of having female teachers of courses and workshops that were part of the novitiate order. Also, since Francis has been appointing women to some Vatican offices is to me a hopeful sign.

Being invited to speak to women and children issues. Serve as em (30 years), reader, read gospel and offer homily at communion services.

When sister Teresa Kane spoke to the pope when he was in d.c. and expressed the need for women to have significance in the church. It made us feel that our voices can be heard if we have the courage to use them and it gave us hope. Even though that was years ago the seed was planted.

Had never felt empowered however hearing woman in future church and today's

presentation gives me hope for the future of women

I worked with Franciscan priests and brothers in Chicago, and Marianist priests and brothers I Mexico. Not clerical. And in Mexico I helped with many "holy week missions" in huge rural parishes. We- myself and those youth I had prepared to work with us - conducted holy week services in the chapels assigned to us.

In one job I worked for a religious sister who was the director of our organization and who supervised me. I found her to do a good job, even when she very nicely and directly corrected me on a matter.

When I was asked to be the chaplain for the police department.

I do feel hope when I listen to sr. Nathalie and her commitment to the synod. May she be able to carry through her mission.

I am feeling hopeful participating in these listening sessions. I am not alone in my thoughts for the church's future.

The synods I have participated in this month, all of which discussed the full and equal participation of women in the church is some way. Let the chorus rise!

Working with RCIA—the pastor was used to running it as a series of classes, a course of study. He was very dubious after another sister and I began working with RCIA as a process of adult faith formation. He sat in on several series. Then one week he didn't show up. The next day, when I mentioned that we'd missed him, he just smiled and said, "I trust what you are doing." After that, he really gave us full rein to continue.

The recent appointments of pope Francis in appointing women in strategic roles in the church, replacing traditionally men bishops.

At an RCIA mass outside at a friend's backyard the priest came to me gave me the gospel and asked if I would read it aloud.

When we began to be invited to do homilies in our motherhouse

When I was able to arrange for a sister to give what would normally be a sermon at the Sunday education week liturgy because the priest said we would just call it a "reflection". I don't know whether to include this as the one that made me disappointed or the one that made me feel empowered. We should not have to play world games or do things with smoke and mirrors. To be clear - this was not in the United States. I was thrilled because the idea came from him and he was willing to do the workarounds. I was most thrilled because the parishioners were so very appreciative.

Catholic women preach.

Rarely.

In my entire time as a pastoral associate in my parish where I have always been respected by our pastor with whom I have ministered collaboratively for 25 years. With one exception I have experienced the same treatment from our parochial vicars. Because of the way we minister together parishioners empower me as well.

Depends on the whim of the pastor of a parish. I have not experienced acceptance.

I have had very little hope, though I have read the works of many women of the church that have brought me closer to God.

My parish is amazing. Women are treated as equals. If only our parish could be cloned. We are the future. My fear is that the church will die out without change.

I guess now that the catholic church is in such crisis I feel hopeful that the men in power

will realize that they need their fellow women Catholics in order to keep us as "church".

Again, from my own experiences as a lay person who usually served as a lector or eucharistic minister every Sunday--I was welcomed and respected by the priests who was the presider.

Every time we have one of our sisters give the homily at mass and when I myself have been asked to do that, I feel an empowerment because it is so important to hear the word broken open from the feminine perspective. I have great hope that something of this type can be opened to women in parishes - those who are called and have the skills and the desire to open the word for us. Even hearing another woman give a homily I feel empowered because I hear the word differently.

When I attended a communal eucharist prayer session (all catholic women). Each of us said the words of consecration and brought Jesus into our midst.

Once at a meeting with the presbyters where I had introduced a program for the archdiocese-renew- a priest asked that I leave the room for the discussion. The archbishop told me to stay. In the holy land I was asked to give a homily as one of the masses. A parish asked the archbishop to have me reinstated as administrator because they needed a woman to lead them along with their male pastor.

Under our previous pastor, I and other women were allowed to conduct communion services in his absence s well as preside at morning and evening prayer services. Since then, the more co servative pastors have not allowed that, however.

More articles are being written now promoting women's roles. In a recent issue of the catholic worker there was a lead article about female deacons. The author wrote that for 1000 years the church had female deacons. Hopefully,

women will be allowed to be deacons. This would be a first step!

When I worked with the people on rural Guatemala. We had one priest for about 20 small communities. We never thought about there being a shortage of priests. The community leaders in the small communities did an awesome job taking care of people spiritual and physical needs. The church was very alive.

As I said, early on; it was living ministry no matter where you shared your gifts and we discerned together where we best fit. My heart aches for generations of young persons we have missed.

Now in my 17th year in an intentional, lay-based, catholic community where women share ministries, governance, and preach. (Praise god!)

When I was invited by a former pastor, who was dealing with heavy responsibilities, to lead the good Friday service... Several years ago. Being able to share the reflection was gift and respected.

I belonged to a parish in the 1980's that started in the 70's as an experiment by a bishop who was a visionary. The parish was guided by a team consisting of a priest, male deacon, and married woman. This team was so prayerful and loving. They had a pact that no one would ever act on his/her own. They would be guided by the spirit and consensus. A new bishop stopped this arrangement after many years and to this day this parish is vibrant because all were welcome; all of us felt to be an integral part of the parish community. I so long for that.

I was a pastoral minister on a native American reservation. Because of the priest shortage in the west, catholic sisters were hired to be administrators. Another sister and I had that role at our parish. Also, because the Jesuits recognized this shortage was coming, they

began lay ministry weekends once a month for the native American to learn scripture, theology and homiletics. We, the people conducted the word and communion services and preached. It was truly an epiphany of the body of Christ. The pastor counted on us and we picked up the ball and ran with it. The people saw little difference between us and the priest.

The pastor had a power struggle. Refusing to repair the convent because of the cost the sisters had to move. He had the convent repaired and made it very comfortable for himself

Got a bit hopeful when I first heard rumors about female deacons, but I've come to suspect it's all just talk to try & placate women who do so much of the work at the grass roots level.

I felt great hope at the inauguration at catholic theological union on March 6, 2022. Barbara Reid, op is the first woman president of ctu which is a seminary whose corporate members are all men's congregations!

Meeting the women in tonight's small group.

On several occasions I gave the reflection at services and people said it was good to hear a woman's voice.

As an educator, the first person to hire me was a woman principle with many years of experience in education and catholic ministry. My teaching mentor was also a woman. They were great mentors and profound influences on my life and my work as a teacher. More priests should do what Roy bourgeois has done in putting himself on the line. As a layman in the church, I wonder how I can be more consciously in the struggle as an ally of women in the church. I feel convicted to do more.

When we were the first married priest couple to give the homily at the liturgy at a corpus

conference. When I minister next to my husband.

My participation in voc and personal eucharistic community which postures in favor of living authentically human lives.

Studying with women theologians and reading their books opened my mind and gave me hope

I personally haven't felt a time of being empowered in the church. I am hopeful when I listen to and read the women theologians and biblical scholars unearth god's message and challenge us all to become more human and more loving as Christ. All the women who speak out and up give me great hope.

Celebrating with my sisters in religious community and taking zoom courses in church/theology sponsored by the congregation

Sr. Magdala on this breakout session advised us to pray and lean on the lord at times like these when we see no way forward.

As pope Francis has elevated women to positions of power in the Vatican. When the Vatican ended its battle with us women religious. When Amazonian synod called for women deacons.

I belong to an association of the faithful and the main thrust of the charism is the empowering of men and women to carry out Jesus' mission based on each other gifts no gender.

We had a renew program in our diocese with small groups in the parishes and I led one. It gave us all an opportunity to be active participants in creating church for each other.

When I read about Jesus's relationships with women and how he treated them just like he treated men and had discussions with them just like he did men, I feel empowered that

he has held us in this regard. I was taught by Franciscan nuns in the 60s and 70s and I feel they pushed us to be more than just moms and wives. The church needs to acknowledge the wisdom and leadership abilities of wisdom and respect them just as Jesus did.

Our archdiocese has made the choice to have lay pastoral leaders rather than deacons so that women are included.

I have a couple of priest friends who treat me as an equal, recognize my calling and are humble enough to learn from me as I learn from them. We bring out the best in each other.

I felt hope when my friend was recognized by future church as a prophet and leader and awarded for her courage and voice, and message of peace.

When I hear women preaching at mass, at mariandale - Dominican sisters of hope.

I felt great hope when I heard a woman bishop from s. Africa tell her story of being ordained and then being able to ordain other women.

I had a wonderful pastor in Escondido, CA that empowered the staff who then empowered the people in the parish.

When another pastor allowed me to preach in Spanish since there was no Spanish speaking priest on staff.

When I worked on the liturgy committee or parish council or when I facilitated women's groups empowering women to use their gifts and knowledge, when I/we are respected as persons with many capacities to reflect, make decisions, create projects, etc.

Involvement with roman catholic women priests has given me a chance to stand with them for justice in the church and be gifted by the graced inclusive, liturgies they celebrate for and with all.

Then a new bishop came - dismantled the whole set up, including the council of priests, the diocesan pastoral council and from them on all bishop-centric. He was authoritarian and never popular!

When I first heard about the current movement to initiate women as deacons. And now, as we have an opportunity to tell our stories in the hopes that someone may listen.

I am still waiting for that time.

When, as a pastoral associate, I was able to lead communion services and conduct funerals at funeral homes for parishioners and their families. When pope Francis was made our pope in 2013--very hopeful!

I have my own business and have worked with several religious congregations in the area of organizational development, change and transition. Each time I have an engagement with a congregation, it is empowering, and I feel both hopeful and called to action. Women religious are authentic leaders, brilliant collaborators and gifted in the process of discernment whether addressing something financial or legal in nature; or spiritual or values/mission based. What is just, fair, merciful and loving informs each decision. It's amazing to witness.

The voices of so many women today 'rising - speaking out - writing - without fear of censure - 'excommunicated'. Women today are being who God created, missions us to be - ourselves.

I was part of our diocesan synod and a member of our parish committee in working with the questions we wanted our parishioners to speak too and prepared a plan to bring to the parishioners in small groups and we had a tremendous response from the parishioners in areas of the church they saw was not working and brought up ways that could assist the

diocese to look at these concerns and to discuss and respond too

The appointment of lay women to positions at the Vatican. Also the granting of the ministry of acolyte and lector to women. A step forward.

I have been asked to preach several times.

Also, Vatican ii priests have invited us regularly to participate more fully at liturgies, including standing at the altar.

When I worshipped with the Dominican sisters, we had a Dominican priest and a sister who shared the pastoral role including preaching. She was on the altar during eucharist, and it gave me great hope for the church. Seeing a woman at the altar was empowering.

I feel empowered by the women in religious congregations who have withstood the Vatican investigation and by their courage and wisdom actually won the day.

Women becoming sacristans, extraordinary ministers of communion, acolytes

My empowerment was felt outside of the church.

When Mary Magdalene was called "the apostle to the apostles" and her "memorial" was upgraded to a "feast." And when the synod on the amazon called for some concrete structural changes in church leadership.

I feel more hope with pope Francis' increasing inclusion of women in decision-making bodies and functions within the church.

Once or twice. In groups at congress, with Christine Schenck or (I forget the name). Phyllis zagano has also been an admirable force. Prejean on justice ce. There is reason to hope.

The moment pope Francis appeared on the balcony wearing a simple cross and asking us to pray for him after being newly elected, I felt hope. While I wish he would push for the full inclusion of women and LGBTQ+, I think he is doing his best to keep the “ark” afloat in the midst of so much criticism from right wing bishops and cardinals. This synod gives me hope that the holy spirit will breathe new life and direction into our church.

While I served on the parish staff that was administered by the oblates of Mary immaculate. They were inclusive, encouraging, supportive and recognized and appreciated the voices and gifts of women.

When I could work at st Mary’s with other laity, but once there was a change of staff and the person dismissed everybody and does everything by himself. I did write to the archbishop and the diocese but nothing changed.

As a em, I had an active role in liturgy also at the easter vigil, blessing the congregation with holy water. I head the pro-life ministry and have done so for 20 years

At a college student, I worked for a catholic chaplaincy that had a male priest that had been widowed and a woman chaplain that equally and respectfully ministered to us all as equals. This has been hopeful. I have had women of faith - women religious - model a loving church. I am an associate of a religious community led by women that actually lives and models the gospel message.

I felt empowered when I brought habitat for humanity to my parish for its very first house build. It was a two-year project and the spirit moved the entire parish to surround the family and each other in love.

I felt relieved and “of the spirit” when the investigation of the U.S. religious women came to a close through pope Francis. I am

a Franciscan religious sister and have worked hard in the church all my religious life. I am 88 years old and still have my wits about me. The cardinals and higher ups in the church may look down upon us and pay us lip service (the good nuns stuff) but the warp and woof of the church in the U.S. rests on the shoulders of U.S. religious

Working on teams in retreat houses for directed retreats

When I’ve met women who have found ways to express their love of Christ in formal and informal roles within Christian churches. I no longer believe that Christ limits followers to gender identified roles and that there are many roads to ultimate love and salvation

I felt empowered a few times after speaking to social justice issues, following the homily, when people clapped at my presentation, and our parish priest humorously referred to the applause I rec’d, as more than he ever got!

I am hopeful with I celebrate liturgy of the word with communion at a senior’s home. The residents are full of gratitude and so grateful for my presence.

When the priest asked me to help in the church, to be with the laity and facilitate some of their meetings

As a child I would have done anything humanly possible to preside at eucharist ... But when I became a full r.c. chaplain I struggled with the concept of woman of God -- my own identity. God blessed those years. I was able to be very creative and included all the men who joined our chapel community. Building community was a real joy for me.

I have listened to women preaching in different para-liturgical services and those have been good preachings. They give a different insight, sometimes the priest repeats himself. They are deacons who do not how to preach or proclaim

the word of god. Being a male does not mean you are a good preacher or good at proclaiming.

The election of pope Francis gave me hope that the gifts women can bring will be appreciated

When I see intelligent women in leadership roles, this is good.

Being a member of a religious community we have support and opportunities to control our own rituals. Groups like catholic worker, future church, the center for christogenesis give me hope.

I have experienced an increasing sense of power and hope regarding the role and status of women in the church since easter Sunday 2020 when I gathered a small group of friends to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on a zoom liturgy in which we read and shared the scriptures and broke and blessed bread and wine together. It has empowered me to realize that many women are no longer waiting for permission but we are beginning to take up what is rightfully ours to share in.

When the women religious engaged in contemplative dialogue with their communities during the Vatican investigation, especially referring to however long the night

Supporting ordination of women in the Anglican church, feeling ministered to by woman celebrant, experiencing a woman holding the host, hearing women preach, knowing the real achievement of women working in parishes, schools, universities, etc. Etc. Whole field of social justice etc.

We had a wonderful woman (vowed religious) diocesan director of liturgy who brought a lot of life to the diocese. It was a joy to work with her and the liturgical commission.

The Franciscans ran a weekday chapel in downtown Wilmington. Had the privilege of

leading prayer services, penance services, and doing a little preaching.

My first encounter with an ordained woman was in graduate school at mit in the 1970's. She was an ordained Lutheran minister. The religious chaplaincy of the institute brought all faiths together to meet the needs of students. We had many ecumenical services and activities.

Working in a religious order owned all-girls school we were able to develop strong leadership qualities in the young women many of whom became leaders in their parishes and they professions.

When I met the women priest of the Mary Magdalene catholic community in San Diego. Courageous, visionary, called, and an example of what could easily be within the grasp of the church if we but opened our hearts to this obvious injustice. What to me is so absurd is that - it is actually to the detriment of the church, and our witness, and our calling, to deny women full participation. I was also empowered when we had the pastoral life director roles in Seattle. The other element that was empowering - is that the pld in turn empowered the laity. She included a role of lay presider - whereby a lay person assisted the celebrant and the pastor with the mass, including praying before the procession, greeting the congregation with words of gathering, sitting with the priest or pastor, coordinating the eucharistic ministers...

When teaching in the college and empowering the laity with good theology and ministry experiences the Jesuits were my best supporters and colleagues in Belize.

I have experienced many women who are inspiring and participate in ministries because they understand what the role of everyone who claims to follow Jesus should be doing. Encouraged that pope Francis has asked all of god's children to participate in being guided by

the holy spirit to help lead us to a more loving, fuller church.

Women became more visible at the eucharist by being lectors, eucharistic ministers, ushers, etc. I have also celebrated communion services for the parish when a priest didn't show up to celebrate mass. It was well received with thanks.

During the 22 years I worshiped at a catholic church where women were viewed and treated as equals to the extent possible under the circumstances. The beauties were an important part of the worship services and the many ministries led by lay persons. There is no shortage of vocations to the priesthood, just a refusal of the church to acknowledge them and utilize their gifts. Depriving the church of the gifts of women's wisdom impoverishes the whole church.

We had a number of years in the 1980s/90s when our parish allowed women to preach, at regular Sunday mass. There were amazing women in the parish, some lay, some religious, who were fantastic preachers. It was such a gift to me, and to my school age daughters, to have this experience where women were so clearly valued.

Grateful for pope Francis and what he has begun in terms of appointing women to positions at the Vatican and in synod leadership.

The chancellor of the diocese is a religious woman.

In the 1980s, a phd candidate from Ohio state spoke occasionally after the gospel at the Newman center. Then there were "problems" and she could speak to the congregation but not at that point in the mass. About twenty years later, I found she was the chaplain at the hospice facility where my father died. Marie was the first to comfort me!!

I participated in the lay ministry leadership program in 1989 in the diocese. A sister gave a presentation and asked "aren't we all created in the image and likeness of god. I am all for inclusive language. I think it is foundational in helping us to know God.

I studied chose to pursue feminist theology and it has helped me understand the root causes of patriarchy in the church and the mindset of women and men who internalized patriarchy. I was also assigned in a far flung area in the countryside and it was a priest less community, we were able to build a Christian community where all the gifts of women, girls, boys and men are used and shared for the service of the community.

After Vatican ii as I saw changes being made and women gaining roles, I was sure that there would be at least women deacons by 2000. I was very encouraged, but the church has gone backwards.

Working with women on a pastoral team.

For many years after Vatican ii, our family belonged to a parish that welcomed all to share their skills, knowledge, heart, and spirit with each other. We had a priest who reminded us of Jesus--drew us to the work of the poor and vulnerable, the words and message of Jesus--to love and forgive. As families we had a focus of the importance of sharing ourselves as well as our bounty. We later moved our home and moved to another parish and experienced a very similar situation. Gradually, as bishops/archbishops changed, our parishes were forced to change. At the last parish, the people rebelled and the parish was closed. Since the church is the people--many of us continue to meet wherever and however we can...doing the work of Jesus and meeting to support one another (with a borrowed priest sometimes) or without a priest. It's so sad that Vatican ii has almost been eliminated. Rules (a baptism isn't legal????), regulations, hierarchy, power have

taken priority over justice, love, treatment of the vulnerable, inclusiveness, and more.

When I looked at the “100 women deacons campaign” website and read about the wonderful talent and passion that exists among some female church members, I had hope that things might change.

I enjoyed singing the “exsultet” on easter vigil and seeing the people coming into the church with lighted candles as I stood there singing. I am likely not going to do that this year. I am too alienated. Also, I do not want to be around other musicians who 1) won’t get vaccinated or wear a mask; 2) approach me about what I think of a local religious order and then say I’m for abortion because the president of the united states spoke at a local catholic university or 3) send misogynistic, racist, conspiracy-theorist, gun-loving emails. I knew then that I needed to leave. With the pandemic, our country has changed. I have changed. I was very affected by the murder of George Floyd, by the death of a friend from covid, by so much more. I can no longer keep my lips sealed and put up with these nonsense attitudes by the other musicians when I’m not getting paid anyway (or even if I was). As a commenter in the chat said, “the church left me. I didn’t leave the church.” then there were so many issues with the local archdiocese. In June, 2021, they said that everyone had to come back. There was now an obligation, but they did not require masks. In July, I played a funeral where I was the only one in the whole church wearing a mask (and I wore 2 on top of each other). I do not feel safe physically with all the germs, and I do not feel safe emotionally when other musicians may assault me with their political comments, when I am minding my own business trying to put up the song numbers.

I am currently worshiping with an independent catholic community pastored by a dynamic RCWP. I believe that her role is prophetic. I feel empowered in a way that I have not ever before. I am choosing to be catholic in a much

fuller and deeper sense than ever. I am grateful for this encounter later in my life.

My csj congregation taking stands for justice. The role network has served as an agent for social justice.

When I worked for catholic theological union where women read gospels and preached.

New life abounded when bishop pelotte began the native American lay ministry and deaconate program. Native Americans could see their value and worth as Catholics active in their church. They were resources for parish leadership as lectors, parish council members and deacons. Their gifts were invited to build the faith community and to make visible the great contribution of gifts and cultural wisdom for the parish community. This program does not seem to be encouraged or supported which is a real loss for the native people.

I was hired to be an itinerant catholic chaplain in 3 different cities. I teamed with 4 other chaplains, each a different religious denomination.

When we created our community in 1972.

During the second Vatican council I had hope that women would have a more equal discipleship.

Being a lector.

Invited to be a eucharistic minister. Became an associate of the ssjs, an enlightened bunch.

While doing clinical pastoral ed (cpe) 20+ years ago, I was invited by 1 of 2 full time catholic chaplains, to preach at his masses. He added that he intended to treat me as a deacon. That was so empowering - and encouraging! What a blessing!

I believe in the work of women within the church community and as witnesses of

Christ's presence and the kingdom of god wherever we are. Working with people on the streets, the impoverished, creating community relationships around the bible, basic catechesis, creating teams... So much can be done as church without having a priest. I believe in the witness that each person can give. Pope Francis gives me hope as he works from the bottom up to empower women... This synod on synodality gives me great hope.

I feel very encouraged by the fact that the future church group is addressing this topic head-on! I also feel a sense of hope that pope Francis may be open to hearing our calls for change given the women he has already appointed to high level roles.

With movements like the futurechurch, and people like Richard Rohr and the cac, sister Joan Chittister who speak up for the injustices and the areas where the church is falling short. I also am thankful for pope Francis for opening up this area. The catholic church as an institution has much to amend, with centuries of going down the wrong path - from simple beginning of the early church and spreading the good news of love and forgiveness, to the roman catholic empire amassing power, money, land and control at the expense of those it was meant to guide and nurture.

When I lived in Boston, ma I had the good fortune to be a member of the St. Cecilia parish, run by fr. John unni, a "pastoral" priest who guided/inspired us as a Christian community to better understand the message of the gospel and follow Jesus more closely. This included reminding us that we "all" have gifts, a richness of different gifts that should be shared. Women throughout the parish had important and visible roles, treated with respect -- a respect that was reflected in the Sunday homilies. Women were listened to and empowered, as demonstrated by the many active ministries they led within the parish, in addition to being members of the parish council. St. Cecilia continues to be one of the

most vibrant and welcoming catholic churches in Boston. This gives me hope.

Our previous pastor would ask women to give a reflection on the readings during mass. They superior to the usual homily.

For several years I was a member of a religious order who were women who lived social justice and were very dynamic.

It is a century too late!

In 1970 my community sent me to Rome to study... Jesuits and Barnabas Ahern, people who had participated in the vatii. It was glorious! The church at heart is beautiful. Our habits came off. New rule! We were sent out to be with people. I became a spiritual director and built this system for my sisters and beyond with the wi Jesuits. We were growing, transforming. Also, when the Vatican attacked us, and pat Ferrell lead LCWR brilliantly. I was so proud of her, them. Also, Jeannine Gramick and her work. She doesn't stop.

Presently I feel hope, I just really believe that it will happen. Due to the actions and convictions of women many good strides are being made ... I carry hope,

I was very hopeful when pope Francis was elected.

When I was working in hospital chaplaincy, often patients would thank me and say I should have been a priest because they felt special care in their need.

The calling of this synod,

The Franciscan priests of our parish attended the first Mary Magdalene celebration a group of us organized in 2008. They listened to the female biblical scholar, they participated in the person-to-person blessing led by a sr. Of charity who was our presider. It felt so

wholesome and natural to be side by side with the clergy who served our parish so generously.

Any visit I make to st Gertrude's Benedictine monastery. A local group of women who organize retreats centering on inclusiveness, compassion, ecumenical concerns.

When I saw youth especially the girls included as altar servers, lectors and eucharistic ministers. This opened the way for other women to be willing to participate. The movement to a Latin mass negates this. Also when the first sisters were invited and made pastoral associates that this could include trained lay ministers both men and women, When will we be able to anoint the sick. This is a point of such meaning to many when ill??

When I came in touch with future church and attended the webinars. This gave me real hope for the church as well as pope Francis pastoral care for all people.

When women preach and or teach.

I felt very hopeful when women religious stood their ground and their heads high when accused and questioned by the Vatican. They were certainly leading the way in love, probably much better than I ever could.

A group called women in conversation formed at st Francis parish. Every month about 80 women gathered. There was a storyteller, a woman from the parish who shared her faith story. Hearing others' stories reminded all of us of the strength and faith of women.

After Vatican 11 when we were able to have more influence.

I felt empowered when I heard that women have a chance to become deacons. I would sign up for sure! I feel empowered when I can reflect on the gospel and when I guided people as a chaplain, I felt very empowered. I wish I could

baptize babies & take a bigger role in the rituals of the church.

Pope Francis is appointing women to some higher positions in the church. This is hopeful, but it needs to move to include ordination.

I felt empowered when I prepared to go back to college and I received my diploma for pastoral catechetical leader.

In the year or two leading up to Vatican ii, I was very excited and hopeful that things would change, that women could be ordained, that priests could marry, that there would be real institutional change. That was more than 50 years ago. Waiting for things to change is "waiting for Godot"!

When I stood as an equal as an equal ad we lectured around the world.

Around the word.

The church is all the baptized, not primarily the hierarchical ordained who serve the community. The church would be impoverished and look silly if we ignore the women who sustain parish life, serve as religious educators and theologians, give heroic witness in consecrated life, and are more often the spiritual leaders of the domestic church. A broader ecclesiology empowers everyone, female and male, ordained and all the rest of the baptized.

My parish priest of 10 years has been very supportive of me. I have led seminars & retreats in my own parish and in other Australian states as well as in Canada. I have at all times had the full support of the priests in these different places, who allowed me independence & gave me full respect.

When women theologians started publishing and presenting, e.g. Elizabeth Johnson

The inclusion to perform the role of altar server.

At holy family retreat center in west Hartford CT a woman gave the homily.

There's a lot said about women deacons, but I don't see any progress.

I felt hope when our leaders of discerning deacons were welcomed and blessed by pope Francis at the beginning of the synod in Rome.

Have women ever had status in the church?

After Vatican ii so many of us were excited about the changes that were being made. 40 and 50 years ago, the laity talk about women priests and the hierarchy unfortunately had one reason after another why this couldn't be.

I felt empowered to ministry when in chaplaincy training at a Lutheran hospital cpe (clinical pastoral education) program-- ministering by being with patients and families in crisis and their affirming responses to my presence and actions.

I feel the hope because of other women and their ministry to women outside of traditional parish life.

Glad to see changes are happening.

We had a time in our parish when we our pastor made a nun pastoral associate and modeled a true partnership in the leadership of the church. It was inspiring and made me think this is how Jesus would want this.

When I was chosen as one of the twelve parishioners to have my feet washed by the pastor at holy Thursday liturgy.

I attended a synodal listening session with discerning deacons this past weekend. It was inspiring to see women preach and share their witness. Many of them were sisters of St. Joseph who spent their lives in ministry, basically doing the work of priests without the

sacramental support. I am hopeful that this organization, and others, and making space to elevate the role of women. At this session, I was able to show up as a live artist and share my gift of painting and the creative spiritual process as ministry.

Watching the documentary "pink smoke over the Vatican" showed me a view of powerful women working for real change.

The situation I described above was a time that I was hopeful. I participated in good faith and open heart only to see how dysfunctional the church actually was.

When women such as rev. Mary rammerman of spiritus Christi in Rochester, New York, or the women in the roman catholic women priest movement across the country. Step out to accept leadership roles, I feel empowered. I felt empowered when diverse Catholics and friends ordained me in a serve in 2012 in Seattle. This was under the auspices of the progressive Christian alliance since roman Catholicism will not recognize officially the call of women to be ordained. I feel very ecumenical and inter spiritual, hence my desire to accept ordination from a non-Catholic organization, even though I was educated in my youth as a catholic and lived decades as a very active catholic laywoman, including studying theology to serve as a spiritual director. At my ordained, I felt a stir of spirit with john xxiii's name came up during the litany of the saints. I feel called to serve in the spirit of Vatican ii and nostra aetate, welcoming diverse ways to experience and grow into the spirit of love that defined Jesus and many other holy women and men.

It is very empowering when priests allow women to participate in the liturgy by preaching.

Feel hope when I go to episcopal church in. Also, feel hope when I bring communion to the sick.

Whenever I experience informed and committed catholic woman that stand for progress in the church - I feel empowered. And - I feel humbled by the indomitable spirit and drive of woman religious.

Assigned to a priest less parish as the pastoral administrator.

Since Pope Francis came to the papacy.

When a priest from the Netherlands was part of our team. He truly appreciated and fostered the participation of women in a culture that did not.

Before the role of eucharistic ministers was widely accepted, my asst. Pastor asked me to distribute the bread. I felt empowered and respected.

In the late nineties our diocese began a two year lay ministry program. I was accepted into the program in 1999 and graduated in 2001. There was no separation in our roles as lay ministers and there were as many women as men and all of our gifts were being called forward. Our hopes began to diminish as it became clear that many of the priests in our diocese rejected the idea of lay lead liturgies.

When I volunteered in a parish where women and men of diverse ethnicities were treated as co-equals with the pastor, and had their voice.

This synod process has given me the greatest hope, which is not huge at that rate. The election of pope Francis was another point where I thought maybe there might be a change for change.

In our present parish women sacristans and readers predominate.

After Vatican ii when we had parish councils and men and women were listened to equally - except of course - when it came to priests.

When pope Francis finally agreed to entertain the conversation. I know it is but a crumb, but it is something. I also always feel empowered and hopeful among women religious during liturgies and ceremonies in which they lead and preach. It still makes me sigh and say to myself, "I want to be like that someday. "and the many incredibly articulate, intelligent, educated, and courage women who will not be silenced or sidelined, but who persist, usually even politely, in speaking truth to this unjust hold on power.

Women in leadership in the California province of the society of Jesus now the Jesuits west province and the us assistance of the society of Jesus. Much greater respect, collaboration, and empowerment than in our parishes in the province and the diocese.

After Vatican ii, I lived with a small group of women in a rented house near a Jesuit boy's high school. Some of the priests came to preside at informal celebrations of the mass. Those who came were open to change and to dialoguing with us. One of the older men asked us questions one day which led to my story of wanting to be a Jesuit priest in the 5th grade. He ended by saying to me, "I think you were really called to be a Jesuit!" It was a sign of hope and affirmation.

I have felt personally respected by many priests in the two parishes I have attended in my adult years in Maine. I was guided with respect during the 10 years I served as the youth minister in my Bucksport parish. We were able to develop a team, first to serve junior high students, because there were no high school students attending mass at the time. We gradually expanded to high school, and I always felt well supported. All the aspects of the youth ministry training which I received at St. Joseph's college over 3 years were implemented and inclusive with youth participation in the ministries of the church and with total support from our pastor, fa. Jim Gower. I thought the program was so good that I hoped the diocese would create

the same model for adults. Sadly, that has never happened and I'm sorry to say things seemed to deteriorate with new, younger priests eventually leaving the priesthood over the next several years. It would seem that many of the current priests being ordained have a desire to return to the more controlled faith rather than the trusting faith that God created us all in love-to-love others in return. I hope that this is not the case, but I worry that the seminaries of today are still not teaching the path of Vatican ii.

Some of the decisions of pope Francis but not much else.

The years they were investigating the women religious were being expected to measure up and there were some who didn't react well to the requests. I was impressed and it started my questioning of exactly what our church was all about and the view that many regarding women religious.

As an adult, a sister of St. Joseph was given the freedom to begin renewal in our parish before others in our diocese. The pastor had confidence in her research, people skills, and spirituality to lead a core group of like-minded women to begin this endeavor. The small groups continued for years.

When anyone acknowledges that women actually do most of the work in the church.

Catholic women preach is a real sign of hope.

The faithful witness of women who take on resistance to clericalism by addressing abuse and assuming leadership in their faith communities even without the immediate endorsement of the catholic hierarchy.

I ministered in two parishes in the past where I was treated as an equal on the staff: the first was part of St. John's interfaith community in Columbia, md and the 2nd was the staff of a parish in Roanoke, VA . These were early in

my parish ministry days and set the tone for collaborative staff members. Recent pastors in my present parish have mostly been sensitive and supportive of me as a minister of music/ liturgy , scripture and justice programs over the years. I have been here since 1983 as a parishioner.

About ten years ago a woman religious gave the holy sat. Homily at my parish.

Later in life I worked with priests who were open to women in leadership positions in the parish. That changed with the assignment of a new pastor.

Just on a retreat (in philly) co=led by a Jesuit and a lay woman (with doctorate in theology).

Future church!

In my own parish speaking and praying with like- minded women. Not all women my age (71) feel the same way.

As a pastoral team with the former pastor. We planned, dialogued with the faith community, met with parish council and sometimes even disagreed with each other and were able to work it out.

Women lay preachers.

When the revised canon law no longer required elections among women religious be supervised by men.

Just read that Pope Francis has reorganized the Vatican bureaucracy to include women and laymen. The first change in 30 years for the system.

Opportunities to lector and to be eucharistic ministers.

The women I know who in settings do preach and bring their pastoral richness to community.

After several years of only males having their feet washed in our parish on holy Thursday, pope Francis rewrote the instructions so that women's feet could be washed "legally". I had my feet washed that year and felt deep joy in the inclusion.

When I hear or see or read about women leading the church on a particular issue of importance, i.e., gay rights, etc. or women theologians writing or speaking about the Sunday gospels, etc.; or caring for people at our southern border!!

Education & open discussion like future church. Women speaking truth to power in many different settings.

Becoming altar servers. Lectors, eucharistic ministers, ushers, chairs of various ministries.

I felt sincerely hopeful about the future of women in the roman catholic church when I was a junior in college in 1980. I had come to see and hear and encounter talented women theology majors and I saw and heard women in roles at mass and I felt God was calling some of these women to be ordained in our roman catholic church. I felt sure that by the year 2000, we would have ordained women priests in our church. My consciousness had become larger and my hopes were high for the future. Ever since then, I have felt the church could accomplish so much more if all our members who felt a call to serve in ordained ministry would be trusted to hear god's call and be invited to go through formation and become ordained ministers. I stumbled onto a catholic community parish founded after the second Vatican council and my hopes remained high into the 1990s, but since then my hopes have gradually plummeted. My faith in God has never diminished, but my faith in the leaders of my church truly being open to the loving spirit of god in all ways has diminished year by year and decade by decade. It is heartbreaking for me.

The fact that we are being invited to share our stories now is hopeful. Catholic women preach also gives me hope!

When Pope Francis became our pope.

After Vatican II.

Just for a brief period following Vatican II. In the United States, that also depended on which part of the country you lived in and if the hierarchy in your diocese adhered to the changes which Vatican ii promulgated.

Once a priest at our firmer church in Raleigh NC diocese left town and had two women celebrate the communion service all week

I was part of. A synodal process 6 years ago.

In the diocese of Helena, I was hired as the director of liturgy and music for a small parish. Both the bishop and the parish priests valued the women on their staff, sought their input and encouraged them to give reflections at evening prayer and presentations to adults. Their voices were important. Diocesan days for catechesis were open to both ordained and nonordained. With the recent change in bishops, this sense of hope no longer prevails.

When the clergy worked as a team and encouraged the talents and interests of the group.

Reading feminist theology, listening to lectures from Phyllis zagano

When I have worked side by side. We planned together, implemented together and evaluated together. Mutual respect for one another and the gifts of those present was an example to all.

When a woman in our city went on to be ordained a priest that this was a breakthrough to the clerical model

Participating in future church's synod listening sessions has been very encouraging. I am so glad that there are so many like-minded people out there who are doing their best to keep the church sane, welcoming, and relevant.

I was a pastoral associate in a church in ga and felt truly empowered by the pastor in the work in which I was engaged. I know there are other pastors who are in favor of women being fully engaged in ministry including ordination.

Pope Francis publicly acknowledged the work of the sister who works with migrants at the border. Pope Francis has appointed a sister to one of the offices in the dicastery. He has announced a reform to allow lay women and men to assume responsible positions with decision-making authority within the church.

At one parish I went to, a priest let a woman give a few homilies! She worked on the parish staff, and she was a mom (I went to school with her son, who was also an altar server.)

Pope Francis has given little rays of hope by opening ministries of service to women which were once closed to them. But he must listen to the majority of the church which has expressed its *sensus fidelium* and insists that married men and women are indeed being called by God to the ministerial priesthood.

Have not had any.

When the pope started a discussion of having women deacons.

Never!

Our local parish has an activist group: equality for wine. In the church. Support groups and actions!

During the tenure of a previous bishop who fostered lay formation and women parish life coordinators in the absence of resident priests

(shortage of priests). 1970s - mid-90s. His successor undid all his accomplishments.

Phyllis zagano and discerning deacons

Writing a parish pastoral plan. Running a parish assembly and retreat.

When I go to events led by women religious I feel hope.

Working with priests and bishops who understood/understand and lived/live the vision of Vatican ii.

When I felt a strong call to the diaconate and found others who felt the same. My energy in this direction lapsed when the pope reacted so lukewarmly to the report from the first commission, he called to study the diaconate and its history for women in the church.

I was so excited when, in 1973, some episcopal women were ordained as priests! Even more excited when the episcopal church recognized their ordination and opened ordination to women two years later. I believed that this might happen in the catholic church soon after that. Even though catholic women were ordained on the Danube in 2002 and more have been (supposedly invalidly) ordained since that time, I am still waiting for the official catholic church to open ordination to women.

A long time ago when girls were allowed to serve along with boys.

As a catholic chaplain, I have many opportunities to minister to those in need: funerals, memorial services, word and communion, as well as journeying with people through the chaos of life. My "call" was confirmed by the work I was doing. And ironically by the protestant chaplains I worked with. I eventually became the director of spiritual care for a hospital system.

The collaboration that exists in our parish...a female parish director working closely with the priests who come to say mass.

I do not like to see women overstepping boundaries to be illicitly ordained. I think pope Francis is trying, but he himself holds to old tenets.

I was director of a center for campus and young adult ministry at a college in Chicago and felt that I had complete responsibility for the students, working young adults, program decisions. I was accountable and reported regularly to the director of campus ministry, who was a priest; but felt almost completely free for the implementation of our goals.

As stated above when I was allowed to become an adult woman altar server...and during my training to become a spiritual director at Creighton university when I was a director for three people leading them on an 8-day silent retreat and I was allowed "to preach" after the gospel just as a priest would do!!

The invitation by the sulpicians (with Vatican approval) to be first female lecturer at a seminary in Malawi (St. Anthony's).

Never experienced such.

I was inspired by the way women religious responded to Vatican investigation and the outcome of it. Listening and openness of women to dialog and standing their ground and trusting the spirit to show the way.

I was a pastoral associate in two parishes in the 1980s. We were extremely hopeful that things were changing. We had a university that had intentionally partnered with the diocese to provide theological education at the level of the Master of Divinity to women and men-not roman catholic priests. The vision was to allow these women and men to serve parishes as pastoral life coordinators. We envisioned a changing church that would eventually ordain

such leaders and we prepared them to serve as lay ecclesial ministers until the time came for them to be ordained. Then, pope john Paul ii and pope benedict xvi happened.

Ability to be lector and eucharistic minister.

Never.

In our parish women take the lead in so many ministries but unless you are involved you don't know or appreciate what they do. I have been lucky enough to be involved and have seen the leadership of women in our parish. Women need more recognition and advancement into more church and diocese positions.

I felt empowered and hopeful when our 12 member St. Bonaventure justice ministry , led by a member of an even smaller bible study group, shared our most painful experiences within our living connected to the issues of criminal, environmental, mental health and seniors justice. We provided a safe space for each other and active listening to allow each of us to find and use our voice.

Listening to speakers Future church hosts. The voices of women religious. Research on women deacons in the church. Making Mary Magdalene a feast day.

When I was allowed to give the homily and, received positive feedback from the parishioners, I felt empowered. Women should be treated as equals.

The ability to form a reflective Hispanic women's group within the parish.

When I first started listening to and reading catholic feminists, (but that was 35 years ago!)

When the Vatican named women to important roles in the curia, etc. Approving women to be elevated to ministry of acolyte and lector.

I think women can help in various ways but I think we need the priest.

When I was a parish administrator with only a weekend priest. I was able to get a dead parish alive and full lay participation. Was a joy. Now bishop says only deacons can administrate a parish. No women.

Periodically, women are allowed to preside over prayer services(ash Wednesday, good Friday, Mary of Magdala celebration. These times make me feel the near-equality of women.

While on staff 1986-88 and again from 1991 to 2006 the pastor shared leadership and built a vision from the grass roots. "in Christ, we are bread for one another... Broken, we gather... nourished, we reach out."

When I was allowed to gather the women and speak of their self-empowerment and self-respect. Women should not cover their heads in the church. Clerical domination is forcing women to cover their heads.

I was hopeful when the current bishop appointed a woman to be the superintendent of catholic schools and when he appointed a woman to lead the ministry offices.

Today as pope Francis is trying.

When I have heard women preach.....in another diocese.....not allowed in ours.

I am a Dominican family member with the Dominican sisters of Houston. The sisters give me hope because they are doing the work that makes a difference and are preaching the messages that should be preached in all of the catholic church. Inclusive, and that all people are equal and created by god. Women and men, all races etc. They live what they preach.

When a catholic female priest (ordained through references in the bible and a leader of her church for decades) concelebrated a funeral

mass with a female Lutheran minister for a friend of mine. What is there to fear?

I worked with the one pastor for 9 years. We worked together, with common vision of church that was missionary and inclusive. A truly graced 9 years!

One of the blessings of covid has been the wonderful women priest led zoom mass I found.

Francis making curia positions lay led.

When women could read at liturgy [but not read the gospel] and administer communion.

When I was a new other a lovely nun led a mother's group in our parish where she would teach us about our faith in the most loving way. She modeled how I could learn more from a woman than I ever had from a priest. It showed me that women can evangelize and should evangelize.

I know that the talent and expertise of women is very present in the church. I am confident that women want to share their gifts in ways that are of service to others and to the common good. When a woman who has the gift of preaching is allowed to share the gospel meaning, I am encouraged. Denial of the priesthood to women is cutting off the life of half of the church body.

I am an associate member of a parish that recognizes the abilities of women and where they have a greater role than in other parishes.

The experience was short lived, but I felt honored when given a role by our bishop. It was short lived because bishop prefers to listen to theologically inept clergy rather than a parishioner. This remark has to be qualified by mentioning many of our clergy are members of a separate itinerant lay led movement or sect and their seminaries are different.

When the intercommunity peace and justice center in Seattle held the women's convocations over the past 25 year, about every 4 years, I felt hope. Unfortunately, the organization has not had a convocation for about 6 years now. We live 30 miles from Seattle. Yet to experience anything remotely Vatican ii or with a social justice theme, we have to go to the heart of Seattle to find that.

Haven't seen anything, yet. Lots of words but no action.

Never.

I belong to a group of roman catholic women priests and that community is inclusive if all who want to join.

Listening to people from around the country who are in favor of elevating women to the diaconate and priesthood.

Most of my roles were ones of having the chance to empower others. And so I did as educator, director of faith formation, hospital chaplain, spiritual director. For these opportunities I am grateful. We all know that before the scandal became so prominent, father was the end all and be all not because of his excellent performance, but because of the collar. When able to implement my roles despite this, I was hopeful and realized the great gift women are to the church.

Pope Francis is appointing more women to major roles in the Vatican. Women serving as pastoral administrators, one such new hire in my parish!

I had the pleasure to serve as the first woman director of education for our city's catholic school board. Brief history lesson, in Ontario, Canada, catholic schools are publicly funded through tax dollars - they are not private - no tuition required, they are public schools. I was responsible for over 21,000 students and about 3000 staff. I worked closely with our diocese

and met with the bishop regularly as well as with the local priests at their monthly meetings. If a woman can be entrusted with the education and faith development of thousands of children then why can't women take their rightful place in the leadership of the church? I find it odd and highly ironic that most popes swear a deep devotion to Mary and yet have so little regard for women and their abilities, power and commitment to the faithful.

Woman lay ministers.

I haven't. Women's roles have always been limited to areas of service. Even as a child, when the topic was approached it was always justified as well at least women are allowed to do. And the roles were specifically listed whereas male were free to choose any role for themselves.

Through women religious and women active: religious sisters in traditional orders, non-traditional and brave women that lead us through catholic women preach, all involved in future church, and ordained catholic women priests.

In general as my parish is quite progressive, women have been taking leadership roles. I have been a head of pastoral council and chair of the mission and social justice committee. I am hopeful as pope Francis is putting women in leadership roles at the Vatican.

Women should have a larger role in the church but that is for the catholic leaders to decide how they can best be utilized. If that is as priests, we will accept them.

Many of our current female theologians are a bright light in the church and I am grateful for social media when the average lay person has equal opportunity to partake of their wisdom I am grateful for the 'staying power' of many women in the church who are voicing their concerns about the state of the church in today's society and are committed to

transforming the church they love and are not just walking away from it.

Having a career that allowed me to meet wonderful women of all faiths working on behalf of the catholic church social ministries throughout the world

When I read what women writers have said and done.

When Chris Schenk started future church and has been a force for good and hope for our life in the spirit. When coria Kent spoke loud and clear through her art. When Dorothy day was alive.

Discerning deacons' feast of st phoebe celebrations and the work they do. Future church's catholic women preach and their many other programs. Pope Francis' desires/actions.

It hasn't happened in my community, but some of the decisions by pope Francis have given me cause for hope.

Pope Francis gives me hope ... I pray he will live long enough to give me more hope

At various times our Benedictine abbey nearby, allowed women to give a reflection during mass, or at the end of mass. It was not called a homily but served to replace that in a different part of the liturgy.

When people broke the rules and ordained women and got excommunicated.

A liberal Vatican ii pastor in the 80's hired a nun to be a pastoral associate who gave homilies every Sunday for several years until he was reassigned elsewhere and she was asked to step down.

When I got involved, somewhat reluctantly, in youth ministry in the 80's at the request of our pastor. I returned from my diocesan training so excited about the full range of

catholic ministries and told our priest that I thought a similar training should be given to the adult parishioners. He agreed but it just never happened. I felt great hope with the passing of Vatican II as a teenager also but as an adult I felt that most people still didn't really understand it's possibilities including many of our local priests.

In the mid 1980's, I was asked to participate in a discussion group in my parish to provide input on women's role in the church. I understood this information was supposed to be used for an document from the Vatican on the subject. However, nothing was ever produced.

When girls were allowed to be altar servers. When women could be em's. When I heard a retired priest express his disapproval of women's limited role in our church

Pope Francis gives me some hope. Organizations and individuals working for and speaking out about the ordination of women give me hope. Opportunities I've had to lead funeral services and other liturgies and the positive response I receive give me hope.

Nuns and sisters who follow Christ's lessons to serve the poor, etc. Selflessly. Nuns and sisters who live simply (vs some priests / bishops I've known). And when my dorm priest at the university of Notre dame would allow the dorm's rectress sr. Maureen ("mo") to hold up the chalice and host while he did the verbal blessing during our dorm masses every week. And when in an indigenous village in Chiapas, Mexico in their catholic mass, a husband and wife held up the chalice and host and did the blessing -- I was told that this is permitted b/c the missionaries / Spanish had to allow the dual nature (male/female) of the indigenous ways to convince indigenous people there to convert to Catholicism -- and this included allowing a married couple to do the mass and not have a supposedly celibate male have a monopoly on blessing the eucharist.

This hope was felt after Vatican II during the 1970's and 1980's.

I have to reach out to the past when we were permitted to have women give homilies. That is very much missed.

When I met and heard speak a south African woman who was one of the first women to be ordained and then later was consecrated a bishop, I was filled with admiration and hope.

I've many times over decades of ministry been affirmed and empowered in my pastoral ministry and 'priesthood' by the people among whom I've ministered and shared deep faith. The majority vote for increased involvement of women in ministries at the Amazon synod raised my hope! But it wasn't followed through.

Future church has been a blessing for me.

Only with FutureChurch activities.

When a mother spoke about her experience as a mother on Mother's Day

I was a RCIA catechist for 20 years. The last year before the demise of the group with the retirement of the wonderful pastoral associate, I was invited to participate in the sprinkling of the congregation at the start of the Easter vigil.

In this same wonderful group all the team members would lay hands on the newly confirmed candidates. I have to report that this was because 1) the female pastoral associate was a constant advocate for all persons and 2) the pastor was a man of conscience who recognized the value of all persons much of the time. When there was another presider at the vigil those options were off the table.

Women theologians being recognized as credible authorities.

When I will in education there were programs, retreats, activities, sessions that focused on

the role of women - an energetic awareness developed- it began with staff and spread throughout the student body.

We were on it!

I became quite discouraged during the reigns of Popes John Paul and Benedict with their 'conservative' attitudes and actions. Young priests in cassocks with superior airs started to pop up everywhere!

Today, I am feeling tangible hope for women now and in the future with Pope Francis' leadership although he's not fast enough! Deb's presentation reminded me of the noticeable improvements over the past nine years. Thank you.

A pastor "allowed" us to form a women's ministry and although he threatened to close it down a few times, it has endured for about 15 years. This has been a great place of spiritual growth and community building.

I have felt empowered through my many years of work and service in the church in music and teaching. My friendships with truly holy priests changed my life at an early age. These priests gave me great support and encouragement in my life and work. I am truly grateful to God.

When the Catholic church started to allow altar girls. Nothing since.

Having been involved with the nuns on the bus, I was encouraged to participate with and support the religious communities in my state. Sr. Simone Campbell was brought to Louisville by a group of clerical and lay people working on the new sacramentary a few years ago. I have attended workshops given by Sr. Joan Chittister and Ilio Delio. Also, I have attended call to action conferences and helped in organizing one held in Louisville. Most of those conferences were led by women.

Q3. What is the most pressing issue we need to address when it comes to women in the church?

Open the doors to reading scripture, to preaching the gospel, get the language changed.

Ordination

Priesthood

Clericalism

Ordination of women and other leadership positions should be addressed and made available to women.

Clericalism and racism both of which reinforce the attitude gender exclusion.

Allow it.

An end of clericalism as we now know it.

Appointment of women as pastoral administrators.

Ordination to the priesthood - inclusion of women in curriculum development in seminary training.

Dismantle patriarchy.

Have married clergy

See above

Clericalism.

The training of seminarians.....if we do not begin to train seminarians to consider accept all people instead of putting on cassocks and birettas and making them feel as if they are the gift to all people, we are doomed. Second, reeducate the bishops -- who are the problem.

Diaconate should be open to women, as there is no theological or historical reason to exclude them.

Deaconate

Ordination

Approve women deacons.

Women's ordination to the priesthood.

To allow it without discussion - there is no need for discussion. Women are half the world and more than half the church. Do the math!

Equality for all.

Train priests to value women.

Women should immediately be admitted to the priesthood. Nothing short of this will suffice. There is nothing standing in the way of this except male ego.

Serious dialogue about allowing women to be ordained as deacons and priests.

Ordained deacons

Co- discipleship

Listen

Recognize the importance of Mary Magdalene in our church

Statement of equality of women in the church

I believe that the church should accept the women who are currently ordained and end the

idea of ex-communication and threats in this regard.

We might want to begin with women deacons and go from there.

Rescind ordination sacerdotalis. It is not in keeping with God or the teachings of Jesus. It's funny how the church thinks it has authority to do absolutely anything, except what it doesn't want to do: treat women like they have the rights of the baptized and are loved by god.

Giving them the credit they deserve by listening to them and giving them positions they deserve. This must be a universal policy and not at the whim of certain bishops and pastors.

The ordination of women as priests

Find leadership that follows in pope Francis' path, develop the same in seminaries/ dioceses. Humility works really well!

Open deacon and priest ordination to women, and all others.

The most pressing issue the institutional church should address is a searching examination of itself, a recognition of the reality and injustice of patriarchy, an admission of the harm done and a contrite determination to make amends.

Start with female deacons.

Ordination, without which women will have no power in the church other than tokenism.

Teach respect for women and their potential in all seminaries starting now and open the diaconate to women.

Leadership roles for women at every level.

Ordination

Take it step by step. Ordination to the diaconate should be a priority, plus continuing appointment to positions of authority.

Women must be an equal part of leadership in the church. We are greater than half of the membership.

Discrimination of women

Patriarchy and clericalism

Clericalism harms the clergy and all who come into contact. It wounds the body of Christ while claiming to serve it. Conversion of heart is the greatest need — all else follows. No more careerists rising up the ranks.

Inclusivity of all people.

I think we need to actually talk about this...not me, not you, but the church as a whole

They are equal to men everywhere but in the church

Open the diaconate to women. Don't only open it to religious sisters or married women over 35 years old. Stop with the restrictions on women.

Start with the permanent diaconate and all women deacons. More involvement in structure of the current church and leadership.

Patriarchy

The church has to open its heart and mind to equity in all forms of spirituality and faith.

Ordination of women and married priests.

Inequality; economic; immigration; racism (consider reparations), climate be a leading doer.

Ordination of women. There is not the priest shortage we think there is. There are women

waiting in the wings. They want to help. People need them.

Listening to our stories.

We need women to offer anointing the sick and other pastoral ministries in hospital settings especially where there is an aging population.

In a hierarchal system, the change needs to start with the pope and the synod. Vatican iii needs to put this issue at the top of the agenda.

Ordaining women as priests.

Ordain women as deacons; give them meaningful decision-making roles and preaching roles

Open preaching to women

Clericalism and once that is seriously addressed then the role of women, glbt and any issues regarding sexuality.

They are already making exceptions but very reluctantly. Women run parish communities, baptize, etc., in fact, everything except reconciliation (formally) and concentrate eucharist

Clericalism

Ordination

Really listen to the women who have been appointed to positions and appoint more women to important roles. Why not?

Must first take a small step. And make women able to participate as deacons.

Ordain women. Make them equal. Don't take small steps, a form of tokenism.

Let women be in full leadership. No more steps. It is almost an insult that we have to chip away so hard at the heart of stone. Enough

of us have been crucified and sacrificed. If it doesn't happen there will be no church - as the gray hair indicates. My four children do not attend and nor to most of my friends' children. The church is dying thanks to the clergy.

Ordination of women.

Equality and inclusion.

Women should have equal position in the decisions of the institutional church.

Reconciliation to help build a strong, lasting and open movement by giving it a good foundation!

Allow and encourage women to preach.

I believe that women should be invited into the diaconate and priesthood to bring new life to our church.

All clerics at every level need to consider that women deserve the same respect as men and that this starts with little girls and evolves to women as the same leaders as clerics in our church. We could try follow Jesus's example, for a starter.

That they be included in all areas of church life, if there are women, who feel called to this type of participation.

Women's equality - women deacons and priests.

At least start with the ordination of women deacons

Dismantling and reconstruction of the hierarchical model, including formation and education of all clergy. In our breakout group, there was significant differences in how dioceses have chosen to implement the synod listening process.

I think it has to be recognizing the full equality of men and women, both created by God.

So many issues. Hard to prioritize, every issue takes years for it to move to laity level

Ordination!!!

Open up the priesthood and diaconate to women.

Ordination. The caveat is obviously that ordination into an abusive system will not of itself create all the changes that are so badly needed. I would not agree to be ordained into the system as it stands. I couldn't commit to celibacy. I couldn't commit to being part of a clericalist structure.

Deacons now. Once people see the foundational change in our catholic communities they will rejoice

Begin working toward change by addressing the study of women deacons.

Clericalism

Priesthood, deacons, more leadership say in decisions affecting the lives of its parishioners.

Women's diaconate then priesthood.

Notion of ontological change coming from ordination.

The church should immediately allow women to be ordained as deacons.

Read deb's incredible presentation. She says it all.

Women inclusivity for women at all levels.

The ending of clericalism and considering the input of all.

Ordain women to the priesthood and diaconate. End requirements for celibacy for priests and allow them to marry at any time.

Although I favor women priests, I would be thrilled to have women deacons. I believe there is justification for this and the power of resulting would be immense.

Train priests in seminaries that women are not sources of sin, that women are equal in status, that they are other human beings.

Women deacons - preaching (not reflecting), on equal basis with men. Women and men need to hear women's voices. Not only a place at the table, but a heard voice and a vote. Tokenism is what we have and that can't be the end. It's insulting.

Opening diaconate and priesthood now

Not sure it's the most pressing issue but rethinking the training in the seminaries regarding Vatican ii and inclusivity. Many of the newly ordained priests seem to be taking the church backwards rather than having the imagination to envision an inclusive church.

Educate, reform (?) Most bishops/cardinals to the oppression of voices of women whose gifts are being silenced in the service of our people... The faithful who long for nourishment

Let us know who the priests are accountable to. Sound like not one.

Opening leadership positions to women. Actually, listening to women who have the pulse of the world.

To allow women to study to be priests and deacons.....and to allow more lay participation in liturgy and church decisions.

Transformed model of leadership from hierarchical and clerical to inclusive, collaborative.

Allow women who are called to the priesthood to answer that call as equal to men.

Clericalism and faulty theology that limits the role of women in the church.

Reinstating the role of women deacons and developing a mature spirituality among the faithful.

Ordain women deacons. Now.

Toxic masculinity. It's destroying the church and the planet.

Listen to women! They must make up half of the synod membership.

That women will be ordained as deacons and priests. It is important that more people have access to the sacraments and ministry.

Full inclusion.

Tone down the conservative, deacons that want to be seen only at the altar and put women down, especially at St. Francis.

Ordain women; let women preach.

We need to put metrics in place to improve the equality.

Open governance at all levels to women and all laity

Women should be able to become priests

Identify and recognize the abilities of women that are equal to men and identify the numerous the qualities that women add that are greatly neglected many by male priests.

Fix the pronouns. No more god as "he"

We need to pray for full women's participation. The spirit will hear us. Bring women into as many roles as we can and keep adding. Empower the young.

Liturgical participation/ leadership and social. Justice leadership

Equal voice in all matters facing the church, but especially on family and women's issues.

Diaconate ordination for women.

We need to make sure the wonderful men going into the seminaries are coming out as brainwashed, clericalists.

Educate Catholics, starting with seminarians, about gender equality and inclusion, highlight women's contributions to the richness of the church and challenge the notion that women can't participate as fully in the church as men are allowed to participate.

Women need to be involved as equals. Something must be done about the power vested in the hierarchy (all the way down to parish priest). The men are not better; they just have jobs which could be filled by women.

Patriarchy and clericalism seem to me to be the basic structures that need to change.

Allow the synod in 2023 to have at least 51% women voters.

Hierarchy. It is self-destructive and taking many American Catholics with it. Affirm women's vocations to positions of leadership, including preaching. With full support of local ordinaries, have women in "front", not just behind the scenes.

Remember the church is the people, including women. Get over outdated thinking and alleviate the power of the hierarchy and institutional corruption

Diaconate.

Let go of the myth that they can excommunicate the RCWP as a group. They are ordained by "the rc rules. They have

every qualification needed- so drop biology. Great theologians say you can't do a blanket excommunication anyway. So recognize the great outpouring of the call from the holy spirit to women and men, married, celibate, and every gendered.

There is not just one pressing issue. All the issues listed in the questions above are all needed. Clericalism must surrender power to the laity and especially women. It will be less painful for the clerics because the laity will continue to utilize their own baptismal rights and power without their "permission"!

The catholic church must address the ordination of women as priests. Jesus told us if we wanted "life" that we must receive his body and blood! That means we have to have priests. I know Catholics have been praying for more male vocations to the priesthood for over 25 years, yet we have less vocations now more than ever! Is the church going to obey Jesus, our founder, our god or continue to uphold the exclusively male priesthood, about which we know Christ never said anything! Thanks to modern theologians, church historians, church archeologists and biblical scholars, among other professions we have a much more accurate picture of what early Christianity was really like! We cannot go back and pretend that women did not have their own ministries, were not bishops, were not apostles, did not have their names changed from female to male in later translations of the bible in order to bend history to what the male hierarchy of the catholic church wants people to believe! It seems similar to the manner in which the hierarchy of the catholic church has handled and is still handling the clergy pedophilia scandal!

Start with the diaconate - in terms of sacraments etc. But let women administer parishes yesterday!!

A place at the table on all levels.

Ordination to the diaconate and eventually priesthood.

Open all ministries.

Open the door to an inclusive priesthood and clean out the Vatican 1 - Latin loving current priests.

Just listen to and accept their wisdom

Respect for women's equality with men

Diaconate & priesthood & all governance

Reformation of priesthood, elimination of clericalism.

Clericalism

I'd like to see the institutional church discard the medieval trappings of hierarchy, patriarchy, and clericalism. Perhaps in that milieu, individual gifts and talents would be more easily discerned, regardless of gender or orientation.

Women deacons and priests - then parishes wouldn't have to close

Women should at least be allowed to become deacons.

To engage women in positions in the church with equal consideration and equal pay as men

Ordination

Grant full participation at all levels for women in the church.

First, the diaconate.... immediately thereafter, the priesthood.

Elevate women as deacons... Without the clerical club ramifications.

Preaching at mass.

Acceptance that women are equal to men in the church.

Ending the hierarchy of male only.

The role of the diaconate.

The church will not nurture the next generation of Catholics, if they do not recognize and include women as equals.

Ordination of female priests and deacons

Diaconate ordination

Clericalism - the men afraid that women will take over

Ordination. I am tired of hearing that we have a vocation problem. There are plenty of vocations, we just aren't letting them come forth.

Priesthood and diaconate for women--both at the same time

If not allowing women as deacons or ordination let them have some kind of prayer service or preaching.

The issue of women's' absence from decision-making at all levels in the church. The restriction of ordination to men.

Allow women to become deacons.

Women being allowed to hold any position in the church as men hold.

Preaching, presiding, participating until our church recognizes that we are all children of god and all are baptized into a priesthood.

Rid itself of clericalism - look to the holy spirit to lead it forward.

Priesthood asap, other faiths offer women full participation in faith community.

Downplay clericalism, because I would be ordained and have gifts, but never would I want to become part of the clericalism that is so prevalent in the church today.

Women ordination.

Move aside, boys!

Women deacons! That seems like an easy first step.

Women's ordination--I disagree with Phyllis Zagano on this.

Listening, & encouraging women to use their gifts as they feel called to use them.

The patronizing, disrespectful attitudes and behaviors toward women

Obstruction by the hierarchical church for equality of women in the church.

First - there must be a removal of patriarchy - and I'm not sure this is possible.

Women need to be devon's and need to be ordained ministers

We are all sinners. Stop focusing on abortion and issues that primarily affect woman, e.g., Birth control as the big sins. I'm tired of hearing about the sanctity of "innocent, unborn life." what about life that is not so innocent and born? All should be welcome to church as Jesus himself hung out with sinners.

Allowing women to administer the sacraments would be a great first step, perhaps as deacons and eventually priests.

Giving us a seat at the table where we can vote and make decisions that affect our parishes, dioceses and the greater body of the church

Recognition of theologically and ministerially trained women and place for them to serve in the institutional church.

Equal decision making in church affairs including at the parish level.

Women's ordination

Review the call to celibacy as in my mind this has nothing to do with the call to priesthood.

Address women's ordination and full participation in all decision making

Addressing the whole issue of sexuality and the arcane understanding and morality that comes from a primitive understanding of what it is to be fully human.

Women being deacons and giving homilies

Begin with allowing women to be deacons.

Renewal -- rethinking rules on how we work together to create community.

Lack of priest is a problem that men created. Let all who have a vocation to priesthood be free to follow it.

Let women be deacons.

Barriers to women and non-celibate men becoming priests hurt the church.

Condemn clericalism and acknowledge its aspects which should also be condemned

Ordination of women both deacon and priest

What sister Joan Chittister said (1980s): when there are so many baptized Catholics without regular access to the sacraments, why does the church need to adhere to a celibate male priesthood?

That is the most pressing issue: people are hungry for sacramental and spiritual growth!! And they aren't getting it.

Inclusion

Including women in all areas of the church as a matter of justice

Women deacons now!

Women's full participation in the church may be the ingredient necessary to bring young people back into the church.

Issue of women becoming deacons.

Equality - not just in ministry, but in all aspects of life. In many ways, the so-called "theology" of complementarity has been damaging; creating an excuse for those who would just as soon see women relegated to a corner and never to speak.

Diaconate

Include women in all decision making before changes can be made. The church is at least 50 % women.

Let them be ordained deacons and priests as called by the holy spirit just as men are. Open ordination to women deacons and priests; be more careful about the type of men and women who continue through good seminary training and reach ordination.

Woman deacons so that women can better support other women by assisting them as spiritual directors and confessors.

The church should at least be considering making women deacons.

That women be given equal voice in leadership and decision making. Not only about ordination

Open up the priesthood to women.

Immediate steps to begin a preaching women's diaconate, and to begin the process to ordain women priests. To have women in all positions of authority in the church, parishes, and schools.

Recognition of women's full status as baptized members of the body of Christ.

Because women are baptized like men in the same death-resurrection of Christ Jesus, they should be empowered to use their gifts for the good of the whole body. It is a gradual process but it's already happening and will continue to grow.

Allow women to read the gospel and preach. Open the diaconate.

Restructuring of seminaries and finding creative ways to support those ordained as priests, whether women or men.

I will be 76 in 10 days so I'm not looking for solving things immediately. I accept that the church operates at glacial speed - although I have to admit that the glaciers are moving fast.

Address clericalism and priestly formation.

Full participation!

Ordination

1 diaconate for women 2 reform how bishops are selected to return to the ancient practice of church giving the community the authority to accept or reject an individual as their bishop.

Clericalism needs to end and the spirit w/I us all must be fully acknowledged. Namaste

Give women equal authority in saying the mass.

Ordain women as deacons now! Continue the work of incorporating women as full participants in parish and diocese leadership

That, to begin with, women could become deacons--very easily done and would help the "load" the priests in a parish do have.

Have good conversations and common-sense dialogue. Listen to each other. Respect the joys and sad stories. Avoid condemnation. Show excitement about new prospects and find ways to advance ideas.

Positions of leadership on all levels must be granted to women who are able and desirable of such. Their education and their views and thoughts must be given credence and value. The feminine side of life is severely lacking in our church and would make it a much more pleasant experience for all of us.

Stop excluding us from all of the sacraments (women's ordination)

Patriarchy and clericalism. They go hand in hand.

Publicly acknowledging how women have been slighted and identifying more ways to provide opportunities. Opening the diaconate to women would be a good first step.

We need to know what the bishops are doing with our donations (financial transparency). Fine out why the clergy is opposed to women in the priesthood!

Equality of persons, dignity, the whole atonement theology, patriarchal cultural forms...we are people.

Acknowledge the validity of women's call to ministry!

Find a way to respectfully listen to the voice of women in the church.

Justice for women so that they can use their God-given gifts fully in bringing forth the kingdom.

Allowing women to be ordained as priests and deacons.

Recognize and admit to the gifts that women have that will be a source of value to the church and will complement the gifts of the male.

The priesthood & diaconate and all other ministries should be equally open to women & men. In particular, not being able to preach ensures that women are, in essence, silenced and sidelined.

Parishes are dying. Women could help bring them to life, if ordained.

Ordination of women to the diaconate. So many are already qualified.

Have women a part of collegial leadership in parishes so no decisions are made by one man and consensus is sought on all momentous topics

Ordain women now.

Mandatory celibacy and the exclusion of women's ordination.

Confront the errors of the past and confess why we were taught wrongfully

We need women in decision making roles and we need to hear women's voices in homilies and other liturgical events

Be part of decision making at all levels with voting rights if that is part of the process. Needs to happen at local parish level, to diocesan level, to USCCB, to Vatican.

Inclusion of women in decision making at all levels.

Apologize for the harm the church has done to women. For shaming single mothers (and thereby contributing to the demand for abortions), for shaming victims of sexual abuse, for excluding divorced women from taking up visible positions in churches and schools, for telling us to stay in marriages where we are beaten or killed, for attempting to control even our thoughts ...

I can't prioritize. Women priests, deacons, preachers, positions of influence and authority. Equality.

Open the diaconate to women, open all positions of leadership to women and let women give the homilies.

The attitude of men in authority toward women. They need to be taught to regard women as equal partners. This needs to start in seminaries.

The church should open up its seminaries for women to pursue the priesthood. All should have a seat at the table.

I believe that allowing women to become deacons is the most urgent step.

Full respect for the gifts of the holy spirit in women as in men, through ordination.

Ordination of women as priests and deacons.

Women's ordination.

Allow women to preach.

Many of us have been trained to give talks and reflections.

Allow women to preach and assume leadership roles in all phases of the church's life

Full respect as persons who make up half of the church with intelligence and capacities to offer

Honor women who have been pastoral ministers and support them - work to changing seminary training and the mindset that diminishes women.

Get rid of that concept of ‘ontological change’ by ordination.

Start with the diaconate. This visible role will help the equality conversation immensely.

Accepting women as created by the same god that created the men who prohibit women from being seen and accepting women as equals.

The urgency of not simply multiplying but enhancing the quality of our priesthood that the body of Christ needs. The celibacy issue--it should be made optional. It is crucial for us to make sure to be more discerning in seminaries. Many priests coming out of the seminaries don’t have the gifts needed for priestly ministry.

All statements in #4 - women’s full participation and equality in the present structure. They are each non-negotiable. Can’t to just a couple to pacify. Authorities must address all.

The seminary training - just as we are facing our own; white supremacy and admitting our complicity - a similar process should be incorporated into the all-male diocesan priesthood/ structures, etc.

Respect women in their persons rather than degrading them because of their sex.

Open diaconate to women. Invite and encourage women to preach at liturgies. More women faculty in seminaries.

Diaconate/priesthood.

Since the church has made ordained priesthood the criteria of all full participation and leadership in the faith community, nothing less

than eliminating the barrier to women being ordained

I want to be recognized for the special charisms I have. I want to be able to discuss theology, the gospel message with pastors. I want to feel that they care about us as people.... that no one is beneath the pastor in the parish.

Allowing women to speak for themselves.

All synods, diocesan councils, other committees should immediately have 50/50 men and women, not just ordained men, on the parish, diocesan, and international levels.

Women’s ordination and preaching

Clericalism

Perhaps move forward with the diaconate first (to follow pope Francis’ recent steps to recognize the roles of women as “lectors” and “acolytes,” but ordination must follow!

The power given to the clergy and the power even to dismiss the pope’s wishes example to close churches where women are strong leaders.

Start speaking about women deacons. . . We have strong, faithful women in scripture . . . Let them teach you

Women priests and women deacons as a start. Inclusive leadership structures of all genders at all levels.

Where does the role of prophet fit in the church? As a lay woman who is called to do the work of justice, where is that prophetic role found and recognized? The church has lost 50% of the sky.

Eliminate the requirement of ordination to make decisions on any level in the church

Recognize their many blessings and gifts, administering all the sacraments!

Acceptance

Does the woman really have a calling regarding her full participation in the church.

Bishops who block the teaching of Vatican ii and do not empower or encourage pastors to implement it.

The sexual abuse of women religious in Africa and probably other places of the world where priests used clericalism to abuse them. Women need to be included in positions of leadership and decision roles in the church.

The church must listen and respect women's voices

I would like more reverent masses with better homilies / teaching. If women can teach and preach and accompany people / give spiritual direction and moral guidance, this seems like what church should be.

Pope Francis' resistance. Some bishops.

To dismantle the present structure of the priesthood and create a new inclusive structure for choosing leaders for liturgy, sacraments, etc.

Ordination

Dialogue between women and clergy - this needs to be deliberately facilitated; the synodality process will be a failure without it.

Women deacons shouldn't be a big leap. Hope the pontifical commission comes to that conclusion.

Include women in all meetings, synods, etc. With full participation and voting rights.

Ordain deacons immediately!!! The fact that the wives of deacons go thru the same - only to

be 'the deacons wife' - is absurd. Phoebe was deacon 2000 years ago!! Mary Magdalene was the apostle to apostles!

Most pressing are the many communities without sacramental leadership.

Women today are educated. They can choose their careers. In many fields of endeavor, women have overcome gender bias. In our church, supposedly based on the teaching of Jesus, gender bias still exists. If a person has a calling to the religious life, in whatever capacity, how can we say that her calling (as a woman) is of less value than the calling a man receives? Recognize women have equal in the eyes of God and should have equal value in the eyes of the church.

Need to read the signs of the times and role model what equality means. Address corruption and clericalism in the institutional church.

Start by unmuzzling the gifts of women to preach the gospel, depriving all Catholics of the theological and scriptural insights of women.

I don't even know where to start - it seems as if the church is so fundamentally 'off course' in denying equality to half of the community. I do appreciate the speaker's timeline of the modest changes that have already been made, and it was heartening to reflect on this.

So realistically, I guess incremental changes like allowing women to preach, to join in governance, and opening the diaconate to women would be useful steps.

The institutional church needs to address (require?) more dialogue on this topic with the college of cardinals. Have some of all well-educated women theologians educate them and speak openly with them why they are reluctant to accept women as full participants in the church. Sadly, as pressing as this is, it will not work with the present set of cardinals.

Ordination of women deacons!! Check your scripture!!

Make the women who are already working for the parishes and dioceses equal to men who are doing the same job in any parish in the world. That is, if a deacon is a “business administrator” for a parish then all the women in those positions should be considered for the diaconate if they choose to become one through study. All the directors of religious education should be elevated to the appropriate “clerical” equivalent, priest or deacon.

There are many women religious in the united states (and other countries) who have as much or more education and experience than priests and bishops and should be allowed an equal voice in the synod and in the leadership of the church. In the past it was not necessary for a cardinal to be a priest and enabled them to participate in a conclave. Why not today?

Ordain women.

Start training and ordaining women as deacons.

Lack of felt active reality of eucharistic community due to felt sense of exclusion

Get rid of the male/female descriptive term that goes with any position in the catholic church. Government and businesses have made the change--it's time for the church to do so. Jesus treated men and women equally. Unfortunately, the words of the women were discarded when the church was founded in 312ad...it was founded as a patriarchy. Over the years the writings became history -- completely eliminating herstory. What's the big deal?????

Pope Francis should lead the way and immediately outline steps to be taken to bring about women's equality in the church as a priority of the highest degree.

Where to start? How about getting women deacons, for a start? There's not that much

for them to un-do of the old encyclicals to start that. Also, encouraging laity-led parishes where women are administrators. The abuse scandal - the church in general needs to be more transparent. Open up decision-making to laity and women. More women professors in seminary. Keep exposing seminarians to the works of women theologians.

Clericalism

It starts with a serious reframing of the notion of “woman,” away from temptress, sinner, property, subject. Developing an opening to embrace the change that women will affect in the church. It is essential that the woman be viewed differently as its current iteration is flawed. Then, maybe, we can talk ordination.

Equality of each person

Everything

Where can their gifts be best placed at the service of god's people and especially when the church is not being served due to a lack of priesthood, when many women are waiting to be called to the sacramental life of the church.

Ability to preach from the pulpit.

Equality of the sexes. Ordain women. Sometimes it is hard for us to get priests to celebrate mass, even funeral masses. Yes, we have been refused, even for the latter.

Listen to all of us.

For me there can be no trust in the church until we resolve the issue of pedophile priests. It is insulting to the laity to only laicize the offending priest. Zero tolerance needs to mean being subject to secular law and excommunication is a more fitting response to a person who will continue to be a threat to the community. The church has been hiding masked predators as priests in a closed system of clerical elitism.

Ordination

First of all, give those capable high offices and secondarily, let them preach. I think once people see how well they can do, ordination will be less of a concern.

The training of seminarians and pastoral ministers must be wholistic, inclusive, spirit led, and emphasize developing relationships with self, others, and God. Those individuals who find this very difficult, need to be given opportunities for guidance and support in dealing with their issues. If the situations don't improve, then they must leave. The catholic church needs healthy, full human beings in leadership positions.

Open priestly ordination to women: recognizing those called to this ministry/ service, as well as the diaconate, teaching, preaching wherever their gifts can be used.

A papal statement declaring women eligible for all roles available in our church

Inclusion of women in all areas of the church. Priests, deacons.... With the shortage of male priests, it is difficult for those who are ordained to truly minister and guide those in their community. They are "administrators" instead of "pastors" and it is taking its toll on the church. Also, it is apparent that the church would benefit greatly from a feminine view and the nurturing that women can provide. And because it is the right and just way that it should have always been. Quit blaming eve for Adam's fall! Without both male and female participation, there would be no life created. Without men and women participating equally, there may be no life in the church.

There is a shortage of priests -- ever more so of "pastoral" priests. Would it help to have a deep and sincere examination of conscience by the institutional church, asking themselves "why" is full participation denied to women? Is it a

desire to hold on to power? A desire to control? Why silence women?

View us as equals and open all aspects of the church to us.

Agree.

Give serious attention to the dire need for this instead of lip service.

They focus negatively on sex. Teach human sexuality in the church. In the body sexual energy flows up through the heart and becomes spiritual energy. Sexual abuse is a spiritual wound. We need to ground in the goodness of sexuality so we can be healthily spiritual no matter our lifestyle. The hypocrisy of celibacy needs to be done away with. It can be chosen by the few. We need to be taught dialogue to practice mutuality. We were never taught the learnings coming out of vat ii. Let us teach it, finally.

Work on eliminating clericalism.

I would like to see women deacons.

Train men and women together in the seminary with equal attention and care. Send them out into the field to work together in the parishes. Help people and clergy in parishes to understand and welcome what is happening.

Change canon law so people who are not ordained can make decisions affecting those who are ordained. Canon law currently forbids this - it's a manmade restriction. Women and lay men could then serve with full decision-making authority.

At bare minimum they should be able to baptize, witness a marriage and anoint the sick without consequence. In leadership be a pastoral administrator. Requirements equal for all

Change the structure of clericalism and patriarchal structures.

Ordination of women

Full participation in all sacraments and church life; as it is, there are only 6 sacraments that women can partake; and only 5 if you are a single woman. What a shame. I sincerely believe Vatican ii when it said that we are priest, prophet and leader.

Ordain women deacons. A first step and one that is entirely possible.

Being in leadership in all areas.

Women should be allowed to be full participants, if chaplains to baptize & be able to lead funerals & rituals in the church. Immigrants should be fully welcomed to participate as well.

Ordination for women - the priest shortage shows the need to open the doors to the priesthood to all.

I believe she needs to confident and Assurant.

This is a tough question to answer. Maybe the most pressing issue is to get back to the original message of Jesus, and, to do so, examining, with an open mind and heart, sources that were excluded from the canon. Jesus's message has been obscured by doctrinal clutter. I think it is to embrace the divine in every creature without the goal of converting them to the catholic church's (or any other group's) point of view. The quakers have this right!

The role and selection of the ordained priesthood!

Display in preaching and exhortations a higher appreciation of the real church at the domestic level where gender and age and sexual orientation are less problematic and part of

actual lived reality. Cf. Joe torma's (auscp) book and vision, first church.

Clericalism. Deaconship. Women to give homilies. Women equally represented in leadership across all levels of the church & in all places.

Make the synod in Rome, October 2023, consist of 50% women. Technically, this synod does not make decisions but rather recommendations to the pope. Therefore, no canonical barrier to women.

It starts with ordination.

Training

To be treated with dignity as part of the human race. To start with diaconate. To get away from the excuse of the apostles being men, and attention to women deacons in the early church.

Ordination to the diaconate

Allow women to preach. Ordain them.

There are too many to isolate a most important one. The cc is in crisis.

Start with dialogue with the people and reform some of the readings selected for masses. Some of them are appallingly patriarchal. The hierarchy and the people need to learn about Vatican ii. Many of the younger people know nothing about it.

"Allowing" discussions of women priests, have women everywhere men are in the church. Focus on attitudinal changes toward women not only among clergy but ordinary Catholics... fully support women already in church ministry.

Ordaining women as priests and deacons.

I guess we have to walk before we run. Women as deacons.

The diaconate and given a real voice - not just that of rhetoric words without action.

Full participation and equality is a long term project, so simply allowing women to be ordained is not going to fix everything. And, at this particular moment, this window of time with pope Francis and the synod, I think this is the most important change to focus on making so that we can keep the door open for further change, so that the women who are ready and willing to honor their call in being ministers can do so and be part of the conversation.

Immediately open the permanent diaconate to women.

Addressing the church's root sickness of patriarchy and clericalism. It has blinded the pope who grew up in this culture and prevented the fullness of the holy spirit to renew the face of the earth.

First, the roman system needs to become a truly representative system so the voice of the spirit (the senses fidelum) can be heard; clerics need to forego ownership (including bishops) and people need to jointly own the parishes and hire staff from those prepared whom the people want to call (priests/deacons). Priests select bishops, bishops select the pope. Things need to move from the ground up. Women, married people, people of diverse gender orientations, ethnicities, races, all should be welcome for consideration by the communities (non-discriminatory). Jesus' gospel of inclusive love needs to be at the basis of catholic communities.

Figuring out how to overrule some of the cardinals and bishops who are very prejudiced against women as priests.

The women be regarded as equal spiritual leaders in the church in all forms.

Deaconate

Bishop and parish pastor have full authority to dismiss women's gifts and only use women to meet the needs they want taken care of.

Opening the diaconate to women would be a start.

Let their voice be heard, their many gifts be expressed, encouraged, empowered and have a seat at the table...

Our members are not receiving the ministry they deserve because of a lack of priests and a lack of committed priests.

The church needs to open a pathway for women to be ordained into the priesthood.

To immediately have all positions of leadership in the church open equally to competent women and men. There are some timid efforts being made

The lack of priests. I don't believe there is a lack of vocations. At the very least, women should be deacons.

Women ordained to the priesthood

Qualified, talented women becoming deacons would probably make the most significant difference. While it would challenge many priests to adapt, they could probably offer relief and solutions to many parish problem.

Ordination! Allowing the parish community to decide on their own local leadership.

Time has come today. Act!! Change!! We are dying in the church as it is today.

Undo the clericalism and hierarchy and let the active, prayerful baptized and confirmed Christians speak in elections for their pastors, bishops, and cardinals and eventually for those who would elect the pope. Let's go back to letting the spirit of God reign and not politics.

When I think of scripture referring to us all as priestly people, I think the most important issue before the church is recognizing and accepting that women also have vocations to the priesthood. I have never thought of becoming a priest, but I cannot deny that many women do and that many men also have vocations to both marriage and the priesthood just as some women and some men have vocations to celibate service as priests and nuns. I am sure there is room for all in god's service to the faithful. The seminaries for the church need to be focused on the findings of Vatican ii. In faith they will succeed with the help of the holy spirit to invite discernment for a more open priesthood, one ready to serve all people with love, inviting them to the faith of the early apostles and followers. It is sad that we lost many good priests to lives in social service work but they were still helping those in need. Many other good priests do remain despite difficult working situations in a church in great need. Let us open the doors of our church with the hope of being led by the holy spirit.

Appoint women deacons and give women full and equal status in all areas of decision making.

Allowing us to be part of the church in an active, involved manner.

Diaconate. Many women are actually performing many of the functions that I would think male deacons do.

Give them the right to be whatever a man can be...

Putting women in position of parish and diocese leadership.

Include women in the Vatican process for developing and voting major church teachings.

I believe recognizing the gifts of women as co-equal partners in the service to the people of God and the great need for ordained ministers all over the world is most pressing. So many communities have no priest. Priests in our diocese are aging and few are following this path. We say eucharist is central to our faith and yet many are deprived of this sacrament because of the lack of male priests. We need to ordain married men and women who are called to follow this gospel path of service to the people of God.

If justice won't convince them to ordain women, hopefully the priest shortage will.

Ordain women to the diaconate. Priest numbers are in serious decline. We are needed.

Preaching of homilies and opening to becoming deacons

Sexism. Diaconate. Governance. Stop "father."

Equal participation in decision-making.

Ordination to priest and deacon.

Instruction in seminaries.

Leadership roles throughout the church.

Inclusion at all levels. A great beginning has been pope Francis opening all offices at the Vatican to women leadership.

Open offices where policy and decision making are done to women at every level.

Racism in the usa; refugees

Open the doors of seminaries & diocese training programs to women who meet the required criteria. No cost to do this

My opinion, ordination to diaconate.

Trust women when they say they feel called and wish to serve God and one another in every role in the church. Not every woman has or feels a call to priesthood or the diaconate, but some do. Listen and hear the women who want to serve.

The church must welcome women as equals in all arenas- especially priestly ordination. The catholic church is committing the biggest sexist act in history and continues to until they welcome women fully. The catholic church is so sinful, .and it is heartbreaking.

The church has to learn to become all inclusive. This includes gays, transgender, people of different faiths should be able to receive communion.

Respect and dialogue.

Open up all ministries to women. But not just women. There should be no such term as “laypeople.” every member of the church who feels “called” should be permitted to minister to one another given certain mutually arrived at parameters.

Of course, we need women priests (and married men), but if we woke up tomorrow with those two and still had the same warped theology it wouldn't be much better- entire renewal of church teaching back to Jesus (rather than Aquinas/Augustine/ and the current medieval theology

Women deacons. Allowing women to preach.

More women involved in the leadership of the church, whether as lay women or as deacons. Women ought to be part of the seminary training of priests.

Women need to have a voice in the workings and outreach of the church.

Reinstitution of the female diaconate

Providing service to the worldwide community where it is lacking!

Ordain these very qualified women...now...not yesterday but now

They should consider the ordination of women. I say Jesus would consider this.

The church needs to address clericalism and the role of power within the church. There ought to be more collegiality in decision-making and more openness to listening to the experience of life lived by lay people.

Ordain women.

That's it, that's the comment.

The catholic church has the potential to be a huge force for good in the world. Unfortunately, the present leadership is lacking in credibility and spirituality. Its influence is dying due to its position on women and its horrible reputation with regards to sexual abuse. The presence of married women and men in all ministries would make a dramatic difference. If the present leadership continues as it is, we are doomed.

Begin with the diaconate and move to the priesthood.

Allow women into the diaconate

Go for it all the way. Open up the doors and windows of the seminaries to all of us and revise the formation curriculums. The holy spirit will guide us if we have the courage to begin.

Open the diaconate immediately. Voting power at all levels of governance.

Need to listen to women for a start.

Clericalism

Diaconate

Women as priests.

Clericalism prevents men and women working together as equals.

Women priests.

Recognizing that there is a challenge to be addressed. The silence is deafening; those (ordained) who are listening are not vocal enough in support.

Fully embrace and accept the call to priesthood and the diaconate so many women have!

Ordain women as deacons and priests.

Should be open to ordination of women, especially sisters.

Allow ordination into the diaconate

Women's ordination.

In los angeles, the wife of an aspiring deacon must accompany her husband in person throughout his training. She is expected to study, pray, and perform in union with him. After 4 or 5 years of following this rigorous schedule, he is ordained with much ritual solemnity and she is handed a letter of appreciation. Where is justice?

Clerical hierarchy, clericalism, revamping of discernment and formation of future priests, focus on pastoral formation while not neglecting the academic, reimbursement of permanent deacons and catechists

At the very minimum I would see opening up the opportunity for women called to enter the diaconate realizing fully that it may eventually lead to women's ordination as priests in the catholic church

To give homilies.

Ordination.

Opening the diaconate to women

They need to reject dated teachings on gender stemming from their interpretation of gn 2 and Paul's linking eve to sin followed by Augustine, Aquinas, and everyone else. If the church really taught and acted as though we are all equal in Christ (gal) it would actually change the world.

Women should be ordained.

The most pressing issue is the process of developing leadership. Seminaries are to be closed. Those within parish structures who are leading parish ministries, providing the services needed per the faith community are invited to form their own unions. Community organizers are trained such as those leading the dart <https://thedartcenter.org/> organization then will train lay leaders in the process of democratically having the local community decide the major issue of the year, then do the research and then hold officials accountable in a reconciliation process. Those community leaders trained in this process then will be supported to continue theological training. All ages, genders, jedi focused, from the bottom-up leadership. Liturgical reform based on scholars like aj Levine and sister Barbara Reid with scriptural translations from the original Greek using on line, free resources to be developed voluntarily but with financial support, in each congregational setting, with monies from closing the seminaries.

Allowing women to serve as priests.

Women must be treated as equals.

All levels of governance should have women representation: parish, diocesan, regional and at the vatican.i

Ordination of women to the diaconate with movement toward priestly ordination.

Many women seem to want to serve in the church in higher capacity. I think of the 12 apostles all were men, but I know a lot of women feel we are in modern times and that women should be able to be priest or deacons and advance with the times. Also, many people feel that priest should get married in order to fully understand what married life is all about and how to maybe better understand married people's problems and guide them in a better way. This is not my opinion, but I know this is so from hearing many other people talk this way.

Deacons

Women deacons. But, until then, women homilists at the liturgy.

Clericalism.

Women must be ordained as deacons. And must be given a place of honor as the daughters of God. Waiting till all the men are exhausted is an insult to women's self-image.

Patriarchal controls of the church.

Women being permitted in the diaconate.

Allow women to preach.

Make changes now. Let women become priests and deacons and leaders in the hierarchy.

Creating a female diaconate and priesthood so that all present parishes may have a priest, and to encourage the building up of the church worldwide

Listen and learn, open to the spirit. Women, too.

Get the bishops to stop trying to kill us. The church is worldwide. It is full of nothing but 'feriners.' the USCCB support of 'build the

wall' trump puts targets on the backs of their own congregations.

The Vatican 'mercy' prayer endorses husbands murdering their wives on trumped up charges of adultery.

The whole 'pro-life' movement can be summarized as - only men have the right to murder unborn babies and the mothers too while they are at it. Just ask bishop Timlin & cardinal law. If we complain, they will restrict access to pre-natal care and really rack up the death rate. That'll teach us to get uppity.

From the barking nonsense on the USCCB website, none of the bishops are medically qualified to put a band aid on a boo boo, yet they think they should control health care for the world!

Included in the governance of the church

There is so much untapped talent when you bar women from the priesthood. With the critical shortage of priests, we should begin training women immediately.

It is pressing that it needs to happen, but sadly I feel like it won't happen in my lifetime.

Women should be named immediately to groups that shape the life of the church so that they can influence future decisions. The vision and sensitivity of women will make an immediate difference. Then we can move toward ordination and other leadership positions out of that experience.

Opening the diaconate to women.

Ordination of women and married priesthood.

Recognizing all humanity as equal children of God. Everyone has different talents that are of value and talents are not gender specific.

Ordination of women.

Canon law. Bishops right now, are lawyers, not pastors.

The women do the work, and the priests take the glory. Leadership. Trafficking. Inclusion of the lbgtqai community.

Remove the excommunication rule for all women who have been ordained.

Make women deacons!!! Then ordain those called to the priesthood.

Pope Francis has begun to do this in administration.

Women's full participation/equality by ordination.

The diaconate, the priesthood.

Begin with the diaconate and opening it up to women. Women lead families and are the path to the next generation, they need to be prominent in the church for it to survive.

Men in the church are afraid of losing power for many reasons including the hiding of sin. All meetings of the church need to be public and transparent at all levels. Like this synod they need to be open to all who are called to participate

Women must be allowed to be deacons and priests.

Continue pope Francis's attitude towards women as full participants in the church's life, both in ministries and in leadership.

Just make some concession that shows progress, and it will be a step forward by allowing women to take on some larger roles and that will help the church grow its mission.

Recognize the equality of women!! Honor their wisdom. Open the doors and windows and listen. I so appreciate and respect the wisdom

and the courage of pope Francis in calling for this synod.

Ordain women give them leadership roles and deny male priests from marrying until women are fully engaged as priests and lay leaders

The old boys club.

Ordain women for priesthood and diaconate now!

That we can also image Christ and that Christ calls both men and women!!! Encourage/empower true lay leadership!!!

Finish the exploration/study into restoring the female diaconate and open the doors!

Allowing them to answer god's call to any ministry.

Women are not listened to by the clergy, or even sometimes by senior members of the laity (finance committee). Women's knowledge, interest in theology, are not given a voice, disregarded.

We are human. We are worthy. We are called by the divine.

Ordain women now.

Racism and climate change.

General inclusion in all activities. We need to begin immediately with the diaconate and work toward developing a process that will eventually ordain women to full priesthood.

All issues that exclude a person because she is a woman if pressing.

There are many but the big one is women's ordination.

Dismantle the patriarchy in full. Heaven / souls are not in a hierarchy of male above female.

Inclusive language and ordained deacons.

In reality probably allowing those women who accompany their husbands through the diaconate program to be given the same responsibilities as their husbands if they so choose. That would be a beginning step.

Allow free and open discussion within church circles, on every level, regarding women being deacons, priests, homilists, and allow equal participation of women in the synod of bishops and in Vatican offices and programs.

The priesthood.

Acknowledgement of the total and fundamental equality of all.

An end to gender apartheid.

Open diaconate & ordination. I have a ma in theology, but male deacons who have less education than I do can preach just because they are male????

Opportunities for leadership. Without that, women will forever be second class citizens in the church

Clericalism

To view women as viable ministers with men by realizing that Old Testament culture should not determine current day practices.

Tear down the barriers - the ones that include men and deliberately exclude women. This is going to take courage, determination, wisdom, cooperation.

Open all leadership roles to women who can revamp the hierarchical structure to communal inclusive one.

Becoming aware in 1987 as a child, of sexual abuse by 2 priests, one after the other, towards children (altar servers) only strengthened my resolve for positive questioning of why we have separation of men and women in the western (Latin) roman catholic church through the 1139 rule of clerical celibacy and restricting holy women serving at the altar of God.

Allow current nuns to increase their responsibilities within parishes, have those who would like to be ordained as priests do so - however, the church needs to ensure these women are protected - from those who feel threatened by them, from those who believe men are superior, etc. Training/education is a must for the entire church - lay people included.

Ordain women deacons. In our archdiocese, when a man is studying for the diaconate, his wife is required to attend all classes. Why isn't she also ordained along with her husband? This makes no sense whatsoever.

Q4. What are your hopes and dreams for women in the Catholic Church?

We will find a home there.

Full participation as equals and able to exercise their gifts and calling without gender bias.

That we are side by side with men and able to share our gifts with the church.

That we be treated in the church as Jesus treated Mary Magdalen.

Full participation in the roman catholic church for all women on all levels.

To see women fully embraced in all roles of the church and no longer considered second class or less than.

It would be good if women were full members of the catholic church. Now it is like the church is trying to walk with one leg.

My dream is for full inclusion. My hope is not high.

That inclusion of women in all roles in church would make church relevant again.

Fullness of life and service.

That we become a community of equals.

That more opportunities will be opened for women to participate in leadership roles in the church

That women will be considered equal members in every way.

That women may be rightly co-equal in the church as they are in the eyes of their creator

That all clergy will include them and respect their opinions

I hope that women's gifts and voices are recognized and included in this synod and in the future.

Full equality.

Acceptance on every level.

They be treated as equals.

That we serve as co-equals. That gender does not disqualify.

That we will all be one as Jesus prayed - women, poc, lgbtq+, all people of God who were created in god's image and likeness.

Equality and opportunity to discern call to priesthood

That our talents will be recognized and be allowed to flourish

See 6.

Full participation and equality of all Catholics - including women.

That all positions within the church will be open to women, the lgbt community... including the pope!

An equal place at the table

Full participation.

See above

Ordination

That they are recognized as fully equal to their male counterparts.

My hope is that one day women will be equal partners in the catholic church.

That there is full equality of women and men within the institutional church, and both are able to participate according to their ability, not their sex.

That women and men are treated with respect and credibility equally.

Full equality and participation at every level

That they will have voice and vote, that they will be welcomed for their gifts, that they will be allowed to foster a community of faith as opposed to a structure of power.

I hope women will humbly step up and accept and serve in all aspects of our catholic church.

That every person be respected equally and allowed to build up the church according to each one's gifts and calling.

Full participation

Full equality. That church structures regarding women may reflect the vision that god has of us.

Full participation, but in my lifetime, I hope to at least see women ordained as permanent deacons.

Full inclusion in the church.

Full inclusion.

That they will be allowed to become what they clearly have the potential to become.

Women in ministry.

Hope for full participation in all aspects of life

That each and every one of us can use our gifts to follow the holy spirit and come closer to God.

That the promises of baptism will be open to all.

That at some point, women will have full participation in the catholic church as they are called by God.

To be seen as being made in the likeness of God which means to be as seen in our church equally to men.

I would like to see a female pope.

Priesthood (in my lifetime) and full participation on all levels, parish, diocese, and at the Vatican

To be equal to the men in the church with no barriers to our involvement in full

Full and respected inclusion.

I hope and pray that women continue to press forward and support one another toward equity in the church.

That they will be treated as equal partners with men in this for following Jesus.

That women would be able to live their full potential.

Co-equality on all levels. How can the church continue to disregard over half of its members?

Full participation!

The church will become a beacon of hope for all people and a teaching authority that again has the ring of truth. It will walk the walk of living the gospel and revolutionize societies that have grown stagnant and faithless.

They will be ordained as priests and that I can attend mass and receive communion with them.

That the catholic church will begin ordaining women!

Become a more pastoral church where all genders are welcomed equally and given “a seat at the table” of decision making at every level

Women’s full participation and presence together with men

The freedom for women who feel called to be ordained and lead a community.

I would love if the church would not be so fearful, and that the hierarchy would be called spiritually to relinquish its corrupting power.

Full participation as respected and valued equals

Equality

Full participation of women in the church.

That women will feel as if they are truly part of the church, not just someone who is just there.

To be able to participate at whatever level they wish with whatever talent they have.

To be regarded as an equal being. One of god’s creatures

I dream of full participation in every way by all people.

Equal opportunities for women at all levels.

Equality and inclusion

Women should be seen and listened to as equal.

Equality!

Women’s giftedness being recognized and promoted as equal

My hope and dream is for inclusivity that allows for all gifts and talents to be shared with everyone.

I hope for women to not see themselves just as parents but also as equal contributors to our faith communities and for those women who choose not to have children that they realize full dignity and respect to be heard and hired in this beloved institution we call the catholic church which has been overrun with men who seem to love ritual and ceremony and social distance from some members of their communities. They could start by taking individual responsibility- not leaving to others to consider these issues.

That the church “be one”, as was the express desire of the god whom I love and keeps me faithful to this oneness and love.

Open the door to all women in ministry.

Ordination of women to the priesthood.

Full equality.

That they be able to serve as they feel they are called, as priests, sisters, deacons and informed parishioners.

Hierarchy makes amends for the oppression of women and expedite the movement forward.

To be treated just as men through ordination. We already do everything else.

That all will be able to become the person god created us to be. Simple. And yes - that includes the option of being ordained at every level.

The new resurrected force to a new church.

That women will participate fully in the leadership, teaching, ministering, decision-making of the church.

Full participation for women as equals, as well as the LGBTQ2 communities.

I hope that Rome will see the importance of women in the church and how it will grow substantially!

I do believe this is a turning point with pope Francis and the work of groups like Future Church who are gathering the scholars to speak about the 'erasure' and what the real stories in scripture mean to all of us who are the church.

Full membership.

Full participation in the leadership of the church.

Full equality for all.

Women priests.

Full opportunity and equality.

Ordination to the priesthood and diaconate. Equality to men. Evangelism and sexism in the church.

The female religious I know are super and I can only guess where the church would be if they had full participation in church decisions.

That all people being called by God to priesthood are recognized by the church - including women.

Women and men fully equal in the church.

Take Gal 3:28 seriously and live it!

That we may become one!

That they feel welcome, accepted, encouraged and appreciated for their work in moving the church forward in our journey. We can all work together.

One day the barriers will be removed for full participation in all roles of church service by women and men side by side.

That women never give up or give in.

Full participation — in leadership, decision-making, responsibility, ordination.

That we may be considered equal in every way, especially for the priesthood.

A transformation to inclusion and collaboration in the immediacy; an inclusion of women in all roles of church ministry and leadership, including ordination.

The opportunity to participate as equal members.

My hope and dream is that women attain full participation in all roles in the Catholic Church, either in my lifetime or after.

That women will eventually be ordained priests and deacons.

That women are recognized as the equals God created us to be. God dwells in the heart of each of us in equal measure.

I hope and dream that the church can truly change, however I am not confident that it can be reformed in the US without massive change. My hope is that the universal church will be more open to change.

That our church will be inclusive and leadership roles will be shared equally.

That women and men be considered as equals in our church.

Full inclusion. Genuine/full discernment.

To allow women to serve like men. We do have gifts and ministries. Where I am not one of

those, I have experienced women who do have that gift.

To speak openly; to worship with leadership; to feel that I am part of the catholic church; to have a church to which I can bring my daughters who feel disconnected

That my voice and participation and my daughters are valued and heard and equal to my husband and sons

That women and all people fulfill their baptismal call

That they will become priests and deacons.

That women will be full primary participants in the leadership of all aspects of the church.

That we maintain our beautiful, hopeful relationship with Christ in a way that brings life to the whole church.

That the hierarchical structure will change to a circular structure, and women's voices will be heard.

To be full-fledged partners with men in all life on this planet including our church

Equity in our world and in our church

Women's voices need to be heard before any changes will occur. Therefore, women need to preach, and men need to hear.

I hope that, in my daughter's lifetime, women will be invited to participate as fully as men in leading (as deacons, priests and cardinals) our church.

I would like to see my great-granddaughter celebrate mass if that were her calling. I would like to see more sharing of soul and spirit among women; that's what I miss.

To be all that they are called to be....

Full equality and inclusion at all levels of the church.

I dream of many communities of love and justice known for their deep commitment to the gospel, and full inclusion of all in the vibrant catholic tradition. I see a church whose processes reflect respect, commitment to dialog and welcoming different ways of expressing that tradition. I see couples in ministry including, gay, lesbian, bisexual, non-binary and trans members of the mystical body. I see decisions-makers for collections of assemblies having no power except to affirm the movement of the spirit among all members. (very similar to this synod process) if there buildings, I see property holding of catholic communities that can be used for all in need, addicts, the homeless, kids aging out of foster care, immigrants, those without families, those in need of sanctuary due to conscientious dissent, activists, as well as a quiet space for contemplation and a space for worship. Otherwise, I see all these ministries and more flowing out of a local community into organizations/ movements that address these needs. Women would be presumed to be as gifted as men, and equally affirmed and/or challenged.

I hope that women would be able to have a calling recognized, thus be allowed to attend seminary or become a deacon

More enlightened and holy men in seats of power will continue their struggle with their "brothers" on behalf of women and all the laity. That the women priests and other groups and us, however we can, will not give up, will not stop to open up our church. In the meantime, we will find ways to nourish our faith and celebrate with all our brothers and sisters.

That I will see church reform begin to be taken seriously. That I will see women ordained as priest before I die!

I want to see women in all levels of church service, governance, scholarship, teaching, writing, choosing candidates for holy orders and episcopal positions and any other area where men alone are currently working.

Actual respect.

Be accepted as equal members on all levels

To be recognized as equals.

True equality for all.

That the catholic church recognizes the baptism and sacredness of women.

They become equal.

Baptism gives the right to the sacraments.

To be recognized as full and equal partners.

Diaconate, ordination...and equality of gender and roles.

Partnership through equal status.

To continue rising.

To be responsible for the formation of the laity, governance and decision making in the church.

That we be treated with respect and agape which would enable the witness of all people in the usage of their gifts for the common good.

Equality (total).

Not to lose hope, the holy spirit will make it happen if it is god's will.

That all people in the church are treated with equity and inclusion

That we are able to help our brothers understand that we are called by God also.

That all are equal in all matters. Sex not the determinate

All roles open to those with ability who are called.

Equal, mutual partners with all god's people!

Equality

Full treatment of women as equal

Full inclusion of women & anyone with any sexual orientation, culture (race)

That our ability to image Christ be recognized and celebrated,

I have lost that dream.

Full participation in all ministries (especially as priests and not be relegated to being nuns only) having an equal presentation in decision making.

To be valued and respected as Jesus treated his women disciples and to have a place at the decision-making table on all issues especially those that impact women's lives.

Full participation.

That we will be considered equally in all aspects of the church.

Co-equals with men in all respects, eliminating discrimination of any kind because it is not of God (per gaudete et spes)

Full leadership

That the image of the catholic church will become on that is so inclusive that ordinary people will forget that it was once so exclusionary.

Full participation in leadership roles as well as sacramental.

Full co-equality.

That their talents and treasures are shared with the whole church.

It is my hope that any woman who is called to the priesthood can serve in that role.

I dream of seeing women priests and deacons. Perhaps it will be more realistic to see women deacons thendare I dream priests.

Recognition of women as persons equal to men with gifts equal to men. A person is a person. Let's model the trinity instead of keeping it secret.

I would say -- look at the giftedness for ministry and ordain only those who have the gifts and are not seeking power or prestige.

That we all come to a day where we will have a mutual partnership in the church in terms of leadership.

I dream that our church leaders will be men and women who listen to the holy spirit and work together to bring about the reign of God on earth.

Ordination!

Full equality-erase the dualistic ideas for women as the "evil eve" and the "pure virgin Mary"--schizophrenic!

That they will be viewed & cherished as first-class citizens

Full equality, inclusion, respect and participation

Full participation in ordination, governance, preaching and ministry -- all aspects of church.

They can fully live out their baptismal promises.

Priesthood open to women.

I hope the church realizes that woman make up the majority of every congregation I have ever been involved with and have done the majority of work. Take that talent and use it for the glory of God and don't suppress it.

Full rights of ordained ministers and leaders.

That we are recognized as full and equal members of the church with the capability to participate completely as deacons or priests or as lay leaders

Women will continue to bring their gifts to wherever they are needed. Women are resilient. We're in it for the long haul.

Same as above.

That they are treated equal in opportunity in all ministries.

I'm 81 years old. I hope to see open catholic women's ordination and in positions of authority in my lifetime.

That they continue to listen to the spirit speaking in and through them and creation and that they have the courage to step forward in living the Christ life as it is being called forth

Full participation.

That the church may realize as Jesus did the importance of women and treat them as he did.

That we are equal participants in promoting our faith.

Full equality in every role.

Full participation

Full participation.

That the issue of women in the church no longer be an issue but their acceptance a foregone conclusion.

Full equality not just a few key women in positions of leadership

To become a deacon before I die. To see women functioning on a footing with men. It's so simple.

That we may all be one.

Personal hope and dream are that we persevere and just like the women religious did when they were 'investigated', have a plan and stand firm...while moving forward.

Though I don't expect to live to see it, if the church is going to survive, I do believe there will be women priests one day.

Equality and acceptance of all god's children.

That women will be able to participate in all seven sacraments.

That women would truly be viewed as equals; just as capable of being 'in persona cristi' as men.

Equal participation.

Our hope and dream is that women have full participation and can respond to god's call in any way they feel called.

Full equal acceptance and participation in all aspects of the church

If pope Francis stays in a few more years and/or we have a pope following in his footsteps, and more bishops' conferences like Germany's, this will help facilitate a great move forward.

Equality.

That one day we will have women priest in the church.

Equal leadership.

That women have full participation and are treated as equals. These women will be responsible for a rebirth of our faith and be faithful to the teachings of Christ.

That it becomes a place where women's voices and unique perspective are heard, respected, valued, and put into action.

Full participation at all levels

For full participation in the life, ministry, governance in the church of Jesus Christ.

That one-day women will be priests

I hope someday, women who feel called, will be able to preside at the eucharist. I know I have experienced presiding at a communion service and felt right at home.

I always look to Mary. I have a statue called cherish - an abstract one from willow creek. I kind of see it as the pregnant Mary. She's the one I look to. She welcomes the unexpected. She does not know what it will look like. She doesn't have some predetermined plan. That's like me. I just hope that God has a good dream for women - especially one that doesn't include world war iii.

Equality.

Seminaries that integrate women and men to study for the priesthood.

That we may be able to serve in any role that men can.

1 to be priest and deacons as well as pastors, bishops, cardinals, and pope. 2 women are no

longer used as the scapegoat for the sins of males.

That they will be seen as a person who has the right to live at their full potential w/I the church and that the spirit within them is fully recognized and validated.

Women of faith are powerful and bring a perspective that only they can bring. Stop being threatened by them and free them to share their unique gifts.

Women priests - deacons - bishops and cardinals -- married clergy [men and women]

That they may become priests and share their love, talents and compassions with those in their parishes.

A place beside, with and among the priests as colleagues.

I hope that there will be a day when the priesthood is open for all who feel the call to serve in that capacity. That celibacy would be a choice and not a demand. That wives and husbands might serve together thus giving the church a much broader and expansive viewpoint from which to work.

That we stop having to prove that we are better than mediocre men to be heard, to be seen, to be allowed to participate in the ministries of the church

Full inclusion of all people. Opportunities for education of women in the church beyond the Sunday hour. The church needs to provide all that a woman needs to become educated in the church to use her gifts whatever that is- \$, time, childcare, housing, tutoring, etc. Its is not done for the lay person, although most religious orders of women are highly educated.

That someday, though not in my lifetime, women will really be. O-equals in every way in the church. Any protestant denominations

have managed to do so. Our church should be able to manage this, too.

That, someday, women and men will be able to share the priesthood.

That we discover a field of interconnectedness with the catholic church whereby we go to the edge, be among and with the call of today...for all species

That my grand-daughter will be able to tell her grand-daughter that full inclusion of women happened in her lifetime.

I hope and dream that the gifts of women in our church be recognized and appreciated, whether prophet, priest, preacher, cantor, lector, mother, sister, etc.

Inclusivity, respect

That we have equal say on a local, national and global level.

That women are placed as equals with our male-dominated church.

I think we should all leave and start our own churches. The rc hierarchy is corrupt and rotten from the inside. It cannot be reformed.

That women would not even have to be thought of as a separate group in the church. That women would always have a role in celebrating the liturgy and all the sacraments; and the language would always be inclusive

I wish to see women welcomed as full members of the ordained ministry, to have their educational credentials acknowledged and to be invited to preach.

That women who are married with children and are gifted homilists and other women who preach well should preach at mass and let the congregation experience meaningful liturgy.

Full participation on all levels.

Full and equal participation for women.

In ten years to be in presbyterial ministry at least in the first world where there is serious education of consciences.

Full participation and equal dignity and respect.

We are able to enrich the faith community by inviting people in and treating them as coequals rather than excluding people every time we turn around. If not ordination, then offer our gift of preaching and leading.

To be respected for their gifts and talents and not looked upon as servants.

I feel despair.

That the men (not just the hierarchy) will realize they are sinning against God when they deny equality to all the genders the creator designed and they are depriving the kingdom of full flourishing.

The see women who have served the church for very long not bitter, to see young women hopeful and enthusiastic because each woman can be what she can be in the church.

That they become equal partners with men at all levels of authority.

That we will be treated as humans with brains to figure out what god has in store for us and that we are allowed to pursue that whether the priesthood or the number of children we should give birth to.

That they will be able to live out the calling that God has placed in their hearts, whether it is in lay or ordained ministry.

I want to be a copartner in living the mission of the church.

That they will share equally in all positions - priests, deacons, lectors, etc.

I hope that the bishops and the pope can open themselves up to allow women be part of the governmental part of their power.

That women would encourage other women to use their gifts. That we can work all together to ne the people of God.

I hope pope Francis would open up more ministries in the church to women- women deacons would be a start.

I have little hope that things will change in the near future.

That we are empowered and empower ourselves to take our full place and participation as church

Full inclusion of all so that their gifts may nourish and bless us be they women or men, religious or lay

Women's equality in all roles, and especially that women are ordained priests.

Women as equals in the church and fully integrated in all aspects of the church.

Women's ordination

All statements in #4 - women's full participation and equality in the present structure.

That we freely, lovingly be all we were created to be - the image of god - celebrating our faith without male restraints.

That women can follow their true vocations. If they are called to priesthood, let them be ordained.

They will be revered and valued and sought for inspiration and solace.

Full inclusion

Their full gifts will be realized in every corner of the church

To have totally equal place in the church for serving the people of God.

Our sacraments become alive.

That we reach out to retain and empower younger women in our church, not just the elderly. Consider the average age of everyone participating in these sessions: it looks like it's over 70 years old, or closer to 80! Where are the younger women (and younger men)???

That women will become co-equal partners with men in all areas of the church, and take a major role in building communities that really live out gospel values

Full participation

Equality!

To be equal and just

That all may feel welcomed in Jesus' family

Women are not discriminated against in violation of the gospel message for purposes of power and control by the male clerics.

That we get to sit at the table to eat together the meals that we have prepared together.

That her voice can be heard, respected in all levels of leadership. That women can follow their call wherever that leads.

Women and more women present in the liturgy on the altar as presides and lectors, administering all the sacraments!

Praying I will live for another 25 years!

Personally, I don't aspire to be a priest since I am almost 80 years old. However, I would encourage women to discern fully their call.

That women be seen as full members of the church.

That women are valued in the church and they are no longer seen as servants of priests. That women are able to perform sacraments such as baptism, the witness of marriages, preaching. Probably there is a way for them to be included in the church without compromising the catholic theology of the priesthood. We need more women as chancellors, secretary of synods, or maybe a women cardinal.

That they be equal partners.

I hope everyone who is not male and white is treated as full humans!!! It is sometimes hard to get the white men to acknowledge their privilege. It is also sometimes hard to get women who benefit from white privilege to be allies to other women and other human beings.

Full participation in a servant leadership church.

I hope that women will be seen and received as equal to all the men in the church, so that the church may reflect to societies around the world the blessing of equality between women and men.

Full equality.

Women are human beings with human rights - our humanity comes before sex, gender, vocation, etc. I am a human being with intelligence and feelings: please affirm that!

I hope that I will see catholic ordained women take their place along side men priests and in company of their sisters in other Christian churches.

That women and men can work side by side in ministering to the people of god in every aspect of church life.

Full inclusion, equality, ordination. And - while I am at it - we should look at all the teachings regarding women and sexuality; not to immediately change them all - but to hear the voices of those victimized by some of our deeply held catholic teachings. And - that abortion is for many the only social issue is to me astonishing - war, gun ownership, mass incarceration, poverty, racism; are ignored - while we stigmatize and humiliate women regarding this most difficult decision. If we are pro-life - we should create a world where abortion is not a desired option - with education, opportunity, child care, health care; rather than simply making it illegal.

My hope is that the spirit will move the male leaders to a spirituality that is looking at wider meaning of church...a church that is inclusive as God is inclusive.

That we would be respected and valued.

That in time they receive the right to be ordained if they feel called and be able to share equal decision-making at every level in the church.

My personal hope and dream is for all Catholics have the opportunity to experience the wisdom and insight of women in catholic life and liturgy.

To be able to participate in any way that the person feels called to and trained for; to be seen as equal partners, treated and respected as any other individual baptized into the body of Christ.

That we do a better job preparing future deacons and priests, prior to their ordination, of the need to welcome women as full participants in the catholic church.

Run the show! Men have done a poor job!

I hope that all of those women who feel called to serve as a deacon or priest are given the opportunity to discern if the training for that position meets their expectations. Not every seminarian becomes a priest. Give women a chance to test the waters! Many won't want to learn to swim.

Equal status in the church

Women's gifts are recognized, tapped and shared in faith communities/churches and have full engagement in the life and mission of the church

That my daughters and granddaughters will see women's full participation in the church!

Full acceptance to birth a new experience of Christ alive.

My hope is that the church will welcome all people equally -- and be aware of intersectionality--all people...men, women, all of god's people, gay, lesbian, trans, etc. And black, tan, yellow, brown, white and poor, rich, and any other identity adjective that is used to describe humans.

That women will be allowed and encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of the church including leadership roles.

At the very least that women become deacons. That women can give homilies, hear confessions. Wouldn't that be great if we could go to reconciliation and have a woman listening to us and administering the sacrament of reconciliation. Be priests. They wouldn't have a priest shortage if they let women in. We need to look back at the original women disciples in the time of Jesus and the women apostles, like Mary Magdalene, as deb was saying. There are now women doctors of the church. Also, on

a spiritual level, continue to canonize women saints.

Equality.

That smaller communities lead by women and men develop apart from the monolith that is the institutional church. That the clerical structure be toppled. That women be nurtured in a way that preserves their integrity among the people of God. That women become the prime movers of a great reformation.

The priestly role of baptism be acknowledged in every vocation,

Full participation.

My hope is that we will acknowledge that the first person to hear and welcome the news of the resurrection were women. They too were at the last supper and heard the words of consecration and were not afraid to tell the good news. I think this was the way Jesus had intended for us to open wide the doors and not deprive anyone of the eucharist or any of the sacraments simply because they were not a man. Just as Jesus broke out of the tomb so he desires a community of equals who celebrate life.

Equality.

Allow women to exercise leadership (ordained/unordained) in the roman catholic liturgical services.

I hope we all can be real members of groups that value all people and tend our earth.

That women can have equal discipleship in ministry and in leadership in service to Christ and the church. That their gifts and talents will be utilized to serve the faithful and share the authority of the church.

That every role in the catholic church currently available to male Catholics be opened to female Catholics.

My imagination is not fertile enough. I have to ask the lord to send me a dream.

My personal hope and dream for women in the catholic church is that their voices will be recognized, heard, taken seriously, and their recommendations will be regarded as equally important as their counterparts, and implemented. Moreover, my hope is for the truth of women's role in the early church be more fully uncovered, given credence, and consequently lead to a reformed priesthood in which women and men serve together as equals. Next, I dream that both women and men priests and deacons empower and appropriately train - where needed - lay persons (children through adults) to use their gifts on behalf of the community and in the spirit of the gospels, especially the beatitudes. Finally, that all members understand and take to heart, that being a Christian catholic is a life-long process of conversion and transformation.

That women's God-given gifts may be used to the full within the church at all levels. That they be regarded as an 'equal presence', gender equality, disciples responding to god's call for the building up of the kin-dom of God with all the diversity and creativity of relationship.

That the dedicated and holy women in our church will remain, keep the faith, and find their rightful place.

To be recognized and treated equally as part of the church in all areas.

I hope and dream that women will reach full participation in the catholic church and be given the opportunity to share their God-given gifts as co-equals.

Have the power to recommend a priest to be installed as pastor. Without the approval of the

community, a priest should not be assigned to that parish

That the church sees us as God does.

Everything that the male dominated church does

Equality!

Mutuality on all levels, without question.

Equality, openness, respect

That our gifts will be recognized and used for the church.

I'd like every woman to be able and welcome to follow the call she feels in her heart as her way to serve God.

I dream that one day soon we will see woman acting as priests and having leadership roles in the church

I dream for women to be fully integrated in all ministerial positions - acolyte, deacon (not "deaconess"), priest, pastor, bishop, cardinal, even pope. I dream for all the women in the bible to be honored and for the negative legends about eve and Mary Magdalene to be corrected and free women from the artificial burden of eve's and Mary Magdalene's supposed sins.

Women can be ordained deacons, preach in church at mass or service. If a pastoral administrator why not a pastor?

That the synodal discussions will bear much fruit to reach out and welcome all people back into the church.

Inclusion and equality

That we will rise and take our rightful place in leadership in all areas of the organized church.

That women bring their unique experiences and wisdom to the church community.

Be in decision positions

My hope & dream is that women will be allowed to be in the process of becoming deacons & priests.

My hope and dream is that all women are respected church members and considered worthy to take on all positions in the church.

If they have great confidence, they will be okay!

That the church would embrace and fully include the feminine (and feminist!). That the church would understand what community really is and become community. I see community among parishioners but am shocked that the pastors of the different parishes in our county never talk to each other. What is that all about.

To understand and feel that we are created in the image of and baptized into the priesthood, prophetic and leadership role of Jesus

Created in the image of God.

That church policy and practice empower women's full participation and equality in society, which will vary across the globe.

Full participation in the church according to their charisms & calling. No discrimination. I imagine the shape of the church will change with this.

Equality because how can you have a church with common baptism when women's gifts restricted?

I dream that the pope declares the all-male clerical hierarchy as wrong, and harmful to all Catholics.

To be involved in all ministries in the church at leadership level.

Full respect and equality.

Full participation in a renewed church.

That women become fully accepted and given equal status in the decision making of the church and be blessed to serve in the roles for which they are called.

Equality across the board. Recognition of gifts. A profound voice.

That their voices will be heard and respected. They have much to offer and the church is missing important inputs that come from the female experiences and culture. It diminishes all in the church not just females but males as well.

My hope and dream are that someday soon it won't be an issue.

To see them in leadership at all levels.

That we will be accepted and welcomed into the full participation of the church (as leaders) just as Christ would have it.

Full participation in all areas of the church structure.

I hope that women, and all people, regardless of gender, will have space to break open the word, administer the sacraments, and actively participate in the liturgy and ministry of the church. I hope that the language we use in liturgy reflects this commitment to inclusion. I was recently at an webinar about the gift paradigm, which explored how mothers are a model for giving freely with no strings attached, and imagining what it would be like for our economies and communities to be built on this model instead of patriarchal capitalism. One of the presenters made a comment about a ring that she wears each day that symbolizes her

commitment to the gift, and she compared it to a nun who wears a ring to signify her marriage to Jesus. Eucharist is ultimately about Jesus' self gift, so maybe their gift paradigm really isn't that different. I hope that we can turn to the natural flow of being, the wise feminine spirit in the church as our guide for truly caring for our neighbor and loving a god of abundance.

I hope that women's voices, perspectives, gifts, and stories will be lifted as part of our sacred tradition.

Full and equal participation for women.

Full participation at every level.

That every woman in the catholic church will come to know herself as a revelation of the sacred and her calls and gifts deserving to be welcomed by the communities she is in. If that is not happening, I hope she will be able to tap enough into the spirit of Jesus to speak up for herself and other women and step out of the system to live and love and serve elsewhere--to go where she is celebrated, not just tolerated, or worse, controlled as some sort of second-class being. My dream for the men is you will hear the call of the spirit to repent of this past treatment of women and reform the church to be truly equal and inclusive of all--and let go of ownership of the property to the people who do the work of the parish, who care enough to take on the responsibility. I pray you will know the gift of seeing yourself as a partner to women, not the ones who seek to define and control us. Defining and controlling others of any gender orientation is not god's way.

That women will be recognized as equals to men and therefore able to function fully in the liturgical practices of the catholic church.

I pray that women will be ordained to the diaconate within my lifetime.

The sharing of responsibility for spiritual health of the laity and the clergy. Also dedication by each parish to take part in social action, justice activities

That the church becomes a synodal church.

That woman will have full participation in the church, that the church grows as true ministry to the people and that the papacy will one day be open to and held by a woman.

Laity that are trained and informed in lay leadership capacity- well rounded lay associates programs in each diocese. I want to see women presiding at prayer and preaching - men are not the only prayer leaders when the community gathers . Women allowed into seminary formation programs. Women not having to pay their own way for education and ministry experiences whereas men are given different opportunities

Full membership, full participation as a human being made in the imago Dei

That women are able to serve in whatever way they are called and gifted.

That they can have an influence on the spirituality and life of the church.

My personal hope is we will feed each other and encourage each other to pursue our dreams. I hope we will work collaboratively men and women to bring about a more loving, welcoming, kind, compassionate, life giving and joyful experience of church

As indicated above. I believe we got the leadership we deserve. Many of us women enable the continuance of the status quo by acquiescing and subscribing to its continuance.

That they will have complete parity with men.

Hopefully change is coming!

I my lifetime I hope to see women filling all positions in a parish except the priesthood. I'll pray for that to happen in my daughters' lifetime!

I dream and expect that one day soon, the right for a woman who is called to church leadership will be recognized and the people of god will finally benefit from the wisdom, compassion, gifts and perspectives to which that they have been denied access.

Ordination--full inclusion across the board

That we become equal in every way that men are with the same opportunities to learn, to lead, to worship God and use the gifts that we have received from god for the good of others and for the earth.

Full equality in the hope of their serving god's faithful wherever needed.

Equality

To be an active member with respect due a human being.

However, a woman feels called, whatever capacity, she should be permitted to participate in the church.

Equality.

Full participation and inclusion in all aspects of practicing the catholic faith.

I have not felt called to priesthood but at this point I believe I am living the part of a deacon in my parish. I know other women called to priesthood and diaconate. I would hope that would happen in my lifetime. It was an experience of women in the early church and women mystics often were considered "priests" by the people of their times. In our last session, I met a woman priest and have been nourished by their witness. I have seen women bishops and priests in other traditions

who inspire me and who are a treasure to their communities. Why not for catholic women!!

Full equality!

That the institutional church will begin to change and beter reflect the vision of Vatican II.

Full embrace for all positions in the next 50 years (and that is a minimum).

A church where all people of faith can take part in every ministry

That they will be afforded space to be able to contribute their talents and abilities.

Full participation

Right now, I have little hope when I contact the newly ordained.

Respected equality.

Equal participation

That their gifts can be brought to all in the community.

The recognition by the church of the value and dignity of women and the calling forth of their gifts on an equal basis as men

Full leadership participation in the church, especially in the local church

That young girls are included, invited to alter server or any opportunities offered to boys from grammar school age

That they be great as equals to make clergy

I dream that women and men will be treated as made in the image and likeness of god and welcomed to serve in all roles possible for them to do by their gifts, charism and training. I long for all baptized Catholics to be free and

welcome to all sacraments to which they feel called, if they are willing to be educated and to serve. I hope and dream for an inclusive and welcoming roman catholic church were all are invited to the table and led by a mix of talented and loving men and women.

Full inclusion and equality.

I would like that woman are able to become priests and deacons and take part in decision making in my lifetime.

Openness.

Full and complete participation.

Leading the way to a renewed priesthood that welcomes and serves all.

Equality for all.

More collaboration with women, and a great respect from the clergy regarding women who are trained in a specific ministry, e.g., in liturgy. Women must have the courage to not submit to clericalism.

Equality on every level of the church.
Encourage inclusion in every aspect of church.

To have equal role and representation as men

Mutual respect, recognition of the service already provided and how that can grow.
Working together & letting go of power.

That equality will come...for we are all created in the imago Dei....no distinction

That women will be ordained and participate fully in the life of the church.

The dream is that women can share their gifts in whatever way they can enrich the church in whatever leadership roles they can assume.

That they have the same rights and opportunities as men.

Full equality.

The church will treat women as equals just as Jesus did.

That all of the above choices come true.

That they have equal standing and opportunity as men in all matters pertaining to the faith.

Full inclusion.

Full participation in church. Institutional changes--more people oriented.

To serve as we are called.

Full membership.

Full participation as priests.

That the church has more diversity, equality and be inclusive of women, people of color and the marginalized.

Full equality

That our lives are recognized as truly equal as we are created in the image and likeness of God.

That women find ways to deny their marginalization and flourish as gifted priestly people as the misogyny and patriarchal values disappear from lack of relevance.

Women's ordination and lay women actually appointed to discasteries and to equal leadership with priests in parishes.

Full participation.

That someday, "all will be welcome!"

Women's ordination.

Again, I refer to gifts. If a woman feels called to a particular role and her gifts qualify her, then it is a disservice to god's people if she is not allowed to move into that role.

Equity and inclusivity--that all humans of whatever gender, race, and ethnicity may be able to work together as a team to bring justice and integrity to our crippled world.

To be fully embraced as the true equals they are in the eyes of Christ into full and empowered leadership positions alongside men in the church

That my great granddaughters will be participate fully as lay women in every level of the institutional church (well, maybe not as cardinals)

Equal participation at all levels.

Full participation of women in all ministries of the church, so all can share their gifts in service to the community to proclaim the reign of God.

That they can become the full creation god intended them to be.

That the eyes of those "in charge" will see the light and allow the ordination of women rather than create twisted seemingly esoteric arguments against their ordination.

Women of the catholic church will be seen and understood both by themselves and all as fully human beings, using art as a mediation of our faith as Galatians 3:28, moving away from binary thought. https://www.blueletterbible.org/esv/gal/3/1/t_conc_1094028

That all positions in the church will be open to everyone, since we are all children of God

Full participation.

Women's full participation in the governance, leadership and input into the institutional church.

Full participation in decision-making, liturgy, sacraments, homilies.

Participation in all levels of church governance.

I really feel that women can help in the church in many ways without having to be priests' bishops or cardinals. They can be great helpers to the priests without having to be in control and ruling in the parishes. This is just my own personal thought. Maybe because I am 88 I feel this way perhaps if I was younger maybe I would think a different way.

Full participation.

Equal respect and participation. Women do most of the work already!

Full participation.

My personal hope is that women will be counted as equal partners and recognized as full members in the church. Women and men must realize that god loves women just as he loves men. And there is no partiality in god.

Equality.

A robust voice for women in positions of authority.

Full participation in the diaconate & the priesthood.

That women are given the power that men have had for centuries.

That their abilities will be respected enough to be welcomed to the priesthood and that male clergy will stop fearing their loss of power. Their power and women's power together can create a more humanized church.

That we allow changes to come and grow organically. Not by fiat!

That the mothers in the church find out that the Vatican 'legalized' pedophilia in canon law. There won't be two bricks left standing in the Vatican.

The Australian canon lawyer and the sociologist published two documents. The first is a legal report entitled "canon law – a systemic factor in child sexual abuse in the catholic church." (free download) written for the Australian government. The second is the lay version "Potiphar's wife." (Buy on line for real money). I verified the information with the author of the second book and the legal firm from the movie spotlight. A third is "child sexual abuse in the catholic church; an interpretive review of the literature and public inquiry report" another free download through the center for global research; school of global, urban and social studies, rmit both books thoroughly document how the Vatican ordered the bishops to protect the pedophiles starting 100 years ago. They include more detail on the pontifical secret that Francis just abolished. The Vatican turned the church into q's international pedophile ring! Francis just made pedophilia a 'crime' in canon law rather than a 'sin' like masturbation.

Recognition of our vital roles and inclusion in governance.

Women should have an equal role as men.

That women would be regarded with the same respect and support as Jesus shared. That the roman catholic community lived that mutual respect.

Full participation - it is too late for me but for my daughters-in-law and granddaughters.

Full equality.

Initially that they be allowed to be deacons and hopefully eventually be allowed ordination as priests.

Full and equal participation.

Equality.

Full participation.

Co-equals at all levels.

That the women who were ordained as catholic priests will be welcomed back into the church with open arms and can begin their ministry within it.

That we can be 100% seen and treated for our rights and responsibilities as baptized Christians... And thus, have equal footing in the church.

Full equality at every level, in every office, commission, dicastery, episcopacy.

That we are recognized, honored and respected as full members of the church in the same way that Mary was recognized as the first disciple of the church.

Self determination to follow the call of God.

Full and equal opportunity in all positions.

Full and equal status in all aspects of the church including ordination.

That the catholic church will be open to the emergence of the feminine energy which they have ignored in the past. That there will be equality between men and women, that the laity and in particular women will be involved in leadership and not just being involved in care keeper roles.

Being seen as made in the image and likeness of God not how a bunch of men see me

Equal participation.

Be fully recognized for who we are and the gifts we share.

That our call to serve is honored and recognized....as co-equals.

That god's spirit blowing strongly in our churches be listened to and acted upon.

My hope is that the male hierarchy stop intercepting and interpreting god's message to women.

That we might be treated as equals - gender is not the issue, we are all human. The struggle for equality in Australia in the church is running parallel with our struggle in society.

All roles are open to them and they co-lead with men who are not afraid to stand beside them. There is equality. There is trust.

A woman pope.

That they be respected as necessary & worthwhile partners in all the ministries of the catholic. That the church recognizes that we are all called to share the gifts god has given us to carry his message to all humanity.

That the church listen to us!

Being fully welcomed and accepted at all levels. Equals in all ways.

To be free of all patriarchal forces within the church. Otherwise, it does not follow Jesus' prayer to "thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." heaven is not a dichotomy or hierarchy of male and female souls/energies.

That we may share equally all roles in the church, not just service.

That the priesthood would be open to women.

That soon the right and ability of women to equal participation in ordination and other official offices of the church be accepted and encouraged.

The priesthood

That women's as well as men's ways of doing things be valued.

That the depths of spirituality of women be acknowledged and incorporated into ways we do liturgy and all aspects of the church.

That all ministries be open to all genders.

Full participation in the church.

I am probably now too old to be ordained, but not do hope we can actually understand that God created male & female in god's image & thought it was very good!!!

A female pope.

To be valued in the same way as men in the catholic church. In the same way or lord did.

To be truly respected as a part of god's creation and not less than their men counterparts.

My hope is that women will be ordained, all Catholics will support this, that vitality will flourish and more people will be active in the church.

I want to see women as bishops and popes! Not women who imitate men, but women who draw from their own gifts for leading and facilitating and listening to the spirit.

I hope that women can be deacons and allowed to preach at mass. While not my calling, there are many women who have that call and whose voices should be raised up. Women are half the human race but very oppressed within the church.

To restore to us our original Jewish Christian married priesthood (optional celibacy to reinstate healthy and normal relationships between men and women- and therefore all people) and religious ordination for women who are apostles, the face of Christ.

To be ordained as priests and ability to move upward within the church.

A recognition of the worth of women and their work in and for the church. Full cooperation with the ordained priests.

Q5. What other comments regarding women in the church would you like to add?

I have waited 70 years; do I have to wait 70 more to feel part of this church???????

If I were younger, I probably would choose a more open church community - not the catholic church.

In the us the current isel translations used at mass strongly say to me “you don’t belong)

The church regards ordination as changing. Or otology of the individual through the sacrament. Scrap that thinking.

Minimally, work with inclusive language and de-clericalization of deacons role.

Women have been the primary help to me as a man to be a better person. My father loved me but was not able to lead me - made little effort regarding character building. But he did give me training as to how to work in the farm.

We cannot continue as we are.

Active in the discerning deacon movement.

Thank you futurechurch for your courage to continue these conversations. This always give hope to those whose voices are silenced or weakened.

The current organization and structure of the catholic church is sinful, unjust. Need to ensure canon law follows declaration of human rights as starting point. Inclusion of women would then be a nonissue

I’m sorry that I probably won’t live to see the changes Francis will make.

Thank you for this session. The voices of the 3 women in my breakout group were beautiful. They were all 80+ years. God bless them. They are the shoulders upon which younger catholic women have been carried to what I hope is a new for them.

Women are the backbone of the church. The real workers.

Please stop confusing ordination with power. I had enough power both in my parish in the absence of an ordained priest and in my work. I felt called to offer mass, standing in the place of Christ on behalf of god’s people. That is still a deep conviction - having lasted over 15 years- and although I think it’s too late for me now, I pray that others may see it

As a historian and a counselor later, I am in full accord with deb’s presentation and historical grasp. Kudos!

Too long in coming

If the church claims to be pro-life, it could do more to support women, by advocating for just wages, education, day care, and health care, so women and children of poor women can reach their full potential and live in dignity.

When all people, women especially, are recognized as having a vocation, we will have many more vocations of every kind.

It is time.

We need a female presence and gifts within world and church - I work against abuse of women in all areas, e.g., Laws re. Prostituted and trafficked women.

What a change for the better women priests would make!

The men in the church need to get rid of the hypocrisy and recognize women with all their talents

“It is right and just...and many are ca!!Ed...it is a real and tested call...onward...and thank-you so much for your work and dedication to this great work.

They should be blessed and appreciated for their patience and willingness to put up with all they have had to endure, making tremendous contributions to the church in spite of it all.

Thank you Futurechurch ... May you become the now church or the church now.

Meeting in small Christian communities of men and women helps us all to grow in faith and in the hope of the promises of the lord.

This patriarchy is a big worldwide problem so it will be a long process. But I can see progress in my lifetime as a woman who is also a physician which was very patriarchal profession when I started but has improved considerably over the years!

Women are not an issue to be studied, a problem, a group to be placated or patronized with bromides about motherhood. We are human beings with unique gifts and perspectives. Please no more studies: bishops and priests need to stop proclamations and just listen — they will find the voice of god and be changed.

Women are a powerful force in the world and if women and men could use all their gifts together, what a wonderful world there would be - a true kingdom of god!

We need to bring all the people who have drifted away because of the issues and because they do not feel connected back.

We are the strength and the hope and the nurturers of the faith for the inception of the

church. Since Mary Magdalene, the apostle of the apostle, ran to tell peter “he is risen.”

If only the preponderance of clericalism and stifling hierarchy could be acknowledged and addressed in the church.

I admire those who stay, even though I’ve left. They are like the women at the foot of the cross.

I am weary of all this.

Women will find a way to make this happen..

The seminaries need to be open to new views of God and our community with women as co-equals.

Women are the primary reason I am still in the catholic church. The sisters who taught me in grammar and high school and the sisters who continue to help me grow in my faith are why I stay with the church.

God bless the women who have answered the spirit’s call in every generation down through the ages in whatever way they were called. It is so beautiful to think about.

I felt so hopeful with the talk today. My thanks. The structure of our church as an institution needs to change or it will die. If it remains it will lose the message of Jesus and will return to an institution of right/wrong, me/Jesus - not the concerns for my brothers and sisters. Love is the basis of Jesus message not rules.

There is hope. I love future church!

If the church doesn’t come to grips with this issue it won’t really have a future and will lose the opportunity to expand its influence and god’s work to build the “kingdom”

Women make up the majority in any church now and do much of the work. The voice and work of women is essential.

I hope the synodal listening sessions will begin to break down the clericalism in the church and open it to real listening to the laity, especially women, with the hope of ordaining women.

They pass the faith onto their children. This thread has been severely severed and generations have been lost.... hence low attendance at mass and the eucharist.

This issue is so much more important these days. Women are striving for equality in the secular world as well as the church.

Thanks.

We want full membership in the body of Christ.

Changing the curriculum in our seminaries so as not to continue the injustice.

Be signs of joy and hope filled with the spirit, compassion for all.

I am here to stay. Hopefully, I will be invited to do more!

I think the presentation by deb was excellent and gives a lot of food for thought. I pray that her message may be receptive to many.

Women are speaking up and future church is such a wonderful beginning.

I have been so helped and enlightened by attending the offerings of future church, since I am a woman religious.

We will not be able to retain women in this church if we don't make this change.

When women make up more than half the number of those in ordained ministry, the church will be a very much more caring, loving, kind, Christ-like organization.

We are rising up!!!

We do not need to wait a bit longer, since as I say, isn't 2,000 years long enough?!

The church will die if it doesn't open its heart to this direction.

The men have corrupted it so much. We need the women to help restore the church

I love my faith and I pray for change.

You can't ignore women any longer...we are strong, we are motivated, and we have god on our side.

Women have a sensitivity and discernment, plus another way of looking at scripture that needs to be allowed to be recognized.

Thank you for these Wednesdays. They are special.

Thank you for your leadership and giving space for our voices!

Got to keep on, keepin' on.

I am grateful for those, women and men, who have the gift of courage to 'speak truth' and 'buck the tide'! We need to support them! Open to women diaconate asap or at least allow/encourage preaching at liturgies.

Thank you Futurechurch for your leadership!

The spirit promises to remain with the church through all times. We know the spirit's presence in the life-giving gifts. The institutional church is denying the work of the spirit in not allowing women and lay men's call to priesthood and diaconate.

My hope is also that women, once they attain full participation, is that they do not begin to move into their own version of clericalism, which is a tendency that human beings

sometimes take on when they move into roles with more power.

Deb, thanks for your powerful witness.

I believe that it is imperative for the future of the catholic church that women be recognized as full and equal participants in every aspect of church life and hierarchy.

That the changes be made in a timely way.

Please. Holy spirit, assist our hierarchy to receive your inspiration!

Please I beg to allow women to be equal at the altar. My husband and I worked too hard to keep our kids involved at church but the church's exclusion of LGBTQ has turned them away. Opening it up to women would be a step in the right direction to seeing all people of equal value in the church.

O god, hear our prayer! Let those who have ears, let them hear!! Women do not be discouraged when god calls!

God bless you for doing this. Now is the time to set our future or there will be no future of the catholic church. I hope it is not too late already....

I am eternally grateful for the women in the church who bear the cross of suffering on our way to resurrection.

Women have been the foundation for family participation in the church. In this century many changes have occurred in our society re women and their contribution to the whole. The church needs to modernize their thinking and actions re women, or the church will not survive.

The gifts of women will be seen and heard. The spirit blows where she will. The earth cries out.

A reflection on Bill Cain's "the diary of Jesus Christ" chapter on Jesus. "choosing who he wanted as disciples process with Mary Magdalene, but did not chose her" powerful bill and I did. Create a mini drama that did proclaim her as "the apostle to the Apostles and the first "priest/ disciple. When we performed it from the late 30's to the 2000 people in the audile/ assemblies/ congregations would stand and applaud for minutes. Such proof of women rising. And the knowing of those gathered that the holy spirit and lady wisdom are on the move!

Please use more gender-inclusive language in our beautiful church prayers and liturgies.

Clergy are victims of their training and upbringing, as we all are. Somehow, they need to understand that they will be able to be more their gifted self, not less, as women are welcomed to fulfill their calling whether it is to "ministry" or not.

Thank you!

Gabe Moran's final book what happened to the roman catholic church? What next? Is a good imagining of the structure into which our church might be able to operate in the spirit of the gospel.

For me, there are very important American catholic women who have shaped me. Sister Mary Luke Tobin, sl was one of the only women at Vatican ii. She lived in Loretto, KY at the time I entered the scns, and provided a series of lectures for all four community foundations around Bardstown, kg. I came into adult womanhood presuming the Vatican ii call to be church, as people of God because of her. Joan Chittister is, I believe, our national prophet calling us to justice. Chris Schenk is the national midwife of the new expression of church being painfully born. Decades ago, Josephine massingbird-ford was a strong woman who presented herself for ordination along with the men she had

prepared. I personally have many “saints” from the sisters of charity of Nazareth, with whom I served as sister for almost 25 years. My Irish matriarchs from both sides of my family inspire me. I look to all their lives as sources of hope and patience. My only place in the process of women’s voices being heard in the church (exactly like preaching) is to prepare, contribute who I am now, and allow the spirit to use this as she chooses. Thank you for your initiative in this collaborative process.

Galatians 3:27-28.....there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither servant nor free, there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Jesus Christ

Thank you for these opportunities. These voices need to be heard.

Jesus honored, defended, and appointed women to positions of importance, such as Mary Magdalene as the apostle to the apostles. Jesus also accepted money contributed by his women disciples out of the women’s own means. Jesus was a radical messiah! He did not conform to the “norms” dictated by the pharisees, sadducees, scribes or high priests. Jesus followed god’s laws and since Jesus is God, we know Jesus made women in the divine image, not second-class human beings!

Grateful for the courageous women who are standing up for women’s rights

The church needs to realize that women are a great gift to the church. Just think How much more if they are not limited in ministry.

Women in the church would provide a strengthening cord to connect all in diversity.

Women would only enrich the church to its fullest intent.

Now is the time!

We are all god’s beloved children. We are all equal in his/her eyes.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my beliefs, my hopes and my concerns. Future church is a transforming gift and a needed voice in the church. I am grateful.

God’s presence have much to contribute we are all

I struggle to remain catholic, and I do so in part as tribute to my grandmother. My children and grandchildren, once devout, are openly antagonistic to the church. And I often now feel ashamed to say I am catholic.

Thank you for the work you are doing. Women hold up half the sky; should be so in the cc too.

If it were not for the faithfulness of women, I think that the church would have died a long time ago.

We need to take every opportunity to engage others in this conversation - give hope to others.

Thanks for hosting! I think our group is ready for action too. I hope future church will help organize the continued movement of the spirit in this direction!

That the stories of Mary magdalen as a wisdom figure and teacher in the early church would become better known, as well known as the stories of Mary.

Thank you to future church for this wonderful opportunity.

Bring our theologians to the table to spearhead this movement. They have the background and skills as teachers. Bring the many gifted women into liturgical life.

Gratitude for all the women who have stayed and labored despite obstacles.

I am now 87 years old, and I will likely not see the time when I would be ordained, but I will do everything in my power to work toward married men and women as priests.

Let all women rise.

The crimes of the catholic church against women are woeful and the perpetrators need to face the reality of what they have done.

We need to open up and allow contraception and stop calling abortion, abortion, but reproductive health. Males need to take as much responsibility for pregnancy over the long term and stop escaping it as women cannot-- stop blaming women for their transgressions!

We are always called upon to do all the work but are left out of the decision-making process & if we are at the "table" it is mostly lip service.

Women need to find or create communities of faith that are inclusive, justice-seeking, diverse and committed to live the gospel as Jesus did i.e. Not seeking structures but service.

As part of god's creation, we should have equality with men in the church.

Deb, thank you for the powerful witness. Thank you for the opportunity to share and hear so many stories.

The church is currently dying but can resurrect if some new and dramatic changes happen. Our world is in a religious and moral crisis. People crying out in the desert. The church needs to wake up!

It is inconceivable why women are not already in the highest ordained and governing positions in the church just because of gender. I pray for this to change soon to breathe new life into the church.

The blessed mother is a woman. She is a strong leader. The holy spirit cannot be contained and circumscribed!

In reviewing the structure of the church much thought needs to be given to breaking down the hierarchical system that has developed in the last centuries

Let our voices be heard!

Women will bring the heart back into the rituals and celebrations of our church!!!!

Thank you, Deborah Rose. I was very moved by your witness.

Much talent is not being used. Community needs the gifts of each. Take care of the racial bias in authority and unwelcome in churches.

Women have insights and ministry skills that would enrich the church.

The church needs to overcome serious resistance to change when change is warranted.

I have hope for change but think it will be a long time before we see it. Which makes the church image hypocritical, sad to say.

Renewal of the church in all matters not just ordination of women but evaluation of an evolving church in this cosmic world---all doctrines/dogmas and teachings, sacraments, liturgical practices etc.

Please keep me on your list. Thank you.

Thank you for this opportunity....and for all the work that goes into an event like this. It is a huge help to many...from all over the world.

Just so grateful for all that future church does to educate and support addressing these issues. Jesus faced the same issues with those widening their philactories (sp?). God advised us not to do as they do.

It's way overdue!!!

This has been a long, hard, struggle. Whether the institution likes it or not, things are changing. It will be better if the changes can come through mutual respect.

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in this very important synod process

I understand the struggle, but being retired in my religious congregation, and very involved with the care of our older sisters in the nursing home, and not involved in a parish, I don't have the passion to work on this issue that I had when I was in pastoral ministry in Mexico. God bless you all!

I am happy that these discussions are taking place. There is hope!

Gratitude for those who feel called to priesthood and openly share that!

Thank you for sponsoring these sessions!

We must continue to fight for the full and equal participation and leadership in all facets of the church and encourage young women and girls to continue the movement. God calls who God calls to the priesthood, the church should not get in the way of that call.

Enough of the "feminine genius" and "complementarity"—they are just dressed up ways to keep women subordinate

Thank you for the courage and creativity of women in the ministries that they are involved in, even in times of frustration and push-back from the male clergy. They (clerical caste) will not endure forever.

Women are the true heart of the church.

This was a very strengthening and eye-opening discussion. Thank you.

Thank you for a supportive, open, listening forum during this difficult time in the American church.

It will take a long time to change the mentality towards women in the church. Religious education must change in schools, universities, seminaries and continuing education for priests.

1 clean up the sexist language in the liturgical books as well as the scriptures. 2 stop using women as free labor, good to clean up after the men and not much more.

I don't understand why catholic men have pursued so many centuries of subjugation of women and I try to forgive them for what has been done but it is difficult.

I know a woman priest and she is just what you would want and expect a "priest" to be. An ex-nun, who later married and has a daughter, she has so much in her background to offer and so much experience in her various jobs before becoming a priest--but she cannot celebrate the eucharist in a catholic church!!! She must use a fellow Christian church. What a pity.

Women have made the church what it is today - children learn about god from their mothers. Women religious built the catholic education system in the us and without their work in parishes things would shut down pretty quickly. Let us value women for all they give us and all they do for us. Hooray for the women of the church!!

I want inclusive language in worship. I want removal of passages about subjugation in the lectionary. I want to see women on the altar, women in the pews, women serving those on the margins. I want women recognized as being the image and likeness of Christ. I want us to preach Jesus' humanity, not his penis.

Requiring celibacy is the base root of many of the problems in the church. It leads to unhealthy sexual developments and then to abuse physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual. I find most celibate priests are unhealthy in relationships because they feel they have to protect a power they know they really don't have.

Women are better educated today. Gradually, many women are looking forward to the vocation to the priesthood! When I was growing up, I never even thought about the priesthood for women. Times are different now.

I wish we had more young "big vision, inclusive," women in the church. I'm not sure who will be around in thirty years.

May the fruit of these gatherings carry courage and light for a "wake up the world of old clericalism!"

I also hope there comes a time when women religious gather together they can celebrate eucharist together without the need to call in an outside priest. Thank you for listening.

Breakthrough clericalism. Examine seminarian programs. Get back to Vatican ii where all of us are all priests by baptism.

We need a true "seamless garment" approach. In addition to the discrimination against women, the discrimination against (nonhuman) animals is the opposite of "pro-life." the fact that we begin what is supposedly our most solemn liturgy of the year (sacred triduum) with a hideous reading featuring "god" as mass murderer -- of men, women, children & animals -- really says it all. It's atonement theology run amok. I no longer can tolerate the cognitive dissonance. I will never worship such a god. "every creature is a mirror of divinity."
~Hildegard of Bingen

Will it ever happen?

In reality, I believe that we will need to look for and accept incremental steps.

As a lay catholic man who has worked in ministry for over 20 years, I do not think I have done enough to be an ally for women's rights in the church. I pray for the grace to see more clearly what god wants me to do and to respond courageously. I am not doing enough as an ally in the struggle.

The method is the message. Fear of a divinity that extracts justice by hurting the childish creature is die. The scriptures must be upgraded not continuing the cultural interpretation of agrarian world

Women are the heart...they know how to listen and to love. We need more than rules and dogma. We need love

I continue to attend the local parish primarily for the community that gathers since I have been in this parish for many years. However, the community deserves better from its leadership. Some women can give better homilies than the droning men and unconnected thoughts of the clergy. We can speak from the heart and identify with people's everyday experiences.

The catholic church doesn't appeal to the new generation of women. The young people among us are not converts, they were raised catholic, and they are leaving in huge numbers. Wake up and see your people, and provide pastoral care to them as they are, not just as you want them to be. Likewise, for lgbt.

Thank you for providing this forum.

If we look at the church with clear eyes, we will see that most parishes are held up by women involvement.

For God we are not plan b!

Thank you so much.

Women are the lifeblood of the church and the sooner the male authorities recognize that the sooner the church will begin to grow again.

Thank God we have had great religious women.

Newly ordained priests seem to be more attached to clericalism than one might expect. Do they need some positive teaching and experiences of women?

I think ordination of women is important but not into a clerical system we have today. It has to change considerable or they will experience the same problems that women ministers experience in their protestant churches.

I have deep hope in the evolutionary process of church

Pray for wisdom and open hearts, courage, compassion and insight and the willingness of the hierarchy to name their fear of women and change and let it go with the help of the holy spirit.

We women are committed, so willing to serve in so many ways. We make up a large part of the church; the altar should reflect that.

We need more processes such as future church is offering - speaking with women across the country is so heartening!!

Let us celebrate the progress we have made and pray that pope Francis can continue to challenge the status quo of a male dominated church. That we don't become as intolerant toward the male clergy as they seem to be toward women.

They rock and clergy run scared.
Excellent program tonight!
Thanks!

Thank you for this opportunity to participate.

Women have special gifts to offer next to men.

If women are so important in our church, then why was a man (Russ) the main "host" of this series? Why don't we (futurechurch) practice what we preach? Let's always practice shared leadership: men and women should equally be "co-hosting" these sessions... Not just having a man (as wonderful and sensitive and supportive as Russ himself might be) be the main leader of these sessions!

Thank you for bringing us together to listen to one another and act for change!

Women do the work and the clergy dismiss the effort of the lay people.

That they may be respected as equals in our church.

Not only am I a woman in the church, I am a lesbian woman. I am emotionally abused on multiple levels by the institutional church on a daily basis. I have found my catholic community and catholic faith and spiritual companions outside the formal church. I will not let the institutional church define who can and cannot be catholic. I am a loving woman that has been giving to my faith community my whole life, that has been working in not for profits my whole life, that lives in marriage with my partner of nearly 20 years in a committed and faith filled relationship. I sin as a human because I am human. The church will not define me as a sinner because I am a lesbian. The institutional church is the sinner. If I get excommunicated, it does not matter as the church is weaponizing the eucharist.

Quote from cardinal Bergoglio (2011 Argentina) "we priests tend to clericalize the laity. We do not realize it, but it is as if we infect them with our own disease. And the laity--not all, but many--ask us on their knees to clericalize them, because it is more comfortable to be an altar server than the protagonist of a lay

path. We cannot fall into that trap--it is sinful complicity.”

All women must be strong and express their opinions we must believe that change will come and never give up. We must not be part of the problem. Believe in the spirit within us as well as in all people

Thank you for this opportunity to share!

Women bring a wonderful warmth, nurturing and compassionate presence!

To be more compassionate and respectful of one another. They have to respect and be inclusive of all members.

Thank you to future church as prophets in preparation for the work of the holy spirit. It is a wonder-full gift that you bring.

That celibacy or chastity be optional for the priesthood

It is the weakest of men who hold back women.

I think each of us has to strive for our own conversion of heart and mind as we work of equality in the church.

That the spirit within women be regarded and heard

The church's moral authority is compromised by several things but a significant one of them is its refusal to treat women as equals in the sight of God, to see in the faces of women, the face of Christ, etc. This is a justice issue.

Ordination of women must follow a logical path. In order to have women ordained and fully doing this job, we need to address the following: married priests. If we have men and women committed to their ministries, they will fall in love and want to be married. We can't have just celebrate women and celibate men ministering in official capacities.

Divorce. Once we have married clergy, we can't sustain the annulment system, which would force clergy out of priestly roles. We should examine the approach of the eastern churches as a way to deal with this issue. Birth control. Leave this up to women. Once we have grappled with the above and have married priests, it's easy to have women in ordained ministry.

Women also need to take their rightful place and not stay back and fall into the subservient role. They need to be equal partners.

To me it's ironic - we pray for more vocations, but keep 1/2 the population out (not to mention the most active 1/2); we want young people to stay in the faith - but ignore the fact most young people have little tolerance for an institution that says women can't - when in every arena of life - women can - do anything else

This topic is all important for us as church to be an example to the world of god's reign which is inclusive or to be a church that welcomes all the gifts of everyone to make this world more like the vision god has for us all.

It is time for a change in attitude. Every priest, past, present and future would be nowhere if Mary hadn't said "yes". It's time that that church recognizes all women have value.

Mother Teresa said "who else most appropriately can say: "this is my body but Mary, a woman! "God intended for women to have an equal role with men and if women could become priests, parishes wouldn't have to close.

There is no shortage of priests. There is only a failure of the church to restrict access to women who have been called to priesthood.

Did you read the article today about the bishop of Essen, Germany who has tasked 17 women with baptizing children in the diocese? A

portion of the church is moving into the 21st century!

Thank you for providing us this opportunity.

Some of the wisest, kindest, most compassionate people I know in the church are women. Some of them are religious sisters. I think more emphasis should be placed on the beatitudes, than the ten commandments.

Let the spirit's voice speaking in women be heard to help bring peace to the world.

Women do far more work in and for the church but are treated at best as second class. This needs to stop!

They have nurtured and given me faith

I want the power positions of the church to be eliminated. Placing women in power will not necessarily change the problems of the catholic church. There are major systemic problems in the church. Making women priests, deacons, altar girls, etc. Isn't going to change the problems of the church.

Women's total equality in the catholic church is long overdue.

I've covered a lot in the other sections. I think in general that the catholic church needs to be more welcoming to women; to women of color; women who love women; men who love men; women or men who might have started out as a different gender; to anyone who considers themselves marginalized. I had not previously thought of myself as marginalized, but now I do, from feeling so hurt by the church and by people in it. Going back to that parish, I will associate that space and those 4 walls with the very hurtful comments made by that musician (as well as the stupid emails from another musician that promote white supremacy, hate, anti-women, etc.) Although I have many happy memories from the past 14 years of some wonderful liturgies and directing holy week.

With covid, I still do not feel safe among the general public, especially those who do not wear masks. Parishioners are captive inside the church for an hour. Musicians for 2 hours (one to rehearse and one to play the mass). I'll be searching for a place where I can be fed spiritually and be able to share my own gifts with others. The archdiocese of Cincinnati's radical parish mergers (from 200 plus parishes down to 65) starting this July called "beacons of light" will be changing everything. Certain parishes are likely going to fold as they blend into these new "parish families" that average 5 parishes. Some parishes where people still wear veils and receive the host on the tongue are blending with Vatican ii parishes into the same "family." how is that to work? It's like mixing oil and water. These "families" were all decided by an outside consulting group. The laity - men and women, along with priests and others - had 3 short weeks to respond and write comments. Over 8000 comments were received. Very little changes were made from the consultant's plan after all these comments. The priests were not even consulted. The consultant said that no priest over age 65 could be a pastor, so some very capable priests who wanted to serve were eliminated and shipped out to the suburbs. They don't want anyone around that is for Vatican ii or anyone that will disagree with them. And... Plenty of cover-up during the abuse scandal. Just in 2019, a priest went to jail in Cincinnati, but the diocese had merely sent him somewhere else before that. I need to discern if my disillusionment is with the faith, the church in general, or with the clericalism and lack of transparency of this diocese. The more I see of their behavior, the more, I feel alienated. Not only are women excluded from decisions, but also men who may disagree. It's not going in a good direction right now. Thank you, future church, for taking the time to have these sessions - to the speakers, to the organizers and the participants. You have your work cut out for you to digest all these responses. Many blessings for lent.

There needs to be an examination of catechesis especially in view of the current complementarity/ theology of the body movements which have direct bearing on women's roles and are infiltrating curricula, not in a positive way.

Women have always had the power to birth Christ.

Thank you for the opportunity to share on this topic that affect the people of God and our church.

Give respect and acceptance to all women.

Women have a concrete view of all life's adventures and growth.

Women gift us all.

To say that the catholic church cannot ordain women based on the example of Jesus is like saying that Catholics can only use boats and donkeys for transportation based on the example of Jesus. In this year of our lord, 2022 the holy spirit is calling us to inclusion; one body, one spirit.

I applaud those who carry the burdens and stick and struggle. I don't struggle any more.

A critical issue that needs intense discernment is married clergy for men and women. This also means developing a healthy attitude toward sexuality and what the implications are for becoming a lifelong, full human being.

In a world filled with violence toward women and vulnerable persons, the full inclusion of women would be a powerful sign of god's presence to all, of unity and right-relationships.

Thank you so much for hosting this synod on this topic. I would love more opportunities to talk about paths forward.

It is shameful how women have been treated for centuries. Jesus came into this world

through a woman, Mary, who said yes to god's request. He was supported by women (and men) throughout his life. There were women he helped and who helped him. There were women who stood by him at the cross when the men fled, and the first to see the resurrected Jesus was Mary Magdalene, whom the church patriarchy reduced to a prostitute. How sad that not only peter denied Jesus 3 times, but the patriarchy of the church has denied Christ's message numerous times throughout its history. It is immersed in hypocrisy and needs to be washed clean. When you deny others what God has freely given to all, you will reap what you sow.

We have some extraordinary women whose voices are not being heard... I remain hopeful that we can recognize the loss of not receiving their gifts. The church can only become stronger if it will open its doors to the full participation of women. We will continue to knock at those doors until they will open.

I hope to live long enough to see women deacons and priests as a common occurrence.

So much talent is being wasted by lack of full feminine participation in the priesthood!

Let us return to Jesus's open heart regarding woman, taught him by his mother and father. Mary and Joseph lived it. Let us not be afraid to be the church holding the living teachings of Jesus and the early church. Thank you, thank you for all you are doing to bring us to that goal.

I hope we can soon welcome women priests and their congregations into the larger fold and stop considering them as disobedient strays.

How long will the male hierarchy insist it is better to close parishes, starve us of eucharist and of the blessings of women in ministry rather than welcome women as priests and deacons? What does the exclusion of women achieve for the male leaders? Where would we

be without the witness at the cross of Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, Salome, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary our blessed mother? Where would we be without Mary Magdalene's witness of the risen Jesus and her proclaiming on the first easter, "I have seen the lord"?

Somehow the church has tied spiritual and temporal leadership to ordination. These do not necessarily go hand in hand. If we could separate even a little the church might be stronger and more inclusive of all.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts and feel there is hope for the future.

Women, especially women religious, are prophets today.

I hold those who can stay in the church to bring about change in high regard. They are prophets for sure, crucified for sure, but certainly they are following Jesus and the good news movement

We need artwork that better represents the power of women.

Women in the catholic church will greatly enhance the quality of preaching, being pastoral & teaching our next generation. We women are good networkers & we know how to take care of families of gay & straight. We can be models of good & aspire always to serve with loving kindness to all.

So grateful for the paschal mystery in my life!

Boys' clubs who have a sign, "no girls allowed," will remove the sign when they realize girls' clubs are more inclusive, serve cookies, have more fun, and enjoy a flourishing life as richly integrated human beings. You go girl.

Keep up your good advocacy.

The world desperately needs a healthy, stable, moral roman catholic church. But the church is on fire, and the clerical hierarchy is unwilling to respond with the urgency needed. The church must welcome and embrace the contributions of women in all aspects of church life, or it will continue to wither away.

Women in general seem to be the most active in the church as laity. I think there may be a fear that women would dominate.

The church needs to enter the 21st century and respect the rights of women as many others in society are now doing.

What if all women in ministry went on strike? Until the male component realizes how women make their vocation possible, nothing will change.

That they stand beside men as coequals and can offer their many gifts to all.

It's 2022!! It's a no-brainer!! We need women's presence and voices at all levels for the church to survive.

Our parish still has a nun as pastoral associate. I am so encouraged by her participation in the leadership of the parish activities. But it is obvious she could do so much more. When the church rejects women in leadership, it signals it is not welcoming to all.

I admire and support all efforts of the women who are working towards equality in all matters. Education, morality, the human condition, spirituality, worship.

It's important to make sure that we create ministry structures that don't result in burnout. Women are natural caregivers, and sometimes exploited for the care they give to others that they forget about themselves. To have an effective ministry, we must create spaciousness for ministers to have prayer and spiritual practices. Collaboration is also important. And

the more ministers we have, the lighter the load is, so practically it makes sense to open up ordination! I would like to see the plurality of gifts that women bring celebrated, and not try to force these into a specific mold of what a priest should be and do.

And Jesus asked the disciples, “why do you harass the woman?”

Pessimistic because even some women rc's are against having other women as part of priestly ministry. It sometimes feels that the roman church is as bad as the countries where women are forced to wear hajibs and burkas.

How can the church be a welcoming home to all when gender or race or sexual orientation divides how one is treated, respected, heard or dismissed, encouraged or discouraged etc. My experience is that tge eoopl

Women are pioneers in every major change that has occurred in church and in society over the centuries.

In the beginning Sophia was present as the world was being formed. God created us male and female and yet so many of our priests especially those just coming out of the seminaries reject the knowledge that God is both male and female. In order to sustain creation, we must have male and female. For some reason the catholic church refuses to acknowledge that the role of women is vital to the future life of the church.

Women unite!!!! To demand this equality. My hope is that if there is a huge swell of opinion for this equality that pope Francis will be empowered to act more courageously. I believe he is a man of integrity. He may at times be somewhat timid in face of the powerful male lobby, and so may be afraid of a schism in the church, but I think the schism is already there.

I don't have anything to add that hasn't already been said and so much more eloquently than

I can. The time has passed when there should be no doubt that women who are called to whatever position in the church, should have that chance.

I wouldn't be surprised if there aren't a lot of priests who'd know how to value what women have to offer it and welcome them as equals.

Many people including women are no longer interested in the priesthood as it is, but have already seen beyond it and are eager to establish a new type of priesthood that is based on service and not privilege and clericalism. Women do not want to imitate the male priests or even to reform the priesthood, which has not been very successful. They want a totally new and different model.

We must let Jesus be our guide. I feel like he would want a diversified priesthood just like God created a diversified humanity. God is always calling us wherever we are but we need the nourishment of believers around us to remind us of the love and mercy god is offering through his priesthood.

As long as there are women and girls who wish to be catholic servant leaders, deacons, priests, bishops, cardinals, and popes the struggle to remain and make that happen with god's loving support is necessary and meaningful.

It has saddened me to see so many women friends and relatives simply walk away due to various reasons but often clericalism, sexism, abuse, non-acceptance of who they are. I respect their journeys and decisions. I have seen the struggle they have had in making this decision. We have indeed lost some of our prophets, our teachers, our spiritual leaders as a result. In many cases, they have found “homes” elsewhere and continue to serve god's children - often those most in need.

My home (rural) parish in Iowa has had a woman administrator for close to 30 years.... now responsible for 14 parishes.

Idea came from the people of the parish, not the diocesan hierarchy.

When women are fully respected and treated as equals, the whole world benefits from women's talents, perspective, and sensitivities.

We have come a long way and we've had some terrific women in leadership to make this possible

The people who have most ministered to me in the catholic church have been the wonderful women who have so touched my life from childhood in school to today in spiritual direction. As they have mentored me, I hope I am mentoring others

Allow women to preach at mass. That the bishops listen to the voices of women & participate in decision making.

We all need to speak truth to power at every opportunity

I dream of a church which strives to be as loving and as inviting as God who is love.

I am horrified at times to admit that I remained a catholic in a catholic church for so long, when many other places have welcomed me with open arms. It is embarrassing. Jesus would not deny women priestly ordination.

We have 1000's of women and married men alive with Christ's spirit waiting to serve the people of God and save them from the pompous prideful powerful patriarchs - what are we waiting for?

The attitude of exclusion needs to be fostered from the leadership down.

I am concerned about priestly formation as so many convey an attitude and practice of privilege rather than service and the formation of community.

I ask, request, beg, pray that the rc church will open its eyes to the reality of the times....the qualified women are there and want to be of service....let them!!!!

"all will be well, all will be well and all manner of things will be well." Julian of Norwich

How on earth does having a uterus stop someone from having the power to give a homily or administer sacraments?

Non-binary people should also have the same rights and opportunities that this survey proposes for women.

How dynamic and spirit-filled our church will be when women are welcome as full-fledged members with all opportunities open to them.

Unfortunately, I have very little hope that this will happen. Any group that is in power rarely shares that power with those who are currently not in power. Old celibate men are making decisions based on genitals being the most important part of a person. They don't even use theirs for the purpose they were intended!

I wish all catholic women felt the same way, but unfortunately many women are ok with the unfair treatment, especially in the poorer countries. Priests are still seen as little gods.

I pray that we can do it!

Thank you for your work!!!!

We are made in the image of God, male and female, co-equal. One cannot be without the other.

We just want to be treated as an equal and be respected for the work we have been doing.

I have much exposure to young women, 25-40 in my life and they will not stand for a church that is not inclusive of all people of all callings, gender identities and marital status.

Great that lay women can now head dicastery's due to the new apostolic constitution. Lay leadership may be hard to institute, especially on the local level, but lay people need equal power with priests. Nonetheless, we need women priests!

The male ego is a hard nut to crack

Only with full and empowered capacity by women can the church truly represent the real "body of Christ"

Thank you for these sessions.

Give the nuns freedom of speech and movement to make the church what Christ intended it to be.

Our archbishop is not well regarded. He is pompous, dictatorial, and devoid of emotion.

That bishops are unable to wash the feet of women in other parts of the world and so stop celebrating holy Thursday is an indicator of the patience that is to accompany my vision.

We must be vocal, for women's silence only gives credence to the oppression of clericalism

It is painful to experience and see the all-male churches liturgical and governance gatherings . Most all other institutions are attempting to integrate women as participants and decision makers whereas the church in its priestly and bishop gatherings puts forth only men dressed in cassocks.

I believe in a "discipleship of equals" thus no hierarchy, so to just ordain women into the current structure would not be satisfactory

I don't want women priests, unless the seminaries are completely revamped. Having women priests may only continue clericalism.

I am very happy about the synod of 2023. I am looking forward to a day when all abuses of women in the homes and in the church will cease and women will be treated with full dignity and respect as god's daughters.

I would like for the church to stop using masculine pronouns to describe god.

When (not if) women are given more power and authority, many will come back to the church. They change will be huge.

Let us in!

My 200-page \$6,000 vanity press because I am so angry - I'll e-mail you a free copy. Available on amazon. Men explain religion to me.

We women, nuns included, do way, way too much of the work of the parish, without being respected for our time and input.

The demonstrated second-class status of women in the catholic church is a significant negative witness to young women who know themselves as worthy because loved by god.

I also am the mother of two gay children. Our daughter is married. She and her wife have two children through a very unusual and beautiful circumstance. Our youngest son is also a gay man. Four of our five children do not attend church, because of the church's position on homosexuality and marriage. This exclusion has got to stop. The only way that I think it will stop is when mothers have a full and valued place of leadership in the church.

It is tragic how the clergy are still treating women religious. Misogynistic to the core. It is tragic how women staff are treated, especially those with the skills to run a parish.

May it all be so!!!!

We can no longer withstand a male clergy that is afraid of us, of our ideas, of our intuition, of our sexuality, of our maternal instincts. We can no longer be hurt and put aside by a clergy that feels their power, their freedom threatened.

The way forward can be peaceful and healing for all. The path behind us is filled with abuse, hurt, fear, anger, repression, exploitation, and loss that can't be restored. The past cannot be amended in this case. It can only be different in the future.

I am familiar with women's leadership in other church traditions and am looking forward to ordained women in the catholic church. It is an absolute necessity!

Thank you so much for this series.

I think the church also needs to look at the diaconate. They're right now being used as priest's sacramental and admin helpers and not really being used to serve according to their call. Hope the women don't get ordained into the same myopic view of the diaconate.

We are also made in god's image. Time for this reality to be accepted and appropriate changes made!

No more excuses. Stop waiting.

Jesus was a liberal rebel. His treatment and inclusion of women was far ahead of his time. We need to follow him in this regard. Now it's time for us to catch up.

A huge thank you to all the women worldwide who are carrying the message for justice to the church and the world.

Thanks for giving people an opportunity to speak on these topics.

Women have so much to offer because of who we are. How much richer we could make our faith community, if only we would be allowed full participation.

No other comments

If we women keep fighting for equality in the church, and against patriarchy and clericalism, we will save and renew the church!

The women do most of the work in the church so why shouldn't they have full participation?

It has come to be a matter of integrity and honesty for many women to leave a parish and church that so distorts the message of Jesus.

I used to think that the church leaders prohibited women from being ordained because they feared a loss of power and prestige. Now I think the reason is fear. Fear of what might happen to the church. But the current leadership needs to have more faith in God that all will be well. That is the crux. All things are possible with God. Matthew 19:26.

Andre Greeley predicted what needed to be done decades ago. You're running out of time to listen.

I don't know how much longer I can stay tbh.

It is about time to allow women to be considered viable ministerial leaders and to reach this, the church should subsidize those interested.

Women are ready - motivated - see cracks in the hierarchy- they -we are going forward-

I expect at my age, I will view any changes from the heavenly side. But I have hope and will certainly pay attention and contribute to the conversation no matter which side of the veil I am on.

It appears that some parishes are not engaging in the process. I am grateful that we can contribute to the conversation with each of you. I trust my voice will be heard.

Through an enormous amount of work done by women and men worldwide, addressed to pope Francis for these needed changes in the church for love, which is truth, veritas. Lord hear our prayer.

They are our some of our unsung heroes. There is the saying the “behind every successful man there is a woman.” it is time to have those women upfront (and perhaps the man behind).

It’s time for the church to come out of the dark ages.

OUR STORIES

SESSION IV

Lay Leadership & Ministry in the Church

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| Q1. What role have lay ministers and leaders played in your life? | 1 |
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Q1. What role have lay ministers and leaders played in your life?

Mentors who live their Baptismal call.

An important one.

I have been part of a Parish Council for some 20+ years - with the right Pastor, these Councils can be very effective.

Well I didn't know until today that nuns are "laity". That is mind blowing to me. They were instrumental in Mississippi in the '60s in changing my views on race. Thank God for them.

Somewhat.

Everything but presiding at Mass: music, education, parish life, spiritual direction, outreach ministries. I have been a lay minister myself and was lucky that my voice counted. However, another lay person was fired by the diocese - not the parish - for being gay. And there was no recourse.

Administrative and lay leaders of varying ministries

Post-Vatican II, laypersons were very influential. Now, they are hard to find.

Lay ministers have been the ones to "call me forth", to identify gifts that I could share and to give me the encouragement

I needed to jump into a deeper walk in the church.

Companions on the journey as one lay minister/leader to another

They have been much more effective than most priests and bishops. They are closer to understanding the meaning of discipleship.

Especially in the last 3 years I have seen and experienced the very positive difference that lay ministers and leaders have in my life.

The influence of lay leaders has contributed a great deal to my life. I feel that the Holy Spirit reaches me through a wide variety of avenues.

Inspiration and hope

I am a diocesan ecclesial minister; other ecclesial ministers have enriched my personal and spiritual life; learned new perspectives; encouraged by their faith and lived reality of their lives.

In the past we had many lay leaders in various passions but not now

Essential in formation and encouragement. As a woman, I find myself seeking out spiritual women in leadership who can speak my language, nurture, love and guide others in finding meaning and purpose.

Inspirations

Woman associate pastor facilitated my divorce annulment.

Lay ministers have kept me Catholic.

Catholic prayer groups, Cursillo, DMTI program, Spiritual Direction classes

Expanded services a parish offers. Added their gifts and talents. Build up pastoral teams

Lay ministers now run the parish I'm part of. As a consultant, I've had the opportunity to train lay leaders, especially pastoral council members.

Some have been inspiring - helped me grow in faith; some encouraging

I am part of a House Church virtually at present. It is run completely by the laity. It is more vibrant than any regular parish I have ever been part of. A guest priest participates twice a month.

Back in the 1950's we lived in a rural mission parish. My mother organized and ran the summer vacation bible school. She brought in a bunch of sisters and brothers to teach as well as setting up transportation for the children.

As Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers and Homebound...pre-Cana and Cana preparation and in some Adult Faith formation classes since the priests seem uninterested or simply not available

I can't say that I have had experience with it.

Very little, unfortunately and less and less as the years have progress

Music ministry, teaching, lay presiding

Very little as an adult.

I stand on the shoulders of countless lay leaders and I can only hope I have served in that same capacity in the 50 plus years I have been a lay minister myself.

Unfortunately, I have spent most of my adult life in the Archdiocese of New York, so the answer to this question is very little. The exceptions being Directors of Religious Education, a role held predominately by lay women.

In working as a team with the priest done very well when both are considered equal...when the priest sees himself as more than it is destructive and abusive.

Lay ministers and leaders along with visionary clergy have mentored me to use my gifts and talents for the benefit of all.

We had for many years a team ministry which fostered and expanded parish life. This has been replaced by a parish priest who does not permit substantive lay leadership. The parish council in my parish has been suppressed. Lisa Frey's experience had great resonance for me.

Given that I am a religious sister, and therefore a member of the laity,

members of my religious congregation have played the most significant roles in my life.

I have shared lay leadership for many dynamics... it was the support of the pastor that enabled ministers to happen...when pastors were not open. Was no lay ministry

Some have blessed me with their understanding, kindness - helping me to grow in my faith journey with their pastoral qualities.

Lay ministers and leaders have been the backbone of the parish. Lay ministers and leaders have been reduced to the side lines with no effective input. We have supplemented our spiritual lives with our own Contemplative Groups, Study Groups, Prayer Groups, action, etc.

Some Sisters have been an inspirational influence, encouraging involvement.

None in my childhood, a little in my adult years, now it is so impactful in the new community I have joined where lay leaders are valued as much as the clergy and with the support of the clergy. Using everyone's gifts for the benefit of all.

Lay ministers have been much more relational and been sources of advice when i have had questions regarding my faith and / or relationships

In my parish experience I have seen them committed to the Church/

the People of God. They have been restricted in some ways because of the management style of the pastor and/or the bishop.

25 years ago they inspired me to pursue parish leadership roles and get a Masters in Theology and another in Religious Education. Now any lay people in leadership is likely to be so conservative and in roles as handmaiden to bring Father's vision to fruition, there is no inspiration anymore, ESPECIALLY for young people

As colleagues we meet and wrestle with issues, concerns. We make plans and make things happen.

I've been a lay leader, I've been inspired by lay leaders, I collaborate with a range of lay leaders.

I have worked as an equal with lay people for many years. They are gifted and have life experience that clergy do not have. Their voices need to be heard. We have slid back a long way since the days of post Vatican II.

Most of the ministries at my current parish, which is being merged with a conservative parish at this time, have been lay ministers. I am not sure the new parish will be a place I want to be.

There are women who had authority in the last parish I attended.

I was part of a pastoral team - 3 priests, deacon, school principal, music minister, youth minister and myself - in the late

'70's - in a neighboring diocese. Yes, installed by the bishop.

I have found individuals in these positions easier to speak with, more understanding, and less judgmental. However, laity asked to be part of leadership teams for the purpose he church or school closures often seemed to be there to be the voice of the hierarchy and not representative of the people.

I've been involved as a paid pastoral assistant. Also led RCIA for over 25 years. Involved in liturgy and adult education. But others have kept the parish going in times of extreme struggle. Without lay ministers, the parish I am in would have died. There is no doubt about this at all. These people are dedicated and love the church and want it to keep going - even if no priest. One parish has been a lay led parish for over 20 years. No pastor. Eucharist is blessed once ever month or so for distribution by a priest in another place. It is vibrant and thriving.

My experience with lay ministers was determined by the parish pastor and the bishop. One parish pastor was open and accepting to the value that the laity could contribute. We felt like a community making a difference in serving beyond our Church campus.

Models and mentors, organizers and enablers, empowering others

Religious sisters played a prominent role

I feel I've always been surrounded by lay leadership in the Church... Were these folks recognized? Not always... But I felt the grace of their presence - as did many others.

Our last pastoral assistant was a wonderful woman who reached out to all. When she retired, she was not replaced, presumably due to money. The parish is really 2 parishes--white and Hispanic, each with own Masses. It appears most are satisfied with that, but I find it divisive.

In the past, I was very active in many areas of parish life and it gave me life to do that work and to share with others who also were empowered to use their gifts as God called them to do

Spiritual director, chaplain, counselor/therapist, member of a retreat team, preacher, executive director of a retreat center

Nourishing and enlivening my faith life and my involvement

They were the inspiration for my religious vocation and why, as a retired lay person, I continue to work for Church reform.

As a lay parish administrator I was given authority and faculties to conduct all business and spiritual life of the parish except the sacraments. As we were not on the road system, I could marry and bury with the Bishop's permission. I preached at Eucharistic liturgies in the Absence of a priest. The parish

flourished and grew. The people saw me as their pastor. But from the Bishop's view I was a substitute for the pastor. Although I had the ability and authority, it was only in the absence of a priest. I could do prepare for the sacraments but not participate in the reception of the sacrament in some cases. I heard confessions but had to send the person to the confessional for the sacrament. This made no sense to most people.

I am unable to answer that question. Lay leaders and ministers in my life had no authority and were like the principal in a school who answered to the superintendent

Lay ministers have been attentive to my losses, grieving, our joys and sorrows.

I have worked both as a volunteer and as a paid member of the pastoral team in a parish. I studied at my own expense in the hope I would better serve God and the people of God.

Inspiring

They are my role models, my leadership, my friends. They have brought out my own spiritual gifts, and encouraged deepening of my own spirituality, in ways that clergy have not, and maybe cannot.

Encouraged us to participate more, helped us to become more of a parish family

Deacons in 2 parishes that I have assisted, have roles, that complement the

priest. In some they are able to preach and not in others.

Very big role. My spirituality and love for God and desire to be God's love, came from a lay person on the church staff

We are blessed with two deacons (males) who serve well but have no authority. I would love to see women ordained as deaconesses as well as priests. We have gifts to share.

They have enriched the life of the church and are often the ones who get the work of parish life done.

In my background in health care governance, lay leaders have played a significant role in assuring the on-going Catholic health care ministry.

I have been involved in both types of parishes. Lay participation is definitely my choice. It provides an energized environment which leads to more involvement by parishioners.

Communion services, deacons, leaders of outreach programs (stvd, homelessness issues, immigrant accompanying, listening ministries, arts development, the hands and feet of many other outreach ministries, RCIA, etc.

They (male and female) have played parallel roles with each other; all have been volunteers. Lectors, music ministers, Eucharistic Ministers and Catechists have all inspired me with

their willingness to contribute time and faith sharing.

Taught lay ministry training. Not really any examples of people with the power of the priests. All good people at lower levels.

The lay ministers in my life have been a blessing; educating, inspiring, and encouraging me to be an active member of the Body of God.

I served in the hospital ministry at our parish for many years, which was led by a lay hospital chaplain. The leadership was very good and it was a powerful spiritual experience for me. I've had a similarly positive experience with lay leadership in a Sanctuary committee (social justice work for refugees and poor communities in Central America) at the parish.

Teachers in my Catholic School when growing up.

It's been all over the map, from super-involved to being shut out by the clergy. The lay people who have touched my life have been a blessing, an inspiration.

As a religious and not diocesan congregation I have limited experience here to offer an opinion. From attending different Parishes lay ministers have played very secondary roles and always stipends as salaries,

Taught me that they are needed.

I am, I train, I form lay ministers in liturgy and music since I was 11 years old.

Crucial! As models of what leadership can be: collaborative, servants, giving from a place of deep sense of building up the Body of Christ. This is where women have been for centuries: serving in so many capacities in parishes—often patronized, taken for granted. Loving justice demands recognition of corporate sinfulness in this area, seeking new ways to honor all lay leaders as essential to the Body of Christ. I look forward to a time when we do not use the term lay — the baptized faithful simply serving the needs of the Church, always embracing the alien and stranger, who has the power to transform us, the Church.

The training I received was mostly done by lay leaders very effectively.

I was an early professional lay leader from 1973 onward. Other lay ministers helped to form me. I have benefitted from a lay spiritual director.

Communion ministers, lectors.

Lay leaders in local churches are organizing the parish and other programs with a broader sense of topics/events in this modern world. Many local programs are designed as inter-faith which is essential to build community in the city/state.

If you count religious women as lay ministers and leaders, they have had a

tremendous influence. Working with them has given me a real voice in the Church.

I have admired and benefitted from the role that lay ministers have played in my parish. They are an inspiration to what Church should be.

Lay leaders in Network, Pax Christi, and Future Church have broadened my social justice/lay participation vision and deepened my spirituality.

SCIC have been great role models. Directors of the Lay Ministry Formation we're excellent leaders! Program, after graduating over 125 candidates has been shelved.

Faith development; pastoral care and counseling; spiritual direction; liturgical leaders; social action leaders; sacramental preparation

Lay ministers - not much. Lay leaders have been more important to me.

Teachers, models of generous volunteers in many parish needs, ministries

They play a tremendous role. I have found faith-filled people who are honest, trustworthy, spirit-filled to walk the faith journey with me.

Some of them have been as important as the pastors, priests and women religious, as have fellow members of my faith communities. God speaks and acts through many good people, not simply the ordained.

Lay ministers have encouraged and coached me in being of service at parish. The services expanded my Christian view, territory and thus, my life.

The wisdom from lay people blows me away and I have learned more about my faith from them than from any parish priest.

I can identify with lay leaders and they can identify with our needs to follow the Gospel. Lay leaders bring different experiences that celibate clergy are unable to fully understand.

I have been inspired by the lay leaders in our church and in

The lay participation. I love to interact with them in our various parish groups and activities....and this is only happening to any extent in the last 11 years with our current pastor who is open and welcoming of lay help.

Used their passion, talent, expertise and resources to enrich the parish life experience for all involved.

Lay ministers introduced me to the power of prayer and belief. They led youth retreats and I eventually became a youth minister and member of the diocesan and pastoral councils. Lay lectors/eucharistic ministers have exemplified diversity and community participation.

Some of the most meaningful liturgical experiences I've had were developed and

presented by lay ministers. Marriage Encounter is a great example of the laity offering wisdom that only a married couple can give.

I learned today that nuns were considered lay ministers. Nuns were my greatest influence in my elementary school years.

Lately. A lot.

Role models for ways to serve the various needs of the church community. They educated, encouraged and supported change.

I have appreciated the time and energy spent by lay ministers who make sure that the physical plant of the church is maintained and made inviting. I also appreciate all the work that lay people do to make sure parish programs are carried out--such as Renew, RICA, children's catechism, visiting the sick, etc. Really, the laity--and mostly women are the backbone of the church.

Starting with my parents wonderful role. Early stages not a great deal. Once working in my ministry. I trained people and encouraged them to be involved.

I am a retired lay minister with roles in parishes and hospice. Preaching as part of my parish/Newman Center experience included presiding over the Liturgy of the Word. I experienced returning the gifts the Spirit had created within me. Refusing to allow the institutional church to deny my gifts, I invited an Intentional Eucharistic

Community that celebrates 17 years this Pentecost.

Huge - they have become friends, have demonstrated great leadership (sometimes behavior that we do not want to model) - but a different dimension than just the clergy.

My general impression is negative because they were chosen with no input from parishioners.

Being a member of a laity-led parish has been welcoming and natural. This will change in July 2022 when the parishes become these "families." The parish as we know it will probably be gone by then.

Solid scripture study by a woman educated at CTU, Chicago

Nun using book club to educate women of up-to-date happenings in the Church.

I was a part of a parish that had Native American Lay Ministers and it was such a wonderful experience of Church. As the Lay Ministers grew in their faith, they shared their learning and helped all of us to grow in our faith and commitment to the sacraments. A new pastor arrives and that all changed, and they are not given the support or encouragement they need to continue placing their gifts at the service of the parish life and community. This is so disappointing to see a vibrant parish nourished by the Lay Ministers basically denied their rightful place in the faith community.

Religious educators, pastoral associates, directors of communications, parish councils, finance committees, retreat directors, program facilitators, deacons

Not much.

In Peru they are the life and light of the Church.

Valuable guides.

Modeled living and reflecting the love that is God.

Co-workers with me.

Primarily the spiritual leaders, mentors and supporters.

Lay ministers are completely responsible for my formation. There was a time when the collaboration was formative also and powerful.

Teachers, friends, lay ministry roles, parents.

Inspirational leadership that keeps the spirit of Christ flowing from generation to generation.

The most formative was my folk group leader from my parish. I joined at age 12. Through her, I learned God's love through music. Of course, my parents were the first lay ministers in my life.

By word and example, much more than the clergy.

I haven't had much experience with true lay ministers other than choir directors so I can't say.

Men and women working closely together in ministry has been lifegiving for me.

Ministers and friends.

CCD, RCIA, Confirmation Team, EM, Lector

They have been present in my life since grade school over 65 years ago and great co-workers in my years of ministry.

Wonderful program coordinators, pastoral musicians, RCIA directors, home visitors, and spiritual directors.

Significant, they do 90% of the work.

Mostly colleagues.

Religious Education and Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation....huge role, recently one, 30years ago many.

Alongside our parish priest, I have journeyed with lay ministers and they have been an important part of my spiritual growth.

They are inspiring and more down to earth and real than most of our priests or deacons. They are freer and in touch with their humanity like Jesus was on earth.

I was a DRE myself for about 10 years, and stopped working for the church so I could keep my faith.

Did the retreat, both Cursillo and Excel (based on Cursillo) that saved my life and brought me back to my calling.

In the past I served as lector, Eucharistic minister and liturgical dancer. I was greatly influenced by the lay people who led these ministries.

Leading adult faith offerings such as bible studies, organizing small faith communities, planning liturgy, serving on liturgy committee, ministering to the sick and grieving, serving as catechetical leaders.

They have assumed responsibilities for most of the groups in the parish which makes the parish vibrant and inclusive.

Mostly in organizing and doing social justice outreach.

Lay ministers and leaders have played a major role in my faith formation both past and present.

As catechists, communion ministers, counselors.

Counseling, Leadership in stewardship opportunities, teaching.

I have not had the blessing of being served by lay ministers.

Our parish once had an active and passionate Coordinator of Pastoral

Ministries whose efforts resulted in a vibrant parish. She encouraged me to follow her path.

They have helped me grow in my relationship with Jesus and my fellow parishioners.

Not much experience with lay ministers - Deacons only.

Prior to the past 2 1/2 years, laity have been active in my life of church... Planning liturgies, participating, helping to organize special events. The parish was prepared for this due to having a lay parish minister about 10-15 years ago. Since things have ended I am now seeking out another such church community.

Lay ministers have been role models for me growing up and as I volunteered in ministries in parishes that I have been in.

Teaching mainly, but not allowed so much these days.

Encouraging us to see and feel that we are the Body of Christ, all together, here and now.

They have helped open my eyes to the gifts and talents of lay ministers.

Very significant role from my childhood and throughout my 62 years as a Jesuit. I can't imagine my life without the collaboration of the baptized men and women I've met and worked with.

Not much.

Have been a part of several parish pastoral teams, have served as Director of Faith Formation, founded and led a lay group serving refugees; also had strong experiences of leadership by women in religious community; consultant and Associate Director for a diocesan Office of Religious Education and Catechesis.

Worked happily with lay leaders in a parish.

Associates in our religious congregation enable several of our ministries to continue with their leadership and understanding of the charism.

Have provided input for homilies, have played key roles in hospitality, depends on the parish priest.

They often give a more realistic view of how to live one's faith in the real world. They also have a concrete understanding of the difficulties of surviving in the lay world.

During my time in parish ministry excellent cooperation.

Made me find empowered to do the same.

We had a partnership with our pastors for the past 20 years but now have a pastor that does not support that model.

Very limited.

They have conducted Communion Services in the absence of a priest in their parish. They have also had leadership positions on committees, etc. (I was only the administrator of the parish).

Until I was an adult I never knew any.

Served together in the hospital ministries and encouraged one another.

Most of my profound spiritual experiences have been through lay people, fellow parishioners, seldom the parish priest.

We have many committed lay ministers in our large and active parish. People freely share their particular gifts to enrich all of us.

They have led the adult education sessions in the last two parishes in which I've been a member (the priests did not).

Active "pillars of the Church" laypeople have enriched parish life and contributed to a vibrant participation of parishioners in multiple areas. Both of my parents and my sisters are good examples of role models in the Church.

Words cannot express the spiritual value of the lay ministers and leaders- but Thank God for their leadership and spirituality.

I was blessed to have a lay woman serve as Parish Director for 7 years. Her leadership was focused on Justice and challenged me to look closely at the

gospels for guidance. After she left, the priest we had as pastor was Vatican II and respected the laity for their voice - from that point, we had a Deacon who was a bit less open to the laity but did try to hear our needs. Since he left, we have gotten young, conservative Vatican I Priests who just want the laity to do whatever they decide we need to do. It is disheartening to be in a parish where your purpose is only cleaning the dishes after mass. These priests have decided to bring back old rituals that mean nothing to me as a 69 year old woman. I have had the blessing of finding a virtual parish at which I have found my spiritual home. A true blessing for me and my husband.

Lay ministers/leaders have shown that God is at work in all of us. Also that education and training are as effective in laity as it is in ordained ministers...and they should be heard/used/shared.

They support my faith and mentor me.

A very important, formative role. Teachers, professors, colleagues and coworkers have all had a profound effect on my spiritual growth and maturity.

My parents were the formative examples in lay involvement, too complicated to relate here. I was in the early cohort of laity that was heavily involved in our diocese under the bishop mentioned above.

I was a paid lay leader for 9 years in a parish and diocese, now am a volunteer. I was greatly influenced by the many lay

people who answered the call in youth ministry. It was a great experience in the Phoenix diocese in the 80's when it was a vibrant and Spirit filled community. We moved away.

Many have been role models with their commitment and dedication to envisioning a new model of church.

Not much.

There are several ministries in my parish. I serve as a lector. I have also served as cook at a homeless shelter.

They have brought authentic, human approachability to ministry, much different, in stark contrast, to typical, clerical, ordained men.

They have been examples to me and my family of what the catholic church is supposed to be.

Lay ministers have been the lifeblood of the parish. They are great role models for other members of the faith community. They build up the community with their active roles and participation keeping it vibrant if allowed.

As a convert I have experienced strong impactful lay leaders. As a Catholic my entire adult life this is one of the hardest issues for me. I am called to serve with no place to go within my current reality.

Some involvement on Parish Council -advisory to the pastor. Directors

of Christian Service and Religious Education in the parish.

They taught CCD, and promoted vocations in my little parish in the UP Mich.

As religious sister I have given an opportunity for lay persons to direct my private retreat. I have also experienced a lay person as a spiritual director.

The few I have experienced was inspirational.

Lay ministers (religious sisters, teachers) have often been more prophetic than “the ordained” in my life.

I grew up in a time of transition, such that while the clericalism of the hierarchy is gradually eroding (there are still some clericalism, though), the culture is very much dominant in the laity especially in the elderly (which is culturally and colonially engrained). On the positive side, they taught to love and serve the Church; on the other hand, the dominance and somewhat authoritarian side is still there, that tends to put off the youth and those who wish to serve the Church, and even the marginalized sectors. That has been my experience before.

Religious congregation member- we are vibrant because we have had many opportunities through each other in dialogue and with leadership that is spirit led.

Many talented persons have shared their gifts in parishes where I have ministered. They need encouragement and positive input, be invited, and listened to.

Walked together as team in ministry.

Retreat Centers have often included lay ministry on their Teams and that has been encouraging, and enriching of voice.

When I was growing up, it was mostly vowed religious women and priests who were role models for me. As an adult, I see more lay people active in my church and I see them as examples of how I need to be.

Setting up pastoral, social, educational and spiritual programs in our parish.

They have been wonderful examples of Christian living and added much to parish life and vibrancy.

Unfortunately, very little.

The most important roles in my spiritual growth and development. Usually the priests were too busy or had problems functioning properly.

Not much of anything.

Many and varied, over the years, esp. As teachers, catechists, liturgists, musicians, and chaplains.

Not much, short of CCD teachers.

This is still a somewhat recent experience for me. I'm learning.

When I worked in the parish alongside of lay leaders and a pastor who welcomed the laity's voice, especially the women, it was fruitful.

It has been a great experience.

As a religious, I have been on parish teams that included lay people as paid pastoral team members and have been greatly enriched by lay people leading many of the groups in the parish. We have worked well together.

They have been role models for my active participation with a pastor who empowers laity. I minister in Cary ministries since 1990.

Only recently when a layman replaced me as a director of a retreat center owned by Jesuits. He is doing a fantastic job. His staff is quite good as well...

There have been a few who guides me and shown that there is more than just sitting in a pew. That we as laity have a voice.

A great love for the church and are deeply committed.

Many lay persons took care of pastoral education for children and adults; the parish functioned on many levels because laity took responsibility

For a period of time lay ministers led very wonderful and spiritually nourishing communion services during the sick leave a dying pastor. Until a new Pastor was assigned who did not support lay ministers.

Important.

An excellent DRE encouraged me to be a catechist, and I enjoyed over 10 years teaching faith formation to children from preschool through high school.

In my pre-Vatican world, my very dedicated parents, along with fine parish clergy gave me a strong foundation of dedication and experience in being church. In my early post-Vatican years I saw the role of the laity amplified and valued the good modelling. In the last 20 years so much of this activity has declined because of the return of clericalism.

Two women have immensely influenced me, one was previously a Maryknoll nun and the other lived next door to Dorothy Day.

My parents were the first role models for us 9 children. We were always involved in every activity, went to Mass weekly, stayed to socialize and have fellowship. . . Then as a teenager, an older friend who was in Youth Ministry was a mentor and I got involved in that. In every stage of my life, in different parishes as we married, had children and moved, my church community has always been at the center.

Bible Study Ministry, Eucharistic Minister, Lector.

As a teacher for 25 years and a principal for 22 years in Catholic Schools, the lay teachers were an integral part of the school and were empowered to share their faith journey with the children and the staff. For 20 of my principal years, there was only one other sister on the staff and all the rest were lay teachers.

I have had good experiences in two of my former parishes that encouraged wide participation by all parishioners. This strengthened the sense of belonging and active discipleship.

I have served as a Catechist, Eucharistic Minister, and Lector, and I went into formation with Christ Renews His Parish, and I would not have been inspired to do so without the example of Lay Ministers who showed me the way and accompanied me on the journey.

Lay ministers and leaders have played a vital role in helping me discern my path in pastoral ministry and leadership positions. They have built me up and encouraged me to use my skills and talents in the church. I am thankful for this. Priests I have come across have often told me to stop as they seemed threatened. I was told by one priest when I wanted to become a chaplain, 'Are you trying to take my job?' Personally, I think lay women, like myself should be welcomed into ministry and encouraged to accompany each other, couples and families.

Lay ministers have been the 'people on the ground' for the Church. With the shortage of priests. Lay ministers are the ones who can and often do the ministering that "Father" can't accomplish.

In my childhood and early life, until old age, none. But now things seem to be opening up. I thought it would happen after Vatican II. Some things changed, but a lot didn't!

When I saw others be allowed to be involved in leadership, I was encouraged to participate more fully as a lay minister (volunteer). This engagement in my parish has fed me and allowed me to give my time and talent in the service of the Church.

Inspiring - creative - generous in many roles - pastoral ministers, religious education coordinator, youth ministry, visiting the sick, bereavement.

Inspiration, tangible help, input, support.

Working in a missionary capacity, it was very important to train the laity as ministers and preachers because the ordained priests were few in number.

The most influential people in my faith development have been orders of Sisters, throughout my life from early childhood through high school. Furthermore, lay people, mostly women have ministered to me in my quest to become a lay Franciscan.

They served as examples of caring, faithful members of the Church.

I am in a lay-based, fully Catholic community recognized in our diocese.

Been an inspiration to be/do better.

Responsible for my return to the church by their caring for all who visited on an occasional Sunday.

Encouraged participation in church activities and understanding of family life.

Accepting roles regarding the liturgies i.e., Cantors, choir, lectors, sometimes giving homilies. Lay organizations to provide for full participation in the liturgies.

I have been very connected to women religious as an adult. They have been the ones that nourished my spiritual growth as spiritual directors and as friends. At present my strongest connection to the Church as an Associate member of a religious community.

Challengers and educators and mentors.

Our social justice ministry is organized entirely by lay ministers with the backing of our Archbishop.

Many have been role models, and encouragers.

I have been inspired by the way they have worked collaboratively, not little

autocrats. They have more empathy and understanding of the realities of life.

I have worked as a parish youth minister, a college campus minister, a religion teacher in Catholic elementary/middle school and now teach religion at a Catholic HS. As a kid growing up in the parish, CCD teachers and parish DRE's were my most direct experience of lay ministers. They were always a bit of an anomaly to me as a kid as I saw the priest as the embodiment of what Church was. I worked with one very empowered and empowering lay minister at Fairfield University -- Carolyn Rusiackes -- who was an Associate University Chaplain in charge of ems and Lectors. The kids were well trained and empowered to preach and lead their own communion services. They were being trained to go out and have real presence and voice in the parishes, but the problem often was that the parishes didn't know what to do with them or there was no real role like this in the parish -- College Campus Ministry at a Catholic School can be like a bubble of sorts, and then the parish winds up really falling short in terms of meeting the needs of young people. I tried once to be on a young adult group committee at a very wealthy parish on the Upper East Side of NYC and I had a mixed experience; people were super smart and with high powered jobs and were somewhat empowered in the ministry but it was still somewhat priest-centric in the way it ran and how people related to the priest in charge of guiding the group.

They have been witnesses who inspired me to service in the Church.

In some parishes they have organized response to Laudato Si, have formed groups to tend to the sick and grieving, have offered leadership in forming discussion groups on issues.

Every baptized person in my life has challenged me to face reality.

Working now with lay leaders in our parish...but there's still the top down model in operation, not the collaborative one.

I grew up in a rural parish in VT where the lay people (even back in the '50s) took care of the practical work (parish social life, religious education, music, fund-raisers, care of the sick)

They have been very qualified professionally but have not been recognized as possible competent ministers within the church.

I have been fortunate to be very involved in my parishes over the years. I became a lector and Eucharistic minister in 1978 when the call to use my gifts came out long after Vatican II was over.

Lay ministers and lay leaders have played little role in any parish I have belonged to.

Basic--lectoring, eucharistic minister distributing the eucharist to parishioners and to the sick. RCIA chairperson, musicians.

I have witnessed and been able as a lay leader to share in collaborative ministry. Truly vital for the future of the church.

Positive- I smile remembering- their inviting manor - their talents - organizing - musically - wow the energy!

Both men and women have been pastoral associates and responsible for collaboration with others in the life of the parish.

Youth group leaders were critical. My parents both volunteered in the parish. When they were involved, we were involved. It made a difference.

Very positive in my young adult life when I was an associate director of religious education at my childhood parish. The women lay leaders were so supportive and active. Many were charismatic, committed Catholics.

They are collaborators, dreamers, visionaries, support and they keep me grounded. I hope we do that mutually. Catholic Women Preach, Future Church, New Ways Ministry, religious orders, give me HOPE!

A big role. I have had teachers at all levels of my education influence me. I benefit from organizations such as Future Church to inspire and encourage and support my own lay leadership (as a religious).

Not a lot. Right now, I am the spiritual advisor for our parish Council of

Catholic Women. The women mostly initiate fundraising events for the poor in our area but otherwise are depended upon to provide the food for parish social events.

They have been an inspiration for me in my spiritual growth. They are like me and do not hold themselves apart. They are not on pedestals. They are what I wish the priesthood could be, a pastoral, servant giving to all people.

Encouraged me to become an Associate of the Sisters of Charity and become a member of CANWE (Catholic Women for Equality).

They have been effective evangelizers, i.e., Witnesses of following the gospel message of Jesus.

My whole life from workshops to college teaching issuing degrees in theology and ministry.

Mostly married women have been very inspirational - giving reflections at services, running parish outreach, teaching religious ed.

Inspired me to become more involved in the Church and my community.

We have had good experiences working with lay people.

I have been lucky to have seen strong lay leaders, starting in HS (a mix of nuns and lay teachers collaborating in leadership, and encouraging students to take appropriate leadership roles

as well). In a variety of other settings - Newman Center, Catholic summer camp, youth ministry programs - there was generally clerical leadership, but also very strong lay leadership. It made me believe that this is possible!

Not much, the clergy took over.

Not much.

Significant. When I was at St. Therese in Seattle - the other Lay Presiders, the choir, the members of the Parish Council, the leaders of the homeless ministry - were instrumental in my Catholic life. I can say I probably would not be Catholic were it not for them. I also know many lay leaders who today are an example of faithfulness, perseverance and devotion. Ironically - Catholic lay leaders who remain faithful can be said to be the most devoted members of the Church - for despite all the setbacks and obstacles and barriers - they remain engaged.

They have been great role models, have strengthened my faith and encouraged me to grow in my relationship with God.

I spent 22 years in a vibrant parish with a large congregation experiencing community by attendance groups at specific Masses. It let me know what church could be. Everyone I brought to experience the church liturgy felt welcome.

All of the lay ministers who were leaders of the lectors, ems, ushers, ems to the

elderly and ill, etc. Were men. They just reinforced the patriarchy.

I served on the Diocesan Liturgical Commission for 12 years. Came into contact with terrific lay and ordained that collaborated well together. Help disseminate best liturgical practices and modeled them.

Have been involved in liturgy committee with very knowledgeable lay leaders and it has been a positive influence. Helped me to live my faith with more commitment.

None except deacons who help out at Sunday masses.

Vowed religious through my catholic education process have had a profound influence on the formation of my faith in teaching that living the gospel as a way of life.

Catholic sisters provide my first 10 years of education. Catholic Youth Organization volunteers provided wholesome activities for several years of elementary school. Cloistered nuns inspire me with their focus and dedication. Some of the lay men were very good at putting together large scale events like parish picnics or festivals. The deacon at my present parish did a great job saving energy throughout our buildings.

My mother and my grandmother passed me that faith. I was also inspired by the example of lay people at the catholic school where I studied, also I had a family member that is a catechist who

inspired me to serve at the church and discern a vocation to religious life.

In spite of difficulties the lay people here in this parish are very actively keeping the parish alive.

Those with whom I have had experience have often been more dedicated and effective than the clergy.

I was a lay leader in ministry from the age of 24. My mentors were progressive priests and the nuns who pioneered pastoral ministry.

I have invited and trained parish ministers.

As a child the parish priest was influential. As a student, it was the nuns, and so women. As a student, chaplaincy included seminarians as teachers often at study weekends. As a mdiv student, teachers were both priest and lay. These days, I don't know any priests to 'chat' with, to meet socially.

Faith Formation leaders and catechists.

Led religious ed programs and RCIA teams. Trained lectors and Eucharistic ministers.

Deacons. One was an excellent homilist. Also hospital ministers.

I had a brief experience of this in the parish referred to above. Very good.

Most have been in the roles of Communion ministers, readers, visitors

to home bound and administering the sacrament to them, serving on various parish committees.

Parish assistance in attending to the informed.

They have encouraged me, supported me and sometimes challenged me.

I am a lay leader and besides in the church I have lead or been in leadership roles in every organization I have been involved in. To support this gift, I have searched out through retreats, extensive reading and study and then discuss with respected person in the area I need to grow in. One can only lead if worthy people decide to follow. Leaders are effective when they lead with others and bring all together through discernment and consensus.

I spent 20 years serving as a lay missionary in the Institute for World Evangelization - ICPE Mission. For 10 of those years I served in a leadership role with other lay leaders. Those years made me who I am today. After leaving the full-time mission I studied and received formation from the Archdiocese of Wellington to become a lay pastoral leader. The program was led by other lay leaders. Again, a huge influence in my spiritual life and my service in the Church.

A woman with advanced degrees in theology currently is a member of our home-based faith community, served as a hospice chaplain and at one time worked for the diocese.

When I visit St. Joseph's Parish in Buffalo, NY I see a woman religious who runs many of their social justice programs. She's terrific & gives me hope. I wish we had Pastoral Associates like her in NYC. My parish has a volunteer led homeless shelter on Sunday nights - it's inspiring to see the love & care.

Catechism person. Leader of choir. Lectors, Ministers to the Sick, Acolytes, all are active.

They have helped form my spiritual life and educated me.

I need to know that they agree with me. That's why I took neutral part of my Ministry. I take care of Adult Faith Formation/RCIA Ministry

No one even knows the best shoppers, never mind help picking. Parishioners don't even know what the bishop does. Oh I forgot he does confirmations.

I have had lay spirit. Directors who were very good and directed me well.

Lay women ministered with me in our retreat ministry and many have a become excellent spiritual directors helping other people to deepen their relationship with God and others. I have had Lay women in my own life as a woman religious and found them very good listeners and leaders in prayer and reflection in our retreat houses. I even had lay women for my own spiritual direction and found them very prayerful

and wise in my own faith journey. I am most grateful to them. I worked with a lay woman for several “At Home Retreats” in New Mexico only after we attended classes on “At Home Retreats” I with the founders of this program.

Besides deacons, just the usual - ladies helping with CCD classes, fundraising, planning parish social events, etc.

They have encouraged and sustained my formation.

They have been very effective spiritual directors.

I have been involved in many aspects of lay ministry for 45 years, as a volunteer and as a professional. The lay ministers I have known (for the most part) have been good and faithful disciples, have contributed to the mission of the church, have mentored me and embraced the gifts God gave me, and partnered with me serving God’s people.

Lay ministers, both volunteer and professionals paid for their expertise, have inspired me by their ministry and examples of Christ-like service. A Catholic parish depends, in large part, on the time, service, and sacrifices of its lay ministers and leaders.

Lay ministers and leaders have had training or expertise in certain areas and have contributed their talents by giving presentations or leading programs, especially in social justice areas.

Deacons preaching and helping with my father’s funeral. The rent-a-priest would not allow him to participate in my Dad’s funeral mass even though they knew each other for decades.

Lay ministers are my main experience of church.

Nothing substantial as I haven’t had experience with them.

I have, before retirement, been a lay minister. While I was energized by my ministry, the total power in the hands of priests was a challenge to negotiate.

Lay ministers inspire me with their leadership, commitment, compassion in my parish where they use their gifts in teaching, healing, preaching(deacons), advocating for social change when needed, ministering to the vulnerable, etc.

Essential in running the parish.

Spiritual director, leaders of classes, Bible studies, RCIA trainers, marriage and family classes, staff employees.

In 1989 -1990 I participated in the Lay Ministry Leadership program in the diocese. It was discontinued soon after. St Patrick’s did have educated lay ministers involved in the parish until 2010. The two people hired for the positions vacated seem to have little or no background in religious education. The Coordinator of Religious Education has a B.A. in Secondary Education and a B.A in in English. Pastoral Associate in

2013 has a BLA and MLA in Landscape Architecture.

Lay ministers have been a source of great inspiration when properly trained.

Not much.

As officers in Parish organization, Education, SVDP, Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors.

I have been a lay minister for many years now and have had my spiritual life enhanced by the number of lay ministers in my parish. We are empowered in our community. We work in tandem with our pastor and all decisions are made jointly. If it weren't for my parish, I am not sure that I would still be worshipping in a catholic community.

Protagonists for the Gospel in ordinary family life in society.

They have added much life and vibrancy. I have served as Eucharistic Minister at Mass and to the home bound. I served as a lector and choir member and member of Parish Pastoral Council. I have participated in RCIA discussions and served as a sponsor. All of these ministries enriched my life and gave me a sense of using my gifts for others. Likewise, I appreciate others who are sharing their gifts.

I have been both a lector and a eucharistic minister, taking Communion to the parish ill and elderly. My fellow ministers were a special group of people. We supported each other.

Religious women are lay ministers. I have been a parish minister and worked with wonderful lay people who were serving on the team.

I have been a lay leader for many years.

I have had the opportunity to work with other lay leaders in collaborative ministries. It is a challenging and responsible position that calls for listening, prayer and support for one another. I have been blessed by the example of care and compassion found in lay leaders. These experiences have informed my own desire to be pastoral and Christlike in my ministry to others.

I have trained lay ministers in a pair of setting. It is heartening to see how that helps their spiritual life.

Our last lay minister was absolutely fantastic. He obviously had fully embraced Vatican II. My husband and I have had some wonderful priests in our lives that have really enriched our faith.

Lap dogs for clergy.

Our former RICA Director, (now a Spiritual Director), is a dear friend of our family. Her faith and friendship has been a huge source of joy to us.

I am an educated lay minister trained in lay ministry. A consulted say should be had.

They have taught me that the ministering role of a lay person goes

beyond the Church structures. It is the civil society where lay persons evangelize best. Formation of the clergy.

Education, Leadership models and church community experience.

Made me realize there's a place for me to join in deeper parish life.

Very Powerful. Thinking of Lucien Roy. Vice-president of Mission and Ministry Loyola University. Chicago who just. Recently died. His influence there and as leader in the lay Ministry Association has influenced, produced. And supported many lay leaders not only in. The USA. But. Around the world. So Many Lay ministers, Pastoral care, Theologians women and men have influenced. Mentored. And supported me in my Lay ministry, Rosemary Radford Ruther, and Thea Bowman including liturgical artist such as Carla Desola, Betsy Beckman and Miriam Healy among SO many. The Institute in Pastoral Ministry at Loyola, Future Church. And network have produced. And mentored many lay leaders and have influenced me personally. And deeply. I also have to say The Jesuits have made it one of their priorities to collaborate with and promote Lay Leadership in the church for many years. I have myself been encouraged and supported positively in collaboration with many of them for over 30 years

Lay people have always just had an advisory role or called on to volunteer for work projects and fundraising.

They share the wisdom God has given them. They are more sincere in the following of the humble Christ. And do not dominate over others.

They have shown great dedication to ministering to Hispanic youth and adults very often without pay. As a former parish and diocesan minister I have had the privilege of training lay parish and diocesan leaders.

None.

Catechists have played the most direct role in my life and the lives of my children. Liturgical ministers have played the pivotal role for the community- they show that we have a vital role and are "worthy" to serve.

They have guided and enriched my faith.

In the early 1980s, lay people began to take on parish leadership and ministries and along with some wonderful clergy, the lay ministers brought me into their world of parish ministry.

Lay ministers and leaders are the reason for my spiritual development outside of my close friends who were guided by those ministers.

Sisters were most influential and encouraging. Inspired me to become a small group leader in my home with Scripture study and faith sharing. Instituted adult education programs through films and guest speakers. That was years ago with the encouragement of former pastors.

They have shaped my spiritual being and have encouraged me to seek new ways of being. We can learn to be church, minister to others and serve one another outside of the walls of the institutional Church. We are called to be disciples of Christ, let us go forth as the people of God proclaiming the Good News to those who have ears to listen.

Parishes with parish life directors and pastoral associates give “life” and vitality to the parish. One parish the Archdiocese replaced a long time parish life director and it was like letting air out of a balloon at the parish.

Not a big one.

They have been mentors and co-creators in the lay ministries in which I was involved.

In our parish, lay ministers and leaders are totally involved in the work of the parish including leadership with the Pastor and involvement of lay ministers in all levels of ministries in our parish.

Strengthened my faith.

I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to have been educated by Ursuline sisters throughout my life and the charisms of contemplation, collaboration and justice have influenced my life and call as a committed single woman in my work in education and hospital ministry. Since Vatican II, the Holy Spirit and visionary lay, religious ministers and leaders have responded

to roles in parishes and communities in voice and service with their grace-filled gifts for the larger whole and world.

I can think of two women in particular, both with advanced theological degrees. One served as head of our religious education program. My son adored her. She was active in promoting a women’s reading group in our parish that read books by female scholars (Ilia Delio & others) that met regularly, even after she moved out of state. The other woman got me involved with Future Church, and Call to Action, and really focused me on social justice issues. Lastly, a male who served as a hospital chaplain and RCA teacher in our diocese was a solid leader when we had a Bishop listening session on sexual abuse. Additionally, he was a wonderful listener and encourager of me as I often shared with him my concerns about our church.

I am an ordained Deacon.

Witnessing to the gospel and social response.

They have kindled in me the desire to become more involved in my parish in whatever way I may be qualified to participate.

They have been great team members for me and have enriched my life and life of the parish.

I belong to the Catholic women’s league. The priest who happened to be in the parish where I live was very helpful

in guiding me when choosing church music etc.

Support and consolation.

Lay ministers and leaders are the lifeblood of parishes and outreach ministries.

We have a lay person who keeps up the communication about sick members or about needs in the parish.

My mother was very active in working in Church activities both social and spiritual. Often she was the only one to volunteer to visit the poor and sick in our parish.

Collaborated on parish projects, ministerial services, etc.

Initiated programs that were meeting the needs of the people or the goals of the diocese.

They, with the exception of one Vatican II priest, have shaped and supported my faith and search for faith.

Ones have been dedicated, prayerful, talented in parishes where the pastor enables them to do so by collaborative leadership.

Offers me a path to live the message of Jesus each day.

At least half of my spiritual mentors and teachers have been women and married men who were priests at one point.

Lay people are doing difficult work for usually less-than-living wage pay.

They have helped to develop my theology of ministry and a 5 year plan in ministry.

They have really been at the core of who I've become in terms of shaping dialogue and translating faith into mission in my life.

Enriched my faith life, helped with serious challenges in my life, gave me confidence to grow in ministries

The laity do most of the work to keep the parish running and vibrant.

Just the typical: Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, DRE, Music Ministers. Never had the pleasure of belonging to a community or visiting a church community where lay persons were truly involved in the running of the church and/or given preaching privileges at Mass.

They have been important role models for me in their passion for and efforts to animate parish life.

Helped with the various ministries: lectors, teachers, eucharistic ministers, religious education and parish councils and other parish groups.

Good priests and my community and my academic community have empowered me in ways I never thought possible since I came back to my faith!

Witness the possibilities. Made me proud. We are all called to witness Gospel.

Lead me into participating in the liturgy and in small groups.

Since Vatican II...Spiritual guides, teachers.

They have enriched my life and expanded the church into a family of loving and caring.

They have given me answers to the Catholic church that have kept me in the Church. They are real.

Supportive and educational

Couldn't do my pastoral ministries without them. Retired now, but concerned how things grow.

I served as a Pastoral Associate/Director at a Jesuit Parish for twenty years. I continue to serve as a lay minister though non-paid in my community. I would not be where I am today without the wisdom, grace, encouragement and affirmation of my lay sisters, brothers, ordained catholic men, and ordained women and men from other faith traditions.

Teachers of catechism, volunteers in parishes, Eucharistic ministers.

I attended a parish with a priest, lay minister, and religious sister in charge. I think it worked well.

My RCIA leaders revived my life.

I have been a Eucharistic Minister but I am not currently involved in this. I was on the Parish Council for four years but found it was frustrating because the pastor really had no interest in our opinions.

A big roll. I was asked to start a bilingual mass on Saturday's. It functioned for 10 years Under the supervision of lay pastoral coordinator. When the leadership changed there was minimal lay participation.

They perform many roles, educational leadership, support for the ill, ministry to the dying, participation in liturgy, reading and preaching at Mass, creating spiritual celebrations and services, outreach to the community, involvement in Social Justice.

Thank God we once had female pastoral associates. They were great role models for a woman in the church. Also all our Social Justice ministers, men and women, led me to my current role in my parish in social justice.

Deepened my faith by witness to both knowledge and stands they took for catholic values both in health areas, service,

They inspire my faith. They are examples of living the gospel. Lay people shine the light of Christ. I do not find any of this in the priest/pastor of the parish

Extraordinarily meaningful; so much of my adult formation is the result of working with significant members of the laity -- parish and diocesan staff (which I was both in the 90's and 2000's) and extraordinary members of my parish communities. I have been a member of many small groups over the years -- all members of the laity -- from RENEW groups in the 70's and 80's to just faith groups in the 2000's and continuing even to today. These have been my primary teachers of the faith -- probably to a greater degree than any clergy, although I hold some clergy in high esteem as well.

Inspiring, enriching and supportive.

They have guided the parishes of which I am a member and been role models. Often they are the driving forces in the parishes. The priests come and go.

We've had lay teachers and principals and administrators of our Catholic schools for many years now and most are highly educated, responsible, ethical, caring people who are a delight to work with.

They brought happiness and a true spirit to the word of our Lord through music and dedication beyond what I had ever experienced!!!

When I was growing up, I had religious ed classes with lay teachers at my parish.

Deacons and Pastoral Associates have been much more relational than priests,

especially in the bigger parishes I have participated.

Liturgy and music have been powerful for me, keeping me in the church.

Basically, they run parishes but get no credit.

Support of my own spiritual growth and volunteer work in our community.

Lay people are the major force behind the lay-based community I belong to. Lay people do all the major ministries. We have a pastoral team, liturgy committee, finance team, coordinating board, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program for young children, a teen program, a bereavement team, Women's and Men's groups, music groups, and many other groups. Almost everyone does one or more things. Right now I am one of 8 lay pastors on the pastoral team, and am part of a Wellness team.

I have had outstanding mentors, I have served with outstanding colleagues, I have modeled the role to others.

They have been the most reliable and constant presence in most of the parishes I have ever been part of!

Most of my religious education and continued growth is supported by lay ministers directly through scripture study and indirectly through living example.

In my life, lay ministers and leaders who emulated a deep faith because of their

personal relationship with Jesus modeled perseverance and courage, even in times of dysfunction in a parish and most often in the face of clericalism. They were the Christ in the storm who kept the light burning on my faith journey.

Honestly, not much at all. ALL the power remains with the priests. I have never seen a really effective use of lay ministers within the Catholic Church.

Not very much. Fulfilling the lay ministries has become part of the busyness of having many ministries, beyond anything of sacramental import. We are all in a rotation of assignments from weekend to weekend and holidays and seasonal liturgical celebrations. The Pastoral Council stand in leadership role, but meetings are not open gatherings and, in general, parishioners do not make inquiries or ask for accountability.

They have played a very active role in my parish life. From a very young age I was actively involved in parish life through the mentoring of parish ministers. I began volunteering as a lector while I was still in grade (elementary) school and that continued up until the start of the pandemic. I have witnessed the reality that parish will not thrive without the hard work of the laity. It is just not possible.

A very significant role! When our beloved lay led Ecumenical Anglican Roman Catholic community on a small Island which had a membership of 144 was dissolved by the Institutional Church and became a Mission church of

a parish that was a ferry ride away it was impossible to attend the parish church! At the present time a priest comes to the Island once a month with 10 to 12 people attending mass.

They often create beautiful liturgies, warm and friendly events, teaching avenues, building strong relationships.

Pastoral associates, gave homilies at Mass, organized workers right's rallies, work for social justice issues - immigration, housing.

When allowed, they are, to me, equal to priests in their shepherding.

We inspire each other.

Brought Eucharist.

I have not had the experience of working with lay ministers but I have read a great deal of "Good News" written by them.

I am one. And I have been mentored, inspired, and encouraged by others. I have found people to relate to, and people to journey in faith with. People with many gifts to share.

They have stretched my faith in a positive way. Enabled me to grow in a deeper understanding of God in my life.

Very little, only in committees and women's organizations within the parish.

Those who have had the richest understanding and teaching on Spirituality, the Scriptures and Theology

in my life have been Lay people, not priests.

The best Spiritual Directors I've experienced also are Lay people.

Other than specific parish roles, nothing personal.

They have been the backbone of my faith journey by their witness and commitment.

Lay ministers have been instrumental in my spiritual growth. Priests only have so much time, thus should be more encouraging of developing lay leaders.

Distribution of holy communion, visit the sick, parish council involvement, planning special Eucharistic celebrations

EVERY small faith group I belong to consists of Laity as ministers and leaders because EACH of the members is recognized as part of the body of Christ.

I had at one time a Religious Sister on our Retreat Staff who did phenomenal work for us, especially with AA and ALANON persons

For 50 years, I have been exposed to wonderful lay ministers and leaders. Some of them have been so encouraging in showing me the way to share my gifts. I am thankful for all that I have learned from their ministry.

Q2. What are the most important issues the Church should address when it comes to lay ministry, lay leadership, and lay involvement in the church?

Invitation to young adults, opportunities for leadership development, engagement in justice issues.

Including lay people in decision making, and in ministerial roles within a parish setting.

Women are not to be feared but embraced in church life.

Subsidiarity, empowering the right kind of lay leadership

Where to start. involve the laity in preaching, deciding parish direction.

DEI issues need to be front and center and not be afraid to address them on Sunday's. Also woman leadership outside of CCD and youth programs.

Train clerics to not just accept lay ministry/ leadership, etc. But to encourage it.

End of clericalism and embracing the actual church teaching that all baptized are equal. People who are qualified should, without regard to being male or female, straight or gay, priest or lay, able to make decisions about their church without interference from the hierarchy.

Hierarchy giving freedom to lay voices and leadership, more recognition of lay leadership, women deacons

Equality.

I think we need to work towards true team ministry where each member of the team, lay or ordained works together for the good of God's people.

Open to all who qualify with experience or a gift or education.

The laity is the Church - not just the clerics. The laity should not just be involved but assisting in the running of programs and ministries.

We need to start with the importance and meaning of Baptism and the presence of the spirit in each member. It is the Spirit that provides all the gifts that each parish needs.

Lay leadership and inclusion of lay leadership or non-priest to take on more responsibility and bring about a growth and increase in faith from the Holy Spirit.

I think that the clericalism blocks the access of the laity to preaching, sacramental function and leadership.

There is an arrogance in the ordained clergy that renders them deaf.

Providing training opportunities and valuing their input.

I believe the Church should deal with the reality that both celibacy and the male priesthood has become idols; and closes off Holy Sophia from actually ACTING within the church community.

Women in leadership.

Open up conversations for what this might look like. Embrace the synodal process...become a “listening church”. Engage and encourage the laity to learn about the true meaning of our baptismal call...to serve. Get back to Gospel living - healing the broken world through compassion, collaboration and love.

No exclusions, i.e.. Women, gays, etc.

The church must understand, as in Jesus’ eyes, ALL are equal.

Lay people doesn’t mean we lay down and do what we are told.

Allow them to use their gifts to participate more fully.

Training the priests how to collaborate with lay persons.

Interdependency.

Education - in theology - the church is miles behind the latest thinking - the liturgy needs total revision; education / formation of leaders - skills training.

Involving women in all aspects of the church. Address the needs of youth. Find ways to invite people of all races and color.

Sharing authority.

The full role of Women and for the future of Women Deacons and Priests

Must require that priests/bishops welcome and support it. Must require education to help prepare people to fill these roles.

Collaborative authority with clergy and preaching.

Recognizing the equality of women (all genders) in all ministries (ordained or not).

Ordain qualified women!

Open-heartedness to the gifts and wisdom present in the laity that justifies their sharing in equal voice, authority and decision making.

A recognition that ordination to the priesthood does not instantly confer on the ordained person specific talents in leadership, sanctity, humility, etc. Lay people can and do poses the talents to be excellent leaders in our Church.

Inclusion at all levels, Jesus is a feminist and I believe in the feminine divine that is pushed down and not allowed in the open.

Perhaps to go back to the documents of Vatican II that laid out the role of the laity in the church - and allow that vision to take root again - and grow.

Recognition of Baptism call. Providing training properly form lay leadership- which should be inclusive

Equality with the clergy on all levels.

Need for educated laity ... use IT resources to make it happen ... need informed laity

Everyone should have a voice, whether that means town meetings, open PPC meetings, whatever.

Full participation. Vote counted. Responsibility. Equitable. Heard.

The above questions address most of the issues. Also need to define the path where committed laity can move on to the priesthood, regardless of gender, in a way that differs from the traditional seminary approach.

See the value and benefit for all. Not be so fearful about giving up power and control. Be more humble in recognizing the gifts of all.

Should work as co authorities with the priest.

Inclusivity, mutual collaboration, acceptance of women in roles of authority, involvement of former priests in parish ministry.

Shift Power from pastors/priests to lay people for all administration and financing of parish life. Allow trained spiritual directors and theologians to do much of the spiritual work for and with parishioners. Leave priests to do Sacramental presiding. And give women their rightful place as priests and Deacons to bring vibrancy and life back to our tired male dominated parish leadership!

Making it an open and transparent process. Each needs to respect and encourage one another.

Empowering all to recognize and share their gifts. The reality is that many ordained male pastors have set policy unilaterally and limited dialogue in many parishes. There is a huge gap in openness and education on the part of the existing priests in many parishes. "We've always done it this way" thinking no longer serves.

Calling forth younger members to assume responsibility. We are "aging out."

Respect the knowledge and spirituality of those who are not part of the Vatican pyramid. Allow them to use their wisdom and words to help direct the Church, which is in big trouble in the US. Look at the age of the average congregation. Our youth is not putting up with the clericalism. Pope Francis gives me hope.

The best person for the role should be chosen no matter of gender. It's the

gifts of individuals that should matter not their gender. All genders should be acceptable.

Making it an official ministry in the church, initially recruiting qualified persons for ongoing training.

How to create a discipleship of equals.
How to use a consensus model in decision-making.

The Church should consider the education of the people now. They should also look at where the church sits and see it is the clerical level that is destroying it.

There are many gifted, compassionate, educated people who can enhance the mission and vision of discipleship.

The need to have a say in policies and decisions that concern us and the opportunity to share our gifts, vision, and hopes

The Holy Spirit gives gifts for the community. The ordained priest does not have all the gifts. No one pastor can be good with the sick, the dying, youth, the elderly. Nor can he be a great liturgist, financial officer, musician, etc. Yet all those gifts are needed and PRESENT. Why have a pastor who can not preach well suffer himself and make others suffer, when in the congregation there are those gifted to preach? We need to learn to discern the gifts already present, call the gifted forth, bless them and send them forth.

How to be inclusive of lay ministers/ ministries - recognize the great gift our laity can be to the life and integrity of the Church.

Ability to be inclusive and share authority.

Revamp seminaries. Graduates of last 10-20 years are pre-Vatican II inclined.

Make sure the hierarchy listen. Our priest disregards his parishioners totally. I often wonder if he even realizes we pay his salary and thus he should serve us. In any other job he would have been fired long ago!!!

Clericalism that leads to presumption and dismissal of all the other things listed.

Ongoing spiritual formation, training in effective communication skills and collaborative decision making, diversity among lay leaders [trans, LGBTQ, divorced, etc.], identifying the gifts needed to nurture a vibrant community and then calling forth those who possess these gifts for service.

They need to be addressed as equals sharing the call of holiness by baptism, not hierarchical pre Vatican 2 status.

Educate, empower, encourage the kids and laity that this is a vocational CALL from God!

Clericalism will continue to hold up, squash down the call of the laity. It needs to be abolished!

The Church is the people.

Lay ministers must be given full authority to exercise their gifts regardless of the presences or lack of a priest- to hold their offices in full participation.

Required coursework In the formation of priests lay ministry and lay leadership I believe that seminaries (should be reformed as well) are the root of some of these issues - clericalism, women in leadership roles and ministries, lack of pastoral bishops and clerics.

Training in leadership roles and the role of collaboration and teamwork with the pastor. Understanding of Vatican II.

We as lay people need to feel we are more than “sinners” in need of frequent Confession. We are Children of God, God’s Beloved, trying our best to love God and one another.

Trust in Spirit. Greater collaboration.

Be not afraid! The Spirit is working in lay people.

Have more involvement in spiritual groups sharing their gifts with each other in preaching, sharing Eucharist without a priest present, planning spiritual events

Not just their involvement, but how to help the laity WANT to participate in parish life.

Education on how to make the church inviting to all, to be happily to say to anyone. I love and prosper spiritual at my church.

Not having a collar should stop people from roles in the Church.

Getting the priests and members of the hierarchy on board!

Sharing responsibility. Seeing each other as Spirit led. Accepting God’s call for each of us.

Education and training are necessary as well as evaluating the work of the clergy and lay leadership.

Education and preparation.

The Church should be celebrating the gifts of the laity, not tamping it down or worse smothering the gifts of the laity.

Create a deaconate that welcomes women, recognize women’s accomplishments in the Church-- past and present, pay for the spiritual education of women, recognize singlehood as a vocation, not a path to and from marriage, work in justice issues, ordain women.

Calling forth lay leadership where they see qualities that pertain. Be willing to educate and form lay people as leaders. Enable laity to be in active ministry in parishes.

WOMEN and men should be lay ministers, allowed to lead and be on

equal basis with the priests, listed with them in the bulletin. The pastor should not be the only one with (dictatorial) power. If lay people's voices are paid attention to, maybe more people, especially men, will stay in the Church. Parish Councils should be authoritative, not just for rubber stamping what the pastor wants.

**Train clergy to work with lay personnel.
Train laity in collaborative governance.**

The moral issues of duality, suppression of women, clericalism vs synodality. Does the head say it doesn't need the eyes, ears, mouths, hands, feet, mind, and beating heart.

I think the issues all revolve around allowing greater participation of trained and qualified lay leaders in parish leadership and participation at the diocesan and higher levels.

First of all, accept all human beings as equal, whether a person of color, a person who identifies as LGBTQ+, a woman, physically disabled - whatever.

First of all, the Church needs to confront the scandal of clericalism. Second, the Church needs to support lay people's education in theology, scripture, ministry, etc.

Parity in positions and services. Not left to local bishops to determine. In my reading many dioceses are becoming ultra-conservative.

Be open and listen to the people.

Respect and honor for the movement of the Holy Spirit in all lives whether ordained or lay.

The recognition of the equality of women as human beings — not problems, an issue, but living, irreplaceable members of the Body of Christ.

The role of the laity needs to be very evident and acknowledged within various communities of faith.

Formation, encouragement, and support, especially financial. Put clergy and lay leaders on equal footing in terms of salary, benefits, and formation.

That we are all part of the priesthood of Jesus.

We must open the diaconate/priesthood to women. We must open preaching opportunities at mass/religious services to women. We must welcome the NONES and LGBTQ to dialog opportunities and listen to their life experiences. They have 'faith' and 'spirituality' that we just don't know about and need to understand

They must be universal. A bishop or pastor should not be able to come along and reverse everything. What worries me the most is that this could happen with the next Pope.

More, more, more. The Church should seek out and invest in, especially young people, who are getting advanced

degrees to make us a rich and vibrant community. One of the most important issues is seminary training, because these young priests are very conservative and they need to be taught that they are a part of the church, and not the head of it.

Clericalism needs to be addressed. Seminaries could teach Vatican II documents and synodality. Also, present priests and bishops need workshops, etc. On synodality, especially in encouraging lay participation in parishes and dioceses.

Pastoral ministry, outreach to the marginalized. Inclusiveness...team ministry...retreats...training of laity.

Identify, train, and empower lay leaders for the sacramental life, well-being and outreach of the church.

Every position except spiritual should be a lay position.

Training and formation plus ongoing education for clergy to understand the roll of laity in the essential life of a Parishas gifted by the Spirit!

Call clergy to roll of Bishop who heartily embrace the laity as coleaders!

The training must be thorough, training in communication and crucial Conversation techniques, be trained in the ministry they will lead. Must use training of highest quality and not look to save money on less effective training.

We all need to be active participants in our Church, starting in our parishes and our faith communities. We have many well educated, spiritually trained and gifted folk.

Criteria for selection of lay leaders, interaction with others currently in role and also with past members. Clearly defined mission and qualifications needed. Active member of parish. Rotation of leadership every 5,7, ? Years

So much of the lay leadership is women. Women need to be elevated in the minds of the ordained as equals, but the Church is even further behind in this thinking than the rest of society.

Revamp seminarian training so that priests have collaborative skills to work with pastoral teams. Furthermore, provide ongoing priestly and laity formation each year.

Provide training.

The Church should encourage lay participation and ministry. And leadership in the church in order for us to truly be the Body of Christ in a visible way. We need each other.

Priests should not be the sole leader and decision maker for the parish. He needs to consult with the laity before making major decisions.

Be aware of the different kind of prejudices that are at work in all these areas: laity in general, for women,

minorities, those with disabilities. Who will really be heard???

Every diocese should be required to promote lay leadership. A collection of the various types of leadership should be created to help expand and inform diocese(s) about all the possibilities. I don't think pastors and bishops appreciate the many ways the laity can be involved.

Restrictions on who can do what has cost the Church (& many other aspects of society) access to the greatest resource God has provided.

1)Temperament for, and interest in, this type of leadership. 2)Training

The community should always have some voice in the life of the community, worship, justice outreach etc.

Elevation and recognition of the many contributions of the lay, especially women.

It will be a culture change for sure. Perhaps a beginning point would be to engage the clergy in a reflective process about what that would look like for them. I suspect that priests who would welcome this change could take some leadership in starting the conversation and conversion.

Trust them. Realize if trained they are as valuable as priests. Welcome and open up parishes to lay people with different roles as minister.

It all comes back to leadership in a hierarchical model. I hear priests, even good ones, refer to 'my' parishioners too often; that belies their discretion to listen or not to lay people with complimentary gifts. The church limps because of this. We're not whole.

Understand the role they play currently, see the role they could play and work with them to set up a system to have a more synergistic liturgy.

To allow all lay people - men and women - to participate, to make some administrative decisions, to listen to the Holy Spirit. Especially important for the hierarchy to listen to the lay people. That's not happening at all in some places.

The Church has to "right" itself first of all. The Church has much to learn from the lost sheep and even those in the fold. Not only is this an opportunity to evangelize but by dialogue and offering how the church can live out the mission of Christ by helping those truly in need and the outcasts.

That as baptized Catholics who have gifts to bring to building up the Family of God they should be trained, supported and encouraged to offer these gifts to the best of their ability.

That pastors be encouraged to recognize the gifts of the lay ministers and not be so caught up in losing their "power." That the common goal and direction should be the building of a faith community formed by the Gospel.

Baptized are priest, prophet, king. Called to leadership according to giftedness. Greek Orthodox have a person decide on celibacy (eligible for patriarch) or marriage (family or parish responsibility only) before ordination.

Bishops/priests not supportive of lay involvement.

Start to include them.

Train seminarians, priests and bishops to promote and engage the laity in all aspects of the church.

Equality.

Respecting and encouraging gifts that just happen to be given women!

Respect for persons regardless of gender.

A focus on lay expertise is critical to support parish life.

Clergy - get out of the way of the Holy Spirit. What are you afraid of?

End clericalism, women deacons and priests, married priests, etc.

Open their hearts and listen to the will of the people

The laity should have authority in all administrative aspects of a parish and diocese, and trained laity should be allowed to preach.

Complete and equal representation.

Assist in paying for advanced training of laypersons and then allow them to perform the functions they are trained for.

Women roles need to be taken seriously with their wisdoms and expertise.

Liberating all people from poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia. Reinvent community time together. Create new ways of celebrating sacraments. Equal access to Vatican funds and connections. More emphasis on scripture and breaking it open for today's culture.

Equal Partnership.

Simply - to be able at every table and have their say and vote!

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Priestly hierarchy is not essential to the mission of Jesus

Lay leadership must be encouraged, funded and integrated into all ministerial and decision-making roles in the church

They need to be more empowered, give more input into parish life.

Education.

Diversity, effective diocesan leaders.

We lay people are the future of the church and with training, mentorship and study can do most roles very well. We would have more than half of the people in the pews finally represented.

Accepting the laity, through their common baptism, as full collaborators in the life of the church and apart of all decision-making. Church should address the ordination of women.

Unmute the voices of women; this is a scandal that women still not accepted as equals. Jesus was so open to women.

Trust the laity.

Be sure the ministers are educated in the areas they will be serving; have communication skills and compassion without prejudice; Love God and others along with self.

Governance. Liturgy design and implementation, faith formation at all levels.

Giving laity decision making positions on every level of the Church

Encourage theological, pastoral and psychological education for lay ministers on a pastor team.

Remove the hierarchical structure of the parish for a more parliamentarian (for want of a better word) structure.

It should not be left to the priest or bishop to decide the role of the laity.

Just wages. Involvement in decision making. Formation and training (skills, leadership and updated theology).

I need more time to formulate and answer.

Only have pastors and bishops who value lay ministers. Invite, accept and honor lay ministers in matters that bring the community to being a vibrant living community following the true teachings of Jesus.

Encourage lay ministry, leadership, and involvement in the church. Don't discourage it -- as happens too often.

Lay ministers should have equal say in parish matters along with the priest.

Acceptance, inclusion, a place at the table at least.

Educating bishops on the important role of laity. Educating all to the sacred role of laity.

The laity needs to be respected by priest and bishops. They should not be undercut. Clergy new to a parish or diocese should not destroy groundwork that had been laid by previous clergy.

Outreach to the marginalized, especially concerning the use of the campus and parish resources.

Married clergy, gay clergy and women's ordination, partnerships and relationships and how to bless instead of condemn.

End clericalism and patriarchy

They are the baptized and are called to various roles of leadership in the whole church. The ordained are first baptized and called by God's grace to empower the members of God's assembly(church).

Education.

Clericalism - both clergy and lay need to understand how to share leadership, work collaboratively and respectful of differences.

Welcome to participate in the priesthood of the baptized, should not be subservient to an ordained priesthood. Issue of clericalism must be faced!

Social justice issues. Inclusion of all.

Encouragement to be educated in homiletics, scripture, social teaching of the church

Provide adequate training, theology degrees, adequate salaries. Priests must be trained to welcome lay leadership and be trained how to work with the laity.

Recognizing that we all have gifts to contribute to the church. Also that there will be no future for the church unless laity are given more responsibility within the organization.

Education, encouraged involvement, creative opportunities.

Women ordinations to priesthood.

A voice for the lay involvement in the church. Endorse active participation in ministries; this builds active participation in the sacraments.

Study by bishops, clergy, and lay leaders together to discern the answers to the questions above.

Education of people with gifts should be a possibility. Clericalism is also a tremendous threat to our church and must be considered by the upcoming synod because it might be the thing that is killing our spirit.

We need to use the gifts ALL people were given to enhance our joined faith experience as Church.

Allow participation in all discussions and decision making regarding their parish.

Theological and leadership training. SERVANT leaders are what we need today, not ego filled leaders.

When a new pastor is assigned he should not be able to undo the work of previous pastors or to change the entire character of the parish. Stop autocratic leadership.

To use their gifts and charisms for the community.

Family life, social issues, youth activities.

Ordained priests should solicit wide lay input on decisions regarding the parish. Listening alone is inadequate if the

laity voice is only considered a rubber stamp for actions the pastor has already decided on.

The 2 most important issues I believe for the Church are optional celibacy for priests (ability to marry and have a family) and women as ordained ministers of our Church.

The laity is the CHURCH and the priests/ordained should be there to serve and offer expertise in their understanding of the Gospels - but not at the expense of the expertise of the laity's understanding of the Gospels - we should be working as a team.

The clergy has to remove their 'blindness' and accept the fact that many lay people have much to share.... spiritually and often time skills from their professional lives that would benefit the parish. Clergy has to not be threatened that their world will collapse if they are not the one in charge at all times.

Lay involvement in liturgy preparation, giving homilies, feeling comfortable to speak out about the need of the parishioners, allowing those with training to contribute to the life of the church, as in mental health, spiritual welfare.

It must be a core value.

Laity should be well trained theologically & academically. Eliminate clericalism.

Laity need to be in roles along with the hierarchy to run the Church!

Collaborating to meet Catholic's needs, spreading God's love.

Assisting in appropriate training; facing the mistrust of laity capabilities; acknowledging that ordained ministry is not the ONLY ministry.

Preaching the gospel not the survival of the institutional church.

Respect for the services that parishioners offer and give. Cooperation of laity and clergy.

Relaxing the hierarchical structure and artificial barriers that keep laity in grossly subordinate positions in the community.

The issue of Cardinals, Bishops and Pastors in the conservative wing thwarting the efforts of reform either actively or passively.

Clericalism can bring the active role of the laity to a screeching halt. This drives people away and is destroying our church.

Issues of power in the hierarchy--it is not given, in my opinion, that the hierarchy are the dispensers of my relationship with God. They are good people but not God junior! Second, the church needs to fill the need for community that many people are so hungry for...it is hurtful to go to Mass and never have any human interaction. "Glad you are here." Welcome - Anything.

As much as I love the Mass we cannot use that as an excuse to not be neighbor to others. So Mass plus.

Someone said to me one time: We have to be consciously Christian to be deliberately Catholic. While I have not necessarily communicated well in this section, I think this quote is what I would choose to say.

Ordination of women and married men.

Promote good sound theology. If this does not happen, we pull the Church back and render her in affective to meet today's needs.

Train people to be open to new ideas.

More Women in leadership be aware of all cultures, live kindness

With proper inclusive theological training and experience, lay ministers are "a must" in truly inclusive parishes! My parish is now "dying" for want of trained lay ministers.

Whoa, a lot. From a clericalist mindset to gender sensitivity and inclusivity just to name a few.

"Try it you will like it". Calculated risks.

Women deacons. So many gifted women can preach so beautifully. We lose so much when they are not allowed.

To answer these questions is difficult with the clericalism in the Church structures.

Awareness! That lay people have a voice, experience, wisdom, gifts, a perspective other than clerical, willingness and need to be involved to feel included in parish, diocesan life.

To have a voice and be heard and talents to be utilized within the church.

They need to let go of "the good old boys club" and believe in the abilities of lay people and listen to them (us). They will see that we can not only run our households, but we can also help run a church as well!

Deal with clericalism in our church so that laity can be an equal partner in the mission of the church.

By virtue of Baptism, laity should be able to work collaboratively with clergy in determining church policies.

Who is welcome? Who makes the decisions?

Include everyone and provide good training and continuing education.

Better training in charity and humility than the priests seem to currently be getting. Good qualifications for the chosen position.

Opening more administrative/leadership roles for laity at the parish level in ALL dioceses, so it's not just up to the local bishop to promote (or squash).

The hierarchy should see the spirit with us, a woman and man should be able to be able to be allowed to reach their highest potential with the church and we should be allowed to acknowledge our spiritual authority.

Hierarchy needs to wake up and open up to the gifts Holy Spirit has bestowed on lay women and men --- and let them minister as per their gifts and the needs of the Church community.

Parishioners need to be educated to the philosophy of Pope Francis re reform in the church but in order for that to happen this needs to start in seminaries and at the Conference of Bishops.

Their importance in the Church.....we are all one working for the same goal

1) Fair hiring and dismissing practices - where the pastor does not have all the power. 2) Decent pay and benefits. 3) Person or group to go to settle disputes or unfair practices.

Good training and education with assistance with cost.

ENCOURAGEMENT!!!!

Education offerings at the parish level that leads to active parish involvement and empowering the laity.

I support ordination of women to the diaconate. Call back the priest who have left the ministry. Have priests who are gay, be open about their sexuality.

1. Education for adults to prepare them. The education should not be done in specific seminaries which would provide the patina of clericalism in psychological ways.

Are the laity eager to help? If so, we need to offer education to further them in this mission.

We are one people of equals, open to and willing to share in different ministries.

Work with inviting youth to be involved; provide educational opportunity for lay ministers, focus on families. Create exciting and joyful liturgies.

Equality and recognition of the gifts and blessings of all.

Freeing up the priests of the parish to be more pastoral/each parish may differ in the issues.

Our lay ministers and lay leaders need to be encouraged to bring their ideas to the table with the assurance that their input will be appreciated and seriously considered.

Training of lay leaders in theology; opportunities to lay a strong spiritual foundation; and ample experience in giving voice to their gifts with regard to parish life and service.

All priests and seminarians should be required to read the Vatican II document on the laity. We are not called to serve within the walls of the church.

I see a great need to connect with our youth. . . We are losing them. Outreach to those in need is served by the lay people.

The church needs to recognize that the church is the People - not just the clergy. When the Clergy does not maintain transparency and is caught in misuse of power, then they should not be allowed positions of power in the church. The church started out with disciples who had nothing and went from town to town spreading the good news of Christ to others, since that the time the clergy have elevated themselves to places of power, wealth and many have fallen short of spreading the good news, but rather lining their pockets and lording their power over those they were supposed to minister to. There is a lack of trust that is due to the hypocrisy that has come from those in power.

We all, by our baptism, are priests. I cannot comprehend what the hierarchy fears other than losing the control that they have fostered over centuries. They believe that they would lose something, but in reality, they would gain so much more. I truly believe that allowing married priests would help them develop the realities of equal partnership and relational skills that they currently don't have to develop as they live away from the people.

The church should ensure that all leaders are well prepared, educated and have a genuine call to ministry.

Empower the Laity. They are the strength of the Church.

The most important issue is to understand that celibate males do not have all the answers in life!

I long for the day when the 'Body of Christ' actually means that all who are called to ministry in the Church are accepted and valued for their contribution.

I believe that the Church has to come to realize that "Father" has a responsibility to be the Shepherd of the Flock here in this time and place. The everyday working of the parish, raising money, have an office to oversee, etc. Should be left to people who have the expertise to do this. The pastor should NOT be the administrator, finance chair, etc. Running of the parish office and what that entails could be done by lay people. Leaving Father time to be the 'minister' not the administrator

Education, training, they should be given real responsibility like in the business world.

The amount of lay involvement is totally dependent on the archbishop and priest. If you have leaders who are open, you are blessed. But when these men change, everything could change, and you had no say in the matter.

Answer the question - WHY is there such a resistance?

Why are we remaining such a hierarchical, clerical, macho church

when they preach the inclusive ministry of Jesus?

Address clericalism so that lay participation can have its rightful place.

In the USA we need the laity as equal partners with the ordained priests and deacons to eliminate the pyramid style of leadership. It needs to be more circular.

I'm so interested in seeing more lay organizations that allow study and discussion of issues related to a "living faith"! How do we become the face of Christ in issues that plague our world?

Training, support and active voice in parish/diocesan activities and decisions

Control and decision-making are not available (usually) to laity. We must do something about the kinds of retribution exercised on priests who want more lay leadership and believe people are capable. Sometimes the priests are afraid, for good reason.

Recognition of the gifts of the laity.

To give the laity full responsibility for their role.

They should be equal partners in all aspects of ministry. Many are better prepared for these roles than are priests.

Stop blocking the laity from its rightful role; reform (or do away with?) Seminaries so all can be educated and play essential roles; allow laity

for perform more sacraments; in light of clergy shortage allow laity to lead communion services; etc., etc....

Ways to help our families thrive.

How to develop a community orientated toward mission, discerning the needs of those inside and outside the parish community. How to be more inclusive, including training in confronting racism, sexual bias, and dealing with those on the margins. Working on clericalism, which can also be present in the laity.

Giving space/opportunity to listen to lay people. Making access to decision-making roles available to laity where they work in collaboration. Having trained lay preachers

All of the above on vote and voice from the parish up to the Vatican. The deliberative and voting authority of lay people is key. None of these parishes should be at the whim and fancy of bishops and pastors. Not sure how this will happen and if the parish structure is even set up to pivot to this kind of model. Again, I wonder what the real future of parishes in the US is. IEC's and RCWP led churches and all of the "Other" Catholic denominations are already doing this kind of empowered laity structure -- maybe people should join these groups or start their own house churches and let the parishes get sold off until they are all gone. I mean, I don't think that will happen, but I wonder if the parish has an actual future of any real import. You also have to factor in that some people just want

to go to Church and they don't want to run it, so there will always be enough of them that the priest-centric model will thrive, until it won't anymore.

Improve seminary education in hopes of reducing the problems of patriarchy and clericalism. Stress the sharing of leadership roles and power to make decisions, belief in the Beloved Community. Provide teaching and preaching on the roots of racism, so that all Catholics understand how that impacts the lives of our black and brown brothers and sisters.

Using the various expertise of parishioners to tend to the needs of the parish and lead in response to the needs of the world.

The wrongness of "hierarchy". It is a cultural trap that we have accepted. Jesus' presentation of the divine reign is not an institution but a social life form that organic.

The "Church" structure where the authority resides, needs to be open to reconstituting the life of OUR church in a collaborative model.

Education, training, salaries for the lay leadership.

That the people are the church along with the hierarchy

The Church needs to value the gifts of the laity by enabling the laity to use those gifts. Incentives like education through classes, workshops, etc., should

be offered and a salary wouldn't hurt either.

First, the training of priests has to be servant priesthood and not a privileged class. Qualified lay leaders should be given significant roles in the ministry of their parish. Lay people should have a say at all levels of their parish ministries and be able to participate fully regardless of gender, sexual identity, or ethnicity.

That the pastor should meet with them regularly to seek their ideas, opinions, questions, etc. And that they be shared with the parish as a whole a mass

Mentioned in the opening remarks about the mission of Futurechurch: to uncouple the role of leadership from ordination. That is a start.

Social justice.

Inclusion through motivating ideas, programs, welcome, supporting.

Church hierarchy should not patronize the laity.

Allow both men and women to be involved in leadership in the Church and parish.

Lay ministry is vital. These are people like us, contending with many of the same problems we have. We need to see women in positions of leadership in the Church. Many women today are working in addition to being full time wives,

mothers, grandmothers. Let's talk about that other than on Mother's Day.

The power sharing between pastor and lay people. The respect given to lay leaders. The inclusion of all laity. Outreach to all laity to be involved and welcomed as important members of a parish.

There are many gifts the laity have that are not recognized. They should be given the means to be trained as to how to use these gifts on a parish level. This would be a means of supporting the church in our shortage of priests.

Equality of men and women, education and formation, compensation for staff, attitudes of the ordained regarding continuing education (the knowledge and experience of the laity is threatening to the ordained--and they don't do anything to start learning or improving their skills. Ordination is the only thing that matters.

There must be structures that are inclusive of lay baptized so the gifts given by the Holy Spirit can be put to use in all manner of ways that the Body of Christ (Church) requires. The gifts listed in scripture and those of today must be valued and utilized.

Inclusion of women. Solid training and competency and spiritual depth. Issues of sexism, patriarchy, and racism; Laudato Is movement; inclusion, peace and justice issues.

Much, much dialoguing must be done and much listening, one to another. We must work to know our own charisma and the charisma of our fellow parishioners.

The main issue is giving them a say and allowing them to have more of a role in the church. There should be advanced training and subsidies to promote this.

Providing adequate preparation and support in their ministries and helping all of us grow in holiness.

Assist the priests and other Church leaders in visioning and administering an alive parishes or other collaborative ministry.

There shouldn't be top-down leadership. There should be consensus-building. Everyone's voice should be heard at meetings, etc.

More sermons on the actual social problems of the day. Too many sermons are interesting but not relevant to our daily lives.

Training, education, and recognition of their talents and abilities.

The Church has to decide whether it actually believes what Vatican II said about the laity. Right now, clericalism is rampant, and leadership does not value lay ministry in any consistent fashion.

Work with the laity as equals and treat them with respect.

As long as clericalism is alive and well, it is not possible for lay people to be heard. I am very concerned about the products of the Seminary. They discourage me. They are not associated with real life.

Addressing the manner in which Bishops can speak and act on behalf of a Church which is often much more inclusive than they are. Some, not all, statements by the Bishops, do not reflect the Pope, Catholic Social Teaching, and a significant number of Catholic lay people. Also, the scriptural assertion that we are no longer strangers - but members of God's household - should be enacted as reality and not theory. Thus - we need to reverse the pyramid - the priests on the bottom - serving the people - who are the majority at the top. Not because we are better, but because we are members of God's household.

Recognize the Baptismal commitment by all Catholics. Deemphasis the "specialness" of those who have received the sacrament of holy orders.

Lay leaders, especially those with multi-cultural background bring vitality to a church experience. Many of the lay people in my former parish held advanced theological degrees and education. The needs of the people of God can be met only when the voices of God's people are heard.

Lay leaders must have the experience of service, not just management.

We need a constitution for the laity that gives legitimacy to their roles. We

need to re-vamp the flow of authority in the Church. Currently, the pastor is the only person that must report to the chancery office (bishop). With such responsibility, it's no wonder that pastors are hesitant to let go of some of the non-ordained responsibilities that they have. No modern corporation does this. Different people with specific areas of responsibility report into the board of directors.

Women preachers, being valued and not just given lip service, listening.

The synod should only be the beginning of establishing the voices of the people of God.

That they are NOT second hand and equally share in the Body of Christ, called and moved by the Holy Spirit and respected.

Clericalism is the most important issue that is preventing laity from making a more vibrant contribution to our church.

Because we had a shortage of clergy laypeople should be given faculties by bishops to run parishes that way the bishop does not close parishes because of the lack of clergy. Lay people need to feel empowered to participate in the Church as the protagonist. They are not the servant of the priest, is the other way around, if the priest really wants to act in Persona Christy he should serve the people of God. We need more synodality at a local level and they need to be involved in the day-to-day activities of the parish.

Change the attitudes of the clergy.
Acknowledge the gifts and talents of the laity.

If a true process of discernment exists on a designated level, a true call to ministry should be able to be recognized. And, if there is a true call, any person, lay or clergy, should be able to be involved, minister or lead.

The first point is to take seriously our theology of Baptism.

Encourage, support and sustain lay ministers with co-responsibility and co equality.

Violence against women, non-violence as spirituality, gun violence, peace-making, nuclear dis-armament, peace-keeping role for military, upholding international treaties such as Geneva convention, etc. Faith commitment to lead to involvement in such work, through expertise and leadership of laity. Similarly, work to protect the environment, reverse climate change, save species from extinction, preserve habitats, including 'just transition' efforts. Church should respect and 'affirm 'diversity,' welcoming 'differences' among individuals, but also among Christian communities, including in worship. As church we have everyone to learn about inclusive community, both with regard to what can be included, and what may have to be excluded when the harvest comes. Respect for conscience, freedom of conscience, nurturing of informed

consciences will be needed for the Church of the future.

The importance of family life.

Allow any man or woman, married or single who is called to the priesthood be allowed to be ordained.

1. **Role of women must be enhanced.**
2. **An understanding of the modern church. Can't continue as us.**

Educated and trained. I see leader's role as being able to draw out the gifts in the community and being able to build consensus in the community deliberations.

Some clergy, in all humility should recognize the fact that they don't "know it all" and realize the wealth of gifts possessed by lay women and men. Perhaps a re-reading of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles might remind them of what it means to trust the wisdom and gifts of the laity.

Addressing the needs of the poor, sick, and all vulnerable people of God.

I think the Church needs to recognize lay ministers as equal to clergy in continuing the mission of Jesus. The Church needs to put resources into training the laity, so they are equipped to take up various roles in service to the People of God.

I have been fortunate to be in churches with secure and faith full priest who have worked with me on projects and

programs. The few times I have been stymied I have approached the pastor and we have worked it out. Discussion and listening is critical. The focus should always be on what is needed to help us all continue to search for God and find Christ in others even when it is frustrating.

Firstly, the Church is US. We the lay people are the Church. The image of Church being a group of old men in black cassocks has to change. Lay people need to be able to fully participate, men and women alike. This also means access to in depth faith and leadership formation.

Listen & Respect lay people who bring their energy & love to their parishes. Actively recruit lay people to be trained in parish & pastoral leadership & ministry.

More people means more welcoming, more pastoral care (formal and informal), stronger communities. Lay involvement seems so obvious.

To give chances to lay in order that serving in the church well.

Equal voice.

Full participation.

Women leadership.

I think we need to listen to others and get their opinions without judgements.

Interest is so minimal and lay leadership or even clergy leadership almost anything will do. But to get people interested and back in church really good people priests and laity will have to be found.

Lay ministers should get good training before they are assigned. In general they should be selected as anyone who would give a position like that.

I believe with the aging process happening in our church officials and Bishops all of the above issues need to be acknowledged and planned for in the church of the future.

Moving away from a patriarchy.

Convert to a circle of inclusion from the top-down triangle. Train seminarians to work with and respect fully the Holy Spirit's working in all parishioners.

Mutual respect.

Please listen to us, please! Please open yourselves to the Holy Spirit who is moving, showing us the way, if only, if only the Church would listen, talk to us, respect us - we can help build up the church, we can lead (Gods people need us), we can preach, so the scriptures can be unpacked in the fullness of human experience (not just from a celibate male perspective), the Holy Spirit works in us too (the laity.)

The clerical members of the Pilgrim Church on Earth must come to see that they as persons and their own

service, ministry, roles, and identity are not threatened by an energized, involved, and in-Spirited lay leadership and ministry. The Church need not be divided between the altar and the pew, between pastors and parish, between those who exercise authority and those who obey. Parishes, dioceses, and the universal Church can become more synodal at every level, making use of ALL the faithful's Spirit-bestowed charisms.

Church leaders should address the need to make sure lay leaders, etc. Are fully respected and treated as equals to priests as they perform the tasks their roles require.

Women's voices are not heard at most levels in the Church. LGBT persons are not seen as legal members in the Church and do not receive help to maintain inclusion in the church. Divorced and remarried persons are uncomfortable and excluded from the ministry of the Church and its care.

1. Get rid of the term LAY -- it is offensive! 2. Church leaders [i.e., priests, bishops etc.] need to accept and embrace that Catholics of all races, genders, backgrounds ARE the church - we are not separate from them. 3. Every aspect of Church life needs to "de-clericalized" and opened to the participation of all - it all has to be re-examined in light of the problems with the existing structure and how will we be Church without spiritual guides [i.e., priests].

Role in decision making a all levels.

Lay having more of a voice and support in their roles. Not top-down.

Compensation.

Vatican 2--the priesthood of all the faithful.

It's important that Clergy work as a team, each member being encouraged to use their God-given gifts regardless of gender, education, political beliefs, differences. Deal with conflict in healthy ways.

'Ability and dedication.

Give them leadership and decision-making roles- particularly in management of the parish and staff, and finance council. Give parish- and women roles in running the parish as well as choice in their pastoral leader and council.

I listened to the Building Bridges North-South: A Synodal Encounter Between Pope Francis and University Students. The students were very thoughtful and articulate in their communications. This is what the church needs for the future and gives me hope.

Recognition of women and their unique skills. Just wages, transparency.

Availability of proper training, and regular review of orthodoxy.

Training for the Role, some jobs requiring Degree, involvement of women, Trust in their judgments

Mainly the church needs to recognize the value of lay leadership and include them in all decisions. Lay people who are allowed to teach in seminaries or go through the same formation as deacons, but not be ordained should also be corrected. What sense does any of that make?

Remove the term “lay” as in common parlance it conveys “non-professional” whereas all the baptized “profess” the faith. Refer to all as baptized, including those who are paid to work in the institutional part of our Church

Helping pastors understand we are there to be collaborators in ministry. Our current pastor and his immediate predecessor want to do it all. They seem to be threatened by anyone else having a part in the liturgy. Altar servers are now all boys when the pastor allows servers, such as the Sunday morning Mass. The laity are increasingly alienated from participation at Mass because of an increasing use of Latin hymns and parts of the Mass (Agnus Dei, etc.). The music director/organist is adept at singing Latin but not so the congregation. It’s an “I am the one in charge and I’ll do things my way. I’ll call on the laity to decorate the church, put on dinners, etc. But not have any substantial role in the real life of the parish.”

Preaching. Most parish preaching is abysmal; lay people who have an aptitude and desire for interpreting the Word should have the training they may need to be effective preachers. That does NOT mean seminary homiletics courses--priests obviously haven’t had the training needed for effective preaching.

That whatever authority and ministry they engage in is truly shared voice and not just in name.

Equality. Justice. Financial.

There are many issues, but the Gospel message calls for living the Beatitudes, loving enemies, including all people - the least among you. We are called to justice, compassion, forgiveness. Society doesn’t always support gospel values. Within the diversity of cultures, races, understanding of values that are inclusive, supportive of equality and justice, we have those who refuse to recognize these critical values that support our living meaningful lives together. Much work still needs to be done to stand up for the Good of all God’s children. We see this struggle played out daily in the wars, the hatred, the divisive issues that face us. We need to support lay women and men whose voices and lives promote positive directions and whose wisdom leads in coming together for the good of all. We need people who support others in faith and who call us to greater unity in our diversity. This should be the focus at all levels of church life. The Spirit/Sophia is calling loudly for these changes and

inspiring many of us to rise up and work for needed change once again.

That clericalism does not get in the way of ministry by lay people. Training in the seminaries need to follow Vatican II directives. We've had centuries of patriarchal rule. It would be wonderful to have leadership that is circular rather than top-down.

I think I, who am in my 80s knew more about Vatican II than the people who came a decade after me. It seems as if the church stepped backwards embracing things that were happening before Vatican II.

End the clerical/hierarchical vs. 'Lay' caste system.

Promotion of women as equals and acknowledging the need for Spiritual Direction, outreach, community involvement.

Women and men should equally be involved if trained.

Formation of the clergy. Absolute transformation of the seminaries as we know them. Formation of priests should be together with laity with selected limited spaces for specific training of each kind.

Gender Equality, Continual Education and Formation, Intergenerational representation.

Treat them with respect for their talents and consult with them. Provide decent

pay for what they do. Invite them to attend workshops and courses that help them to be ready to serve better.

Issues of care and concern for justice the poor, the frail the mentally ill and the Earth as proclaimed By Jesus In the Gospels and by the Scriptures we hold sacred. The gifts spoken of By ST Paul. "We are Many Parts, but all one body" need to be acknowledged as necessary. For the life of that body no matter how humble or seemingly insignificant so we may have the tools to address the way we are Christ's body in the world today and in the future. Education needs to be offered and supported for all. Inclusion the issue of 2022

That the person be trained for the role or already had the qualities for the position. The parishioners should have a voice when choosing the Priest or Brother as well as lay person to fill an important role in the local parishes.

Training and capacity building of the Laity, Clericalism, male domination, the subordination of women, sex abuse by clergy, coverup stories etc...

The Church should provide lay paid ministerial training; give the laity deliberative power in the parish, the diocese and the Vatican; women should be able to participate and have decision making power at all levels of the Church 's life.

Priests should be allowed to marry if they so wish; basic small communities should be part of the parish structure;

the LGBTQ community should be accepted, treated with respect and allowed to marry and adopt children; attention to the cultural realities and impact on the Church laity, especially in its liturgy and pastoral outreach; renewed focus on pastoral outreach to youth and young adults; sensuality as affects all aspects of life.

It should start with permitting women priests and married priests. The role of the laity should follow.

Our Archdiocese is becoming more conservative. Our newly ordained are limiting lay roles. In one example they do not allow lay people to go to the tabernacle. On one hand, they need more help, but on the other, they want complete control.

Greater authority for laypeople.

I think we need to return to the Vatican 2 changes that enlivened the people. Parish life was fun when the doors were open, lay people began to feel empowered and happy music filled the liturgy. The Mass lacks creativity of the laity.

How can any words from leadership of a religion be taken seriously when their own members treat other members as not fully human? I don't understand except to break open the living word, specifically, John 9:39, where Jesus insists there will be justice. All ready but not yet, we are to keep struggling like it matters for justice within our own institution as we also wrestle to bring

justice outside of our Body of Christ. Not a time to be lukewarm for sure. Mandate the rights of workers as if the survival of the institution depended on it, because it does.

Trust that the Spirit works through all. Openness to the faithful who love their Church and have much to offer.

The Church needs to encourage active participation. Priests who have been transferred into a new parish need to be instructed on the importance of recognizing and respecting the role of the people within the parish. Priests who come in with their own agenda need to be removed if the Bishop becomes aware that the actions of the priest have caused disaccord among the people.

Just give them the opportunity to serve and use their God given gifts in service of the Church. Lay ecclesial ministry positions like pastoral associates have now been prioritized for deacons, so laity and especially women have been further removed from serving in ministry. In reality, if one is a lay person there is almost no place for them to serve unless they might be a secretary, answer the phone. Even catechist positions are being replaced by "missionaries" in some parishes with people from groups like FOCUS that have minimal training

Training.

Incorporation of lay leadership in all aspects of church administration and parish life.

The church should be offering education to all who want it. The point of view of the education is vitally important. Current seminary training is woefully inadequate for today's world.

Paid training according to the discerned gifts of the individual and paid positions in the overall organization of the parish

Encourage lay involvement and appreciate and implement their input and ideas.

Having space and equal inclusion and voice for women and laity to be included in episcopal, diocesan and parishes to lead its evangelization and mission.

Training.

Accept them as the people of God.

The parish need to feel like a family, and each of us are important. They need to be involved in parish decisions as much as possible, their needs must be met by the priest - the Shepherd. Our desires, opinions matter and we should have some say in parish goings on, etc.

Proper education and training for them personally and for all those with whom they minister.

Men or women chosen for these positions should be well versed. They should really know the Catholic religion well so that they aren't suggesting things that are wrong.

Roles for women. Definition of ordination. Limits on ordination. Restriction of some roles to ordained persons.

Lay ministers should control all parish & diocesan finances.

Recognizing their gifts and helping to adequately prepare lay persons for all kinds of ministry; lay people will need to be paid a living wage with benefits.

The Church needs to trust the laity.

Listen to them! Include them in moving forward to change and make the Church more relevant for all

Education, spiritual development, and motive of the lay minister.

Lay leadership is crucial to the health of any and all parishes as it is at the local level that local needs are recognized and can be acted on.

Deliberative votes for Finances of the parish, collaboration in all aspects of parish life.

Open the windows for fresh air. 50% of the people (WOMEN) ARE underrepresented! So many have the needed education and experiences to be viable and important in bring our church a "seeing" the needs of church into days world!

The laity, or as Elisabeth Suchller-Fiorenza says the "so-called laity" are mistreated and overworked, and not

considered equals, for the most part. The Church -the Kindom of God - is built up by all of us. Not just those who are ordained.

The Church should provide opportunities for growth in lay ministry and leadership, i.e., retreats, workshops, theology courses, etc.

Providing as many opportunities as possible for dialogue for seeking input of community and for reshaping communities from this dialogue.

Education/formation of adults.
Welcome/respect for all.

Giving them more decision-making power.

I believe the Church needs to get BACK to what was originally intended i.e. A church for the people and by the people. When I read the bible, I do not get a notion that Jesus intended his followers to create of a hierarchy of MEN to Lord/rule overall. Much needs to be done to eradicate our present system and create one where all the faithful (since we are all baptized to be priest, prophet, king) are included in the setting up and operating of a new order.

Visibility of lay leadership, ministry and involvement

Involvement and in-depth training & education on the issues of the day e.g. racism, LGBTQ, etc.

**Education!! Education!! Education!
--Jesuit education!**

Lay ministry in the secular domain. Our baptismal priesthood to be revisited and proclaimed. Adult education crucial to faith development. Make links between practicing faith and justice making. Lay ministry is now perceived as only being in a parish WE MUST BROADEN OUR REALITY. Parish ministry is to be at the service of lay people in secular area. Transforming the world. Reconciling the human and divine, the sacred and secular. There is NO separation!

The need for ordained clergy to trust the laity.

Lay preaching. Parish leadership and decision making. Financial authority.

If we open to lay involvement without some major transformation in our attitude of who we all are as sisters and brothers in the one body of Christ. Our liturgies need to be rewritten to be resurrection language instead of fall and redemption. How about praise and gratitude for all that we have instead of pleading for what we think we don't have?

If we don't train (educate) and pay for training of lay leadership, we lose yet another way to keep people in the church. There are so few priests in our parishes in Houston, they can't (and don't) do it all. We are losing members because of it...frustration and exhaustion over fighting the system.

They should ordain well trained laymen and laywomen to the priesthood soon. Otherwise, we will no longer have a functioning church in twenty-five years.

Dialog, dialog, dialog.

Equal formation across the board.

Address imbalances in power structures that do not allow for the full and effective collaborative partnership in leadership

At least the lay are SANE. I swear the bishops must have been deliberately recruiting candidates from psychiatric institutes for violent sexual offenders for the last 50 years!

The good of the People of God--not power and authority and perhaps most of all, updating the translations of the Scripture including the passages now not included about the roles of women in early history --Old and new testaments.

Laity needs to be empowered with more decision making and responsibility, and the congregation needs to have more say and "sway" in determining policies and activities in the parish. The parish council should definitely have more than an advisory role.

The Church better wake up and involve the laity or there won't be anyone to shut off the lights.

By our baptism we are all called to minister, to empower others. The power

and control by the clergy is the first issue that needs to be addressed.

The priests are going to need support in order for them to LIVE a NEW MODEL of collaboration with the People of God who ARE the church.

First, allowing women to become deacons. Then they will be allowed to preach, etc. And then the next step -- women priests.

Extensive well-rounded training and commissioning of lay person as they have in the Saginaw Mi Diocese, a process of discernment for lay leaders in the church do they can discover where God is calling them to serve. Paid lay leaders that have advanced theology degrees have much to offer the parish and are capable of heading lay ministries. Educated and experienced lay leaders need to be laid decently. They have family needs to meet and deserve respectful wages

Systemic changes ought to be made in the infrastructure of the Church. We the baptized are made priests, prophets and 'Kings' -- that applies to each man and woman without regard for what each becomes in adult life -- whether ordained or not. Ideally, the leadership of the Church would recruit and select the best persons qualified to do the job at hand -- especially in the area of management and administration. I think Francis is putting a pinky toe in the door in this regard. I subscribe to a style of collaboration and consultation in the ongoing development and work of any

organization/institution. No reason this should not apply to the Catholic Church.

Openness and inclusion.

Recognition, reimbursement, job protection.

That they are well trained in the same values and morals that we hold or should hold ourselves to.

To allow those that want to participate do so regardless of their sexual preference.

Having lay leaders who are trained not only in protecting children, but in being welcoming to all and living out the faith. My parish's religious education director refused to let my mom continue teaching special education students after she spent time in the hospital one year. My family and I rarely went to mass for a few years after that (Dad and I started going again after 9/11, but Mom only went to Mass a few times after that until her death 20 years later).

More preaching especially when it comes to marriage, parenting, etc. Hard to credit anyone on these topics when they haven't experienced them.

Sexuality, orientation, gender, giving homilies, decision making on every level,

Know your church history.

Go out and recruit and then give these various sectors the power to operate.

Offer leadership development, spiritual development, and encourage everyone's gifts. Publicly recognize everyone's gifts. Bless those who the community calls.

The Laity depending upon their role or position should be qualified. Lay Ministers should be people of Prayer, Knowledgeable in Sacred Scripture (esp. The Life of Christ and Act of the Apostles), well informed in the Constitutions of V.C.II, Well Prepared for their performance of Ministry.

Parish administration and management!!

All people need the freedom to follow gods calling for them. They need to be accepted and valued for their contributions

1. Formation of priests - Lay women and men must be more present in the training of priests. Clericalism will continue to rise, unless the newly ordained don't fully understand and accept the role of laity in church ministries, church decisions and in places of authority. Seminarians must be mentored to walk with, accompany those in lay ministry and in lay leadership.
2. Formation of the laity – We must get back to the basics and the tenets of Vatican II found in its 16 documents. We have a generation of Catholics who have never heard of Vatican II, have no idea of its significance or even care. It's this generation who volunteer for ministry, are hired on parish staffs. Catechesis is paramount for lay people

in leadership roles. Not all dioceses are providing enough opportunities for lay formation. They would rather focus on yet preparing another class of permanent deacons. 3. Understanding the art of accompaniment – The Church must continue to be inviting, meeting the none’s where they are at while promoting social justice.

Equality. Fairness trust on all levels.

Create REAL opportunities for participation and involvement, not just what looks good and is actually meaningless.

Transparency. Clergy with all parishioners who want to be involved. There should be no meetings of councils of any kind without an invitation to open seating and the provision of prepared agendas Pastoral Council members should not be hand-picked by the priest. All decision-making should be explained to the congregation. Lay individual should be approached with invitation to participate according to perceived/ professed charisma they possess. We have been much too used to “receiving”. Our role as evangelists must be clearly defined. What could it mean to be missionary disciples? Does it mean keeping ourselves busy with signing on to many ministry duties? Does it mean taking on the responsibility afforded by our anointing at Baptism. How willing is the “Lay Apostolate” to learn what is really going on in our Catholic institution? How willing are we to study and to understand the principles our Pope is trying to put into practice? Can

the average pew-Catholic take interest in the revolutionary change that Vatican II has brought into the thinking of our Church?

The Church needs to address that with responsibility comes some authority. If lay people are leaders in their parishes, if they take on responsibility then that needs to come with authority to weigh in on decisions that will affect the life of the parish. That could mean formal voting on decisions related to parish finance for example. I am not sure about whether they should be fully engaged in deciding what priest comes to their parish as there are many factors involved in such decision that might not be known to them. At a minimum they should be able to provide insight into the type of priest (temperament, knowledge, level of experience, Etc.) That might best serve the parish.

Allowing the laity to be full participants in the body of the church, not just submissive followers of an institutional church.

That they stay open and listen instead of deciding beforehand what is before them.

Recognize now the growing group of Roman Catholic Women Priests. Have women who have trained with their husbands become fully involved as deacons and visible on the altar and able to preach.

We have a HUGE role to play in forwarding Christ's mission; embrace us, encourage us, empower us!

CLEARLY we cannot rely on ordained clergy (I would suggest at any level) to address the needs of the faithful. My experience is that clergy are little more than "sacrament dispensing machines". The laity will bring a heart and lived experience to their ministry and the wisdom that comes from being faithful disciples IN the world

Increase recognition and involvement to full participation.

Be inclusive.

Without lay ministers churches will surely close. The laity has always been the backbone of the church. They need to be heard and respected.

Discernment on choosing the leaders to build up the community of faith.

More opportunities and acceptance. Respect and encouragement. Training. Pay.

Psychological stability, keen knowledge of the principles of Vatican II and dedication to the role chosen.

Treatment as trusted and respected equal partners in committees, commissions, etc., on parish and diocesan bodies, bishop conferences, and Vatican offices and departments. Laity must be listened to and be able

to participate in making decisions that affect them.

The Church needs to Value (as well as promote) the input of lay people, and lay ministry, lay leadership and lay involvement as Essential in any Jesus-centered Community.

There needs to be Diversity in formation, to meet the needs of communities.

Even the term - lay ministry - is demeaning. "Lay ministry" should be more than simply the person who "does the work" when the pastor & co pastors don't want to or "don't have time."

Lay persons should be well educated in Jesus' words and teachings. Jesus' words/teachings should not be trumped by other things in the Bible or in the Catholic Church. If we are followers of Christ, then let's follow His words/teachings above all else.

Women deacons, married priests, equality in the whole life of the Church.

The church should make sure that lay leaders are properly trained to match up with their desire to serve so that there is minimal distortion of our church teaching. Beyond catechists, also extending to those in parish outreach.

Training.

The VOICE of the laity. This would help decrease clericalism and increase transparency and avoid future scandals.

Many Religious community members avoid letting others know that they also are Lay members of the church and keep a chasm between themselves and the rest of the non-ordained.

Many of these communities are seeking to be forward thinkers, but in the end rely on the hierarchical structures of leadership to maintain control.

All sisters have the canonical right to participate in community voting actions, but some communities vote by publicly raising colored cards in the assembly. Sisters often say they wanted to vote differently but were afraid of the chastising and shunning they would receive. Only sisters who are at the main assembly gathering can vote. Those who participate at remote sites via zoom cannot vote.

Injustice prevails in the support structures of the Catholic system. God help us!

To give them equal status in all forms of Church governance

Welcome lay ministry, lay leadership and lay involvement with open arms! Their opinions should be considered when making decisions at all levels of the church, from the parish on up. Why are only priests and deacons thought to have anything relevant to say in the church. Lay and clerical need to work together to build up the church. And the pastor and bishops should not be the only ones to have a say.

Q3. Please share any reaction you may have to the new constitution, Praedicate Evangelium, issued by Pope Francis on March 19, 2022.

Eager to study it.

Not sure what it says.

Fantastic - long overdue.

All for it. It took 9 years to do this?????
Good heavens.

I am thrilled! But I am worried that nothing will come of it at the local level, because as I understand it, it is at the discretion of the bishops. I am also happy to see Evangelization is the priority and CDF no longer is.

Not familiar with it.

I'm hopeful but I'm also realistic. Most bishops with undercut it.

I was so happy to hear about this and can't help being excited about all the new gifts, perceptions and talents it will be able to bring to the church.

Hoping men can be open to women especially theologian & Biblical scholars and others with distinct qualifications.

I hope it is the beginning of something new and fresh in our Church

It gives me hope.

Positive. Wondering the timing on it but feel it's good it came out now while Pope Francis is still our Pope.

It is a step in the right direction.

(Too new, but what I heard briefly, i.e., authorizing women to serve as lectors-- which I've done for 30 years--is good.)

Haven't read it yet but intend to.

It is hopeful but it needs to be implemented on the local level and not squashed by the bishops.

Excited, hopefully optimistic...perhaps a window has been opened. Concerned at the reaction of priests who openly do not support the Pope.

Very Hopeful and grateful.

We are getting there. Why reinvent the wheel ... Follow Vatican II.

Would have to bring to mind again before any comment.

Haven't seen it yet.

I haven't read it yet.

Not read it yet but sounds positive.

Excellent. Long overdue. Reform, reform, reform.

It is a beginning. Will the bishops listen?

Amen, Amen Amen.....Pope Francis is trying so hard and I'm grateful, very grateful.

If this is what officially allows lay men and women to preach, I applaud it.

If it doesn't provide a pathway to priesthood for women and an openness to sacred cosmology of Divine Presence, it won't move me spiritually.

It is a vital step forward! Most especially because it returns to the Gospel as our true compass in re-ordering leadership to the servant model Jesus gave us.

I haven't read it yet, but it seems a good initial step.

I have not read it through completely yet.

I hope, but don't think I'll live long enough to see effective change in the local church.

It is opening a window of hope. I'll most likely not live to see in fully in actions, but there is hope for the future. Of course, all depends on who succeeds Francis in the papacy.

Has been a long time in coming... pray that Pope Francis is strong enough to make it reality especially where bishops don't or won't follow lead of pope.

A step forward! Many steps to go, but it's a start.

Pleased. Let's follow through and do it NOW. Let's expand it through all levels of the church - top to bottom.

Am not familiar with the content.

I'm not familiar with it but will check it out.

While it gives me hope, not sure it will be enough to truly grant the church the reform that it truly needs.

Ecstatic!! Hopeful that there will be important changes to benefit the whole church - parish, diocese, national, global levels.

Go for it! True hope is on the horizon.

Grateful for Predicate Evangelium. Looking forward to observing how change occurs at the grassroots staffing levels.

It simplifies the organization of the Curia and includes lay people with expertise. Hopefully, the Church is beginning to move away from the "old boys' club."

YES!

I am encouraged that more is getting in writing and formalized to encourage inclusion of all humans.

I really need more time to carefully study it.

It gives hope for a church that is more than the clergy and an acknowledgment of the belief that we are given different gifts for building up the body of Christ.

I am happy about it. I hope it is legitimate and that results will be seen - and quickly.

Just read about its release. Have not yet reviewed or read the document. But if it lives up to its title, then there is reason to feel hopeful.

I have not yet read it.

I admire the positivity of Future Church and WOC. I am not so positive yet. I am trying to hold on to hope. Maybe because I am older, I am tired of the struggle.

I have yet to read it.

Don't know it.

I like it. Maybe there is hope for our Church.

Thank God! There is still a long way to go, but it's at least a start.

I haven't yet become familiar with this document.

Praise god! It is a good way to chip away at clericalism, which is about being on a power trip, not enriching the spiritual life of a community.

A wonderful start.

I love and respect Pope Francis and what he is trying to do to bring the Church to ALL people, to be inclusive.

It is a start. It was hard to implement and must be inclusive of all, including the ordained.

It is a welcome start, yet I am skeptical- "we will wait for the next pope"

It is an inspiring, hope-filled expression of the church working together for the common good, for the recognition and equity of women and men, and for systemic structures to change what keeps us from fully realizing our baptismal call.

I have not had time to look at this in depth - only a quick over-view, but I say from the bottom of my heart, God bless Pope Francis!

Hope.

I have no knowledge of this document.

Grateful, hopeful yet fearful that many dioceses and bishops will totally disregard as they do Vatican II

Have not had a chance to read it.

I have not read it yet, but I believe that it does allow for more lay roles so that is welcome.

Haven't read the whole thing. Promising but so was Vatican II

I have not read this yet but anticipate doing so.

I haven't read it totally yet; however, I'm excited by what I have read. I never read an encyclical until Pope Francis started writing. They are thoughtful, readable and inspirational.

Very supportive.

Haven't read it yet.

Wonderful news; totally beautiful vision of church. May Pope Francis have a long, long life!

We need to help implement it at the local and diocesan level. Heard it will be difficult. We need lay WOMEN and men to head Dicastery's, especially women.

It is well overdue.

I am heartened that Pope Francis is officially putting into effect what I pray will be lasting changes. I pray that has a long and productive papacy.

I'm sorry I haven't read it. I will read it.

From what I hear reported, I am very happy with it.

I haven't had a chance to study it. I've only read commentaries in NCR.

Have not read the new constitution.

I do not have enough knowledge except to know he is open to change except no priests

I am looking forward to reading it in its entirety. I am very enthusiastic, but also know that it will most likely bear fruit well after my lifetime.

Very positive. Francis is making way for change. There will be opposition, but the Holy Spirit will prevail. The death and Resurrection is for the freedom of all, not those deemed pure by a narrow, constricted "faith" which is self-serving and judgmental.

It is an advancement in that we are all Catholic evangelizers from our Baptism and all need to participate in the life of all the Church.

Praise God! The Spirit is alive, and we may finally return to the vision of the church that was reached by overwhelming votes by the bishops in Vatican II. Most of the constitutions were passed with votes like 2200 for, 6 opposed.

I have not read it through, but from what I have we are truly on the right path. A path that got overgrown with lots of weeds during the time of John Paul II and Benedict.

I have not seen it. But I will google it!

A real step in the right direction.

There is hope, but Francis needs to live a long time to make this dream come true.

Alleluia! This document gives me hope for a real living out of Vatican II.

Hopeful.

Do not know the details but it has to be a huge improvement over what is currently in place.

I regret that I've not yet read it... shame on me! I'll do so prior to our next gathering! Promise.

Oops, I haven't seen it yet.

Wonderful! Thank you, Pope Francis!

Not familiar with it yet

Pope Francis is doing so much, yet the minds that need to be changed simply discredit him and don't listen to him.

I am so relieved that Vatican II is coming to shine forth and continue to lead us in a more participative church.

I have a positive reaction. I love that Pope Francis has a pastoral viewpoint and that he is open to God's guidance And not just wanting us to stay the way we were.

Pope Francis is being led by the Holy Spirit and I applaud them for taking

this necessary step with Praedicate Evangelium.

From what I have seen so far, haven't fully studies it. I am hopeful. Want to see what difference it can make. People will be able to quote it and use it to promote availability for broader ministries.

Cautionary optimism. It opens a door. Hopefully, many will be welcomed in their desire to walk through it.

Have not yet read.

Haven't read yet.

A good step in reforming the way things have been done. It is long overdue. A reason for hope. We must go forward.

I'm amazed by it! I believe that Pope Francis was elected to do promote and lead extraordinary changes and updating in the church. I believe it is the work of the Holy Spirit.

YES! Thank you for being so up to date. My heart smiles. I guess when trying to reform a hierarchical structure, there must be clear at the top. We already have commitment to making this happen from the laity. I have hope that has been lacking for many years. That coupled with this process gives me an occasion of Spirit presence.

I cannot comment - I did not know about this document.

Strongly agree with this.

Definitely a move in the right direction. Hopefully the next Pope won't return to the "good ol boys" model.

It seems to be going in the right direction. I opened a separate window in my browser to read more about it before I answered. As mentioned earlier, I am pleased that Sr. Alessandra Smerilli has been appointed as ad interim of the Dicastery of Human Development. From what I could glean in a few minutes of researching this, Pope Francis has reorganized the way the Vatican governs. It seems hopeful that maybe laity may have more input into this new structure of dicasteries. I do not know enough about it yet to comment but am glad to see it happening.

I believe heading in the right direction. Under the Dicastery of Faith is the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (long needed after the abuse crises, still ongoing). Encouraging is the greater involvement of the laity in various roles.

It really gives me much hope for our church to have this new constitution from Pope Francis. He is putting into action his belief in the Church of the People of God where all are called and gifted.

Very hopeful. Beginning to recognize that all are called to roles in church, in keeping with gifts and vocations.

Cheers!!!!

Have not read it.

Bravo! It's very hope full

A good start!

I haven't read it but am supportive.

It's taken until 2022 when Vatican II set the stage for implementation decades ago. I fear that Pope Francis will suffer extensive push back from many bishops and priests in the US>

Haven't read it yet.



I haven't read it yet, but I am extremely encouraged by what I've read about it.

Haven't read it yet.

I unfortunately am not familiar with it.

I'm delighted -BRING IT ON!

Great hope if it can become a reality.

Strongly support.

Thrilled-- for the first time the Vatican is leading in involving all the baptized in the governance of our church.

I am happy to see it, hope the trend continues.

Haven't had a chance to see it yet.

Not able, at this time.

Haven't seen it

I have not read as yet

Have not read it yet.

Haven't read it but reports on it seem good. Let's see if it gets implemented.

Mostly an improvement. Still needs to work on women's and LGBTQ+ areas in God's eyes and the world's/ministries

Initial response is gratitude.

Hopeful that it will change the amount of lay participation and respect for laity's gifts in the governance of the Church.

I am delighted.

I am hopeful in the future of the church in that any qualified person can lead a Vatican department not just cardinals. And not just men.

An opening to welcome and to pursue.

I am not prepared to discuss and answer at this time.

Hopeful.

Well done, Pope Francis! (It's about time.)

Not familiar with it but will look into it after this program

Go Pope Francis- about time! Next work on USCCB.

I am hopeful for the possibilities that can follow. Hopefully positive action will follow.

I believe that this constitution will make the Church more communal, listening to the voices of the people and acknowledge them as partners in the Church.

A hopeful step forward.

So very hopeful that it does what the Pope intended in reforming deeply the infrastructure.

Another welcomed baby step on the way to a "Discipleship of Equals"

Good news and good step forward to recognize the gifts of the baptized.

Delighted, anxious to see it rolled out

I'm hopeful that it is a beginning.

Good News!

I have not read it yet, but my first reaction is that I must read it.

To be honest, I'm haven't read up enough on this to give an opinion. This would be good homework for me!

Have not read it.

It is a hopeful sign that change in church procedures can happen with Pope Francis.

This was so necessary, but I hope that leaders of parishes will make Pope Francis' writings available to everyone and gather people to talk about it.

I am not yet familiar with it.

The new constitution of Pope Francis gives me hope.

Don't know enough about it yet.

I support all the documents Pope Francis has promulgated--and I pray for him every day to continue to see the Synod process through to completion.

I'm sorry to say that this document has received no press locally; I've never heard of it.

It is long, long overdue by centuries.

I have not had time to read it - I have only heard about it. I look forward to taking some time to read and pray on it. My experience of Pope Francis's writings are that they are inspired and worthwhile. Any move he can make to change the Curia and its power structure is appreciated by me.

A step forward...and that is good.... that fosters the 'seeds of hope' that Lisa spoke of ...but it is a small step. And we all need to realize that that is how a journey/process starts...with small steps.

I think that it is a great step in the right direction. The more lay voices there is in the decision making the better for the health of the church.

I applaud his effort of opening up the offices and roles to women and lay people.

I haven't had time to read it.

I haven't seen it yet.

Breath of fresh air! Are so many capable lay women and men who can head various Vatican Dicasteries.

Have not read it yet.

Sorry, don't know it.

I am cautious but filled with hope. The Spirit is at work in this!

It gives me hope but at the same time I hesitate, wondering if it will really happen as Pope Francis proposes. Too many do not share the views of Pope Francis and will actively work to prevent what he is trying to accomplish.

I have not been able to devote the time to give this a thorough review. However, it appears that PF's strong push for change is not being heard universally. It is a question of power and money as well as respect for the laity.

It is a great start in recognizing that lay people are integral to the life of the Church.

It is too little too late. Really!?! How do you convince the clergy to let it happen. The young people seem to dismiss it.

I have not read it yet. Therefore, I have no comment.

To Preach the gospel just getting acquainted to it.

It's about time!

I have yet to read the English translation, but reading the news item, it's a step in the right direction.

Pope Francis takes calculated risks being led by the Spirit and I suspect much dialogue.

I have not had a chance to read it yet but am hopeful that it will give a boost to the lay involvement.

Have not read it yet.

Joy and hope - may this opening step be graced with courage, and open-hearted listening.

Positive step toward reforming the curia.

I have not read it all and cannot give a reaction to it.

Have to read it first.

This document empowers the laity to live out their Baptism and counter over-the-board clericalism.

I haven't had a chance to read it yet.

This is really new, and I only read the short note that Futurechurch sent us.

But it sounds hopeful, the small bit I understand about it.

I think it's a small step in the right direction.

Wonderful... Finally (after nine years of preparation and waiting for its publication). It seems to be a huge step in the right direction (haven't read the whole thing yet, since it was just published last week). It should apply not only to the Roman Curia, but it's principles should be applied at all levels of the national church, the dioceses, and local parishes.

I have not read it.

I haven't read it yet.

I have not had an opportunity to delve into the document.

I rejoice that he made these statements. Hopefully all will be open.

I have to read it again more carefully, but I am very encouraged by it.

Happy to read the highlights. Women reading Gospel. Evangelization office as primary.

I haven't read it yet. But I will.

Unfortunately, have not read it. Will soon.

Did not read it yet,

Have not had time to read it yet! Happy it has happened.

Not aware of it yet. I will look it up.

I think it's a great step but am concerned about its acceptance and fulfillment,

I've read only a bit of it, but I find it very encouraging.

Have not read it yet. Look forward to doing so. Thanks for encouraging this.

I have not had time to read it yet.

I'm ignorant of this document but will seek it out, read it and give my views after

Wonderful news!

I am grateful and hope to study it in detail.

He's reforming the Curia...let's see if lay Catholics are incorporated into leadership roles.

God Bless Pope Francis for his courage and bravery in addressing this. This is a huge step forward and one I hope will continue.

It is a step forward, when it will be put into place. But it is only a beginning and needs to expand. It cannot be viewed as the solution to allowing laity to have a larger role.

I haven't read it yet, but from the remarks from Future Church etc. It sounds wonderful. If it is taken seriously and put into practice.

The Holy Spirit is at work! I am thrilled and filled with hope.

ALL should be invited, prepared and celebrated!!

I waited a long time for this and support it fully. Alleluia.

Having an apostolic constitution reforming the Roman Curia is long in coming. When clergy are placed in positions that have made them feel they are above the "masses" they have lost the lessons taught by Jesus Christ. Humility is needed in order to be a good leader.

I was pleasantly surprised and grateful for the new constitution. Grateful for Pope Francis' openness

Joy, hope, an awakening.

It sounds like recognition and respect for all children of God as being called to serve.

I really can't comment as I do know anything about it.

I have only read about it, not actually read it, but what I have heard I think it is very positive and much needed. Now to get the passive aggressive clergy to not block it.

I am delighted that Pope Francis has moved to change the Curia.

It's a start.

I'm delighted that we are finally going to get a feminine perspective -which has been silent/ missing for too long. Please let it be the start of more involvement and include other groups who have been marginalized.

Have only seen a little bit about it so I don't really know. I understand it is a major overhaul of the Curia, so sounds good to me.

I am very encouraged about this reform. I hope it will be taken up by our Bishops and priests to really make a difference in the ordinary lives of lay people in the Church. Bishops and priests need to be more in touch with the laity. Also, we need to reach out to 20-somethings and our youth so that they are helped to see and understand contemporary theology and spirituality to take their place serving in the Church.

I haven't had time to read this.

Sounds right. Haven read it. I hope that it doesn't have too many words. Vatican II buried the Divine revelation and dialog in two tons of verbiage that 90% of the educated never read.

I'm happy about it, but it's way overdue, and not inclusive enough. In terms of administration of the groups. And why not use straight language? Like "pontifical councils," instead of

"dicasteries?" Who talks like that? It took us months to figure out what a "Synod on Synodality" was...

I am THRILLED! Praise God for Pope Francis!!!

I have not had a chance to read it.

I haven't read it yet. Just received a link to it in an email today.

I see the new constitution, Predicate Evangelium as a hopeful start for full participation for women. We must expand it to include ordination.

I applaud Pope Francis' effort to make long-term, sustainable reform in the church. This needs to continue long after his term is finished.

It sounds fabulous- let's hope it becomes reality, inclusive, real, available, informative-

I am still reading it.

I have not seen it as yet.

I have not yet read it all.

I have not studied this new constitution yet, but I understand that it has reorganized church leadership at the Vatican level around service and communication, which seems an appropriate shift.

I am so excited and anxious to be able to read it. I will be printing it out as fast as I find it in the computer. I believe this

may be a big door opening for the laity. Just to think that qualified lay people may be able to head dycasteries. It is only available in Italian at the moment.

I'm unfamiliar with this one.

I need to read and study this document.

Sorry but I didn't read it yet, but I was delighted to hear that Francis is opening up the curia to any baptized Catholic.

Very pleased that the roles of women is being expanded.

It's so exciting! I do suspect that it will be fought, tooth and nail, by a large portion of the current clerical hierarchy. I think many will be just biding their time, until Pope Francis is gone, so that they can attempt to undo this -

I have a positive reaction. I respect Pope Francis and pray for him every day. He needs more of our U.S. Bishops to support him.

I have just got my hands on it and started to read it, but I have to work from machine translation since there is not yet an official English translation on the Vatican's site. It is in Italian.

I like what I have read - and - like many Catholic pronouncements - does not go far enough given how far we need to come. Women need to represent 1/2 the churches decision-making. Without women, or lay people- there is no catholic church.

I am ecstatic about it. I just pray that it gets implemented. If it does it has the potential to bring the Catholic Church alive!

I was thrilled to see your announcement but have not read it in its entirety. I mentioned it to a deacon friend on medical leave and he was not familiar with it -- yet.

The constitution suggests reforms of the Curia, some of which have happened. Others will be blocked by inertia or non-compliance. The Curia seems to be a group of churchmen each of whom is vying for their own political gain and place in the upper echelons of the Church. Pope Francis really wants things to change, but it's very difficult.

Great that the hierarchy recognizes the need to involve all in the running of church affairs. Hopefully it will not take too long to implement.

I need to become more familiar with this document.

It is good, as far as it goes. But the Church of England has a formal environmental program which is leading them to net zero emissions by 2030. The environmental function is glaringly absent in the Vatican's constitution. It will be hidden under "integral human development" and remain on the back burner because we don't hire people who know what to do.

It was time for that reform in the Curia. Lay people with expertise in their field should be protagonists on the Church.

Have not read it yet.

I am disposed to favor it. I do not have knowledge or experience to critique it off the cuff.

Delighted!

I don't think I have seen it.

A great start in moving the Church forward.

I confess I have not read it yet.

I have not had the occasion to study the document at this time, but I will. We need to trust his wisdom and support him with prayers as he does not hesitate to speak the truth to a broken world.

Not familiar with these items.

I think this constitution is a long, overdue breath of fresh air in the Church! It can set the Church on a path of equality for all the baptized. It can open the door for a new vision of Church that is imaginative and creative.

I read some of it today! It is suggesting a huge shift to Vatican II and it gave me great hope with caution to make sure we do the right steps to go forward. I love the sec. 5 Art.149 "... Promoting among all people true search for God" (I hear an end to converting people because we are right and all others are wrong! That

teaching has caused great pain, hurt and death to too many people)

Praise the Lord! It gives hope. Not only for the opening up to the laity but also the primacy of evangelization. I know that much more could have been done but it's another step in the right direction.

It looks hopeful. I hope that a future pope will keep Dicastery Leadership positions open to lay people. I'm pleased that there is now an office of Alms Giving. That's the foundation of the Gospel. I love that the organizational structure is designed to support expanded Evangelization of the Gospel. That's really what counts.

I am a new Catholic and I know very little, but it seems like many changes and big ones. I know some Trads who are going their minds about this, and Pope Francis. He is just BLAZING a trail, (great) but leaving local priests with a lot to deal with from people in the pews.

Helpful.

A good start and hopefully will be implemented.

I would like to see action not just words

I feel Pope Francis is charge. He has the right to provide protection. We are lucky to have him. (Pope Francis).

Interest is so minimal and lay leadership or even clergy leadership almost

anything will do. But to get people interested and back in church really good people priests and laity will have to be found.

I have not read it.

I regret that I do not have a copy of this and have not read or prayed with it. Yet, I know our Pope Francis is praying about the Future needs of God's People and what might be some possibilities for more lay participation and leadership positions in the Church of the Future.

A step in the right direction. Hope something actually comes of it.

Inspired.

I was surprised, and it gives me a glimmer of hope. That being said, I am realistic enough to know (sadly) that living fully into this vision is going to be a big learning curve or uphill battle for many in this hierarchy structure.

It's a start. Hopefully, the next pope or two will expand upon it.

I am delighted with the new constitution. I hope it will be implemented without problems.

Have not had the opportunity to read and digest this but I will look for it online.

Haven't studied it. Seems hopeful.

Excited. Hope and pray it works it's way thru the Vatican.

Curious. I have only seen it in Italian. Waiting to see it in English.

`about time.

Anything is better than the current way this church operates.

I have a limited understanding of the new constitution, but it appears to be a positive step forward in the reorganization of the Roman Catholic Church.

Very happy to hear.

A great step forward.

Joy and hope it will be promulgated around the world.

The new constitution gives me hope for lay involvement. I believe that Pope Francis will ensure its fulfillment, but I hope other leaders in the church will work to make its implementation successful for the laity.

Needs to be implemented on the diocese/ parish level

I am delighted to hear that competent lay people are now Able to share in the administrative roles in the Church. God bless Pope Francis for having the courage to help make this happen.

“Cautious optimism” seems a bit optimistic. I can't imagine bishops (much less priests) sharing the power

they have or think they have willingly--at least in my lifetime.

One step to the inclusion of the laity that can have huge ramifications if, again, they have true authority.

I need to reread its summation, but it is a start.

I see Francis listening to the Holy Spirit and to diverse voices in the universal church. He greatly desires a more inclusive and listening body that serves all the people of God throughout the world and especially those on the fringes of society...most in need of care and compassion. I applaud this action and pray it comes to fruition. It holds many challenges, not least is the funding of those who would be put in leadership positions to help make this happen on local levels. As Tom Reese noted in his excellent article, the Vatican like the Church should always be "reforming". Francis has taken an important "step forward but much remains to be done".

I haven't finished it yet.

I am embarrassed to admit that I don't know anything about it.

While Francis has spoken well re: many issues, he, like most clerics/hierarchy, maintain 'blindness' likely 'culpable' re: justice & equality for half of God's children, women & girls.

I am cautiously encouraged.

Have not read it.

It is a step in the right direction. Albeit a small step.

Have not read as yet.

Praise God for change and acceptance for the whole Body of Christ as being capable for enriching our Church.

Have not read it all but so far a simple YES response to be given more thought and reflection at another sitting. In short, I as a Lay Minister was in a Theater Group for. Many. Years touted as "Portable Theater Proclaiming. The Good News (the Gospel) I also had my own group called The Prophetic Players. Both Groups spreading, sharing, educating, proclaiming the Gospel message through expressive arts: Dance, Music & Drama in both the streets and in the sanctuaries.

I

I am unfamiliar with the new constitution.

I am happy that Pope Francis is changing things. I know it takes forever. These are small steps in the right direction. Except, there needs to be outright truth to the catholic people regarding the sexual abuse issues and the laws that protect children and young adults. In Pennsylvania, the church has way too much influence on the political favors and the statute of limitations being open, the church needs to push for the statute of limitations so it can begin to resolve in all countries a restorative

justice for the survivors, and the siblings and parents of the victims. We need to resolve the hurt and divisions in our families because of the abuse and other irresponsible damages that have sent people from our church.

With Pope Francis declaring women will never be ordained and those with pets instead of children are lesser than, I don't trust this person. To me he is a creature, like us all. I trust Future Church 's community to live out the authority place within the office of the pope, for me as an individual. Too many really bad experiences to trust in a bishop of Rome for me.

Great! Let's keep opening the doors for leadership in the Church to look like the people in the pews

Not read yet

A great beginning but we must continue to review and reform so that there is a constant creation of the better way.

I haven't read it.

Positive

I feel encouraged by the embrace of the Vatican II model of being Church that calls for a contemplative, transparent and collaborative way of engaging in the world in service and mission. The cabinet model of departments that interface in leadership of women, religious, and lay people is encouraging. Also, the key emphasis on the Department of Evangelization to lead in

the mission encourages a more holistic preaching of the Gospel.

Not informed enough to answer.

Alleluia!

I have not familiarized myself with it as yet but am planning to.

I apologize that I don't really know much about the constitution so don't feel qualified to make any comment. However, I think Pope Francis is doing a great job.

All for it!

This is the fruit of Vatican II; I am hopeful.

It was a step in the right direction.

Excellent!

Hope filled. Visionary.

A small step in the right direction. So much more is needed, and quickly, with the seeming stream of exclusionary tactics enacted by so many US bishops.

Our Pope is amazing. He too has to work with many obstructionists. It seems more and more people and groups are speaking up and breaking down the old barriers, just takes much time. Some of us don't have much time

Well done Pope Francis. A breath of fresh and needed air and this change is

a solid beginning. The path is difficult, and the obstructionist are many. More people have been speaking for these changes and for him to create this change is affirming they are on the right track. It is a slow process. I am older and hope to see some of these needed changes really taking hold! We have lots of talent, experience and well-informed individuals that have much to share and do! Given the opportunity, WOW. We need to reestablish true credibility, and this is a good beginning,

It represents a change in philosophy. No one in top positions leading a department can exceed two five-year term seems like a good safeguard that no one becomes entrenched with power. For Pope Francis, the provisions in the new constitution serve to undermine careerism, unlinking the chains of power formed when people remain in dicasteries for a long time. However, I am afraid of a bureaucratic structure forming that may stunt necessary growth. It appears that more fine-tuning must take place.

Very excited for the gifts that laity can bring in helping reform the Church giving new meaning to what it means to be “Church” in contemporary world.

Positive, a step in the right direction.

I have not had time to read it thoroughly but am very encouraged that he took this bold step.

I had to review materials online regarding this, as I had no familiarity

with it. I am not sure that it will make much difference to lay involvement as we experience it today.

I’m thrilled that this is official and finally happening!!!

Glad they changed Art. 93! Need to read the whole thing in Italian!

At long last. Courageous step Our mission of proclaiming comes from our baptism not from ordination. Governance and accountability necessary SERVICE to the universal Church as opposed to being the overseers

Hierarchy disappears. Bottom up rather than top down

Disappointed.

I keep hoping Francis will lead all in honoring and living equality of all

It is hard to find the document- just commentaries about it. So, what I have read is a good start.

Not enough time with it yet but inclined to approve. But I think P. Francis has his head, heart, and hands set straight.

It fills me with great hope and joy

Anything to begin opening opportunities for lay persons to play more active roles and recognized roles is a good start.

I stopped listen to ANY of the popes after the death threat in the Vatican ‘Mercy’ prayer.

Have not read it but Francis is a light in this darkness for the Church.

I have not read it.

Well, since I haven't heard of this at all, it shows how the Church can't even communicate its own business. I will read it now. I follow the Pope on Instagram but didn't notice any announcements. My parish never mentions these things.

My hope is that it will be both promulgated as well as PRACTICED throughout the Church. The response of some bishops to the compassionate, pastoral leadership of Pope Francis has been resistance and that continues to block our progress.

Thank you.

Ummmm -- I have not informed myself about this -- cannot comment.

Other than what was written on the Futurechurch site, I know nothing about it.

I haven't heard much about it and I can't read Italian.

It seems like an improvement.

It gives me hope that dialogue, mutuality, and shared decision making might become possible by not only by laymen, but even by laywomen.

Wonderful.

It is a start. It is long overdue.

I so look forward to Pentecost when Pope Francis will courageously implement the reforming of the Roman Curia. Long Live Pope Francis!

I don't know specifically what these are.

Finally! The doors to leadership are beginning to open for lay people, especially women and their gifts!

Wonderful. Hope it will move through all levels in church life especially diocesan and parish levels.

At my last reading of NCR, the constitution had not yet been translated into English. It is only in Italian at this time. That qualified lay persons, men AND women could be chosen to lead diasteries is a tremendous move in the direction of inviting the laity to leadership. I want very much to have a deeper understanding and appreciation of our clergy as being vital to sacramental ministry in our parishes. This entails much better training in how to be "pastoral"; i.e., servant-priests.

Perhaps the statement that all 'Dicastery's will be juridically equal' brings some hope that the emphasis isn't totally on rules, regulations and orders and ones like Interreligious Dialogue and Christian unity (not only with the Jewish faith) will provide an opportunity for listening and potential growth in today society

Amen, alleluia!!!

I haven't read the document yet, but articles that have been written on it that I have read offers hope that the restructuring of the curia (so long needed) MAY, deal with some of the ongoing abuses and offer women and lay men SOME chance to have their voices heard.

Have not yet read it.

Pope Francis is leading the way to modernizing the Church and bringing all the faithful to the table - capitalizing on talents of all Catholics.

Very excited about its possibilities.

Don't have enough knowledge about this to comment.

It seems to be a step forward in accepting lay leadership of Vatican offices and governance, but it is still to be seen as actually working. Parts of this constitution seem vague and confusing. So there needs to be some follow up and clarification.

I welcome it and pray it will be implemented and extended to All roles and ministries in the church.

Haven't read it yet to comment.

What a courageous move to decentralize the roles at the Vatican.

I LOVE IT. Holding my breath to see how it trickles down into my parish.

Sorry I have not seen it yet.

It doesn't go far enough to welcome women and lay leaders into the life of the church. And why can we no longer have lay men and women homilists? Our parish had them for years, and suddenly with a new archbishop and pastor, all of that went by the wayside.

Q4. What do you believe is the future of lay ministry and leadership in the Church? What is God calling us to do at this moment?

Listen to the voices of the laity and let them lead.

People need to own that we are the church and that we need to be grounded in the gospel of Jesus.

Continue supporting groups such as Future Church.

To use all the gifts of the laity to better serve the community.

I really don't know. I wish I was more hopeful that the boys in charge at the Vatican and in dioceses all over were more will to share authority. But boys will be boys. (I am male, just fyi).

Really take a hard look at the state of the Catholic Church and why so many are leaving, and we are not attracting young people. We are NOT addressing their needs and we MUST be open to woman as leaders in the church going forward.

The laity are acting with their feet and hearts, forming community not organizational Church.

God calls all of the baptized to ministry. The church says it, but it doesn't act on it. If they want the church to continue in the world, they need to embrace lay people and let go of some of the power they hoard.

We need to reach out and connect individuals in our parishes whether they are in need, feeling useless, lost a loved one and other areas.

When all the clerics are gone, lay ministry will flourish.

Perhaps the time has come when everyone who loves God can work together to bring the kingdom, where each person can share the gifts given to them with all of God's people...and leaders, lay and ordained, can help this happen.

Since the Spirit of Wisdom breathed new life through Vatican II, the future was/ has been for more lay leadership.

I have been in lay ministry and leadership my entire time as a member of the Church (entered in 1997). I don't know anything else, though I have heard of dioceses that do not promote or encourage lay leadership. God is calling us to fulfill our baptismal promises; to be priest, prophet and royals.

The laity must be allowed to be full members of this Church or we will not have a vibrant Church in the future.

It needs to really happen and be embraced throughout the whole church.

We need to listen to all the people of God.

It's really hard to say because the males who find their identity in control and clericalism have been blocking the fruits of Vatican II. Perhaps we're being called to push for an increase in lay ministry-- besides "solving" the shortage of male, unmarried priests by ordaining women and married men.

I would hope that the Church would return to the small model of home community churches instead of buildings that isolate us from those in the community to whom we should be actively ministering.

To be treated on an equal basis as the clergy.

God is calling us to listen to the voices of all the people. To re-evaluate the structure and function of the Church and is it serving the needs of the people and caring for the Earth? How can we become relevant in the daily lives of the faithful, and to all our neighbors... regardless of faith tradition, or none?

Eventually I think the church will allow more lay ministry. We need to keep working for it.

Home churches. Leave the patriarchy.

The future could be very positive for lay ministry and leadership but are there enough who think as many of us do?

Let all the People of God be fully involved. We can serve better together.

It is an absolute necessity.

We need to be not afraid and listen to the Spirit

With the diminution of the clergy and the lack of women in the priesthood, lay leadership is critical. It should be critical even if there were an excess of male and female clergy.

Lay people are needed. There are not enough ordained people.

Much greater involvement and movement of all the laity and especially women.

I believe it is the future, but I think it will come very slowly.

Lay ministry must be described by words such as inclusive and equal.

I strongly believe that God is calling us to finally recognize that women, men in fact all genders are equal before God and therefore can be called to ordained ministry. Lay ministry should NOT be considered as subservient to a hierarchical system. Lord have mercy.

I hope we will return to “house churches” where men and women will celebrate Eucharist together.

If truth be told, I believe God’s Spirit is drawing us toward something completely new! The old is dying on its own, and the future will be bright only if the present way of doing things changes!

I answer the question by reversing the wording. The future of the Church includes the close integration of lay people in leadership roles

Move forward into it-we will no longer be church if we don’t become transformative.

I believe we are being called to a much more inclusive and collaborative leadership where all voices can be heard.

We must persevere.

God is calling all of us to see what is before us.

God is calling us to collaborate. We are a people of God who is community

I believe lay people should have “equal billing”- equal voices. We should be able to do whatever there is to do within our faith communities, according to our ability and calling.

The future is full lay ministry and leadership in the Church. That is precisely what God is calling us to do.

I think that needed changes will be very slow in coming. God is calling us to keep working on it, regardless of the glacial response.

To change our direction. Invite all into the church in full participation.

More women in those positions; better training in communication and relational skills; open to lgbtq persons as well

If there is a welcoming spirit/ an openness/ an acceptance shown by the clergy to share the responsibility, there is hope. For us as lay people there is a calling to get involved, to share this Good News that we are an integral part of the Church’s mission.

God is calling entrenched clerics to wake up and see what the Spirit has done in the hearts and souls of lay people and give up the power to widen the tent for all those called to serve! It’s such a clear clarion call to those of us who have been called and have spent our own time and money tooling ourselves to serve the people in Parish leadership and church leadership! Wake up! Give up clericalism and power we are here!!!

Educate, plan, and execute. Be gentle, not brash. Start small, build relationships, but intentional as you grow.

Feeling reconstruction is what’s needed. Certainly celibacy, patriarchy and hierarchical structures should be excavated and a reengineered circular

model developed eliminating any connection between service and gender.

With the decline in the number of clergy, I believe the Spirit is telling us that it is time to empower the laity.

IMO, God has always wanted us to work together as a spiritual community. It's run more like the military right now and getting worse. The hippie priests of the 1960's are retiring.

I believe we need to keep speaking our truth with love and find ways around those who want to silence us. All voices are relevant and need to be heard.

With so few ordained, there is now no excuse to ignore this need. Pray, Talk, Advocate.

We are being called to greater openness and a study of new models of being church.

The future has to include lay ministry and leadership or the Church will die, or a new version will form such as is already happening with RCWP organizations. That wouldn't be bad though.

We are being encouraged to use our voice . The Holy Spirit will offer us the wisdom and courage to speak and reach out.

I believe that this is the future of our Church. God is calling us to listen to, respect, work with, empower one another--not in opposition to the clergy

and hierarchy, but in collaboration with them.

See question 6. I can't speak for God, but it makes sense to me.

God is calling us to recognize and utilize lay leadership in the Church.

Not much future in traditional Church. Make our voices heard by taking money we put in collection basket and give to organizations that are progressive.

Without lay ministry the church will not exist.

Greater and equally distributed roles and "say" in our faith life and the life of the church as a whole.

Unleash the spirit in people of good faith. Be fearless and trust that the gifts of the Spirit are given for the common good.

Lay ministry should work shoulder to shoulder with clergy and religious and designations should vanish. Properly trained lay should be considered ministers of God as well as clergy and religious. God is calling us to be open to the spirit and bring his kingdom to fruition

Lay ministry and lay leadership have Always been a call from God. The institutional Church, hierarchy, needs to open their hearts and listen to that CALL.

I hope there is a future!

I believe the future of lay ministry is the future of the church. God is calling us to recognize the gifts of all people, not just their gender or office in the church.

Just this. Speak, listen and learn. I know that the Holy Spirit is fully involved in this. I would like to have monthly parish listening sessions no matter who is pastor - it comes with the territory.

I believe that the Spirit is inviting us to listen deeply to those on the margins, those who have been hurt by the church, those who have given up on the church, those whose anger keeps them away.

I believe God is calling us all to full and active participation in the Church as we all together form the Body of Christ.

Speak truth with humility.

Lay people are the Church, and always have been. We have always been leaders but have not been seen and acknowledged as such. God is calling us to continue to be leaders, and to speak out about our gifts and abilities.

With less and less priests, lay ministry must expand to meet the needs of the community. We are called to step up, share our gifts and be community.

I believe that lay leadership will take greater hold, especially as priests become more scarce. Priesthood is a "call" from God, but not what the priest does, this can be shared. Here is where I

believe the laity will gradually come into their own.

He calls us to be His love. To spread that as far and well as possible. We need more people. Train and let more people in.

I think this is a healthy thing in the life of our Church. I believe we need to pray and "fight" for this to be more widespread.

The church won't continue to exist and flourish without lay leadership throughout the world.

The Church IS the people of God. If we listen, truly listen, He/She will lead us. Surely, we need to trust in this.

We have vocations in our church, many vocations and people willing to serve. They are just not men who are willing to take a vow of celibacy.

Vatican II addressed the role of the laity - the church is called at this time to enhance Vatican II's vision of the laity in the church.

Lay leadership will be extremely important as we move forward. With the number of priests decreasing, we need to utilize the gifts of lay people.

Carry out Vatican II values, use the talents of all people, including homosexuals and LGTB people in ministry.

There is a future for lay ministry at all levels in our church, if doors will just open wide - especially for women. My vision of church is less hierarchical; more pastoral and less regulatory. The rules and regulations and European liturgies are killing the Spirit of our global people.

I hope lay people will have equal power and ministry with priests and priests do spiritual things. I believe God wants us to ordain women priests and deacons and to allow and promote birth control and gay marriage.

I think it will have greater use. To train and develop clergy and laity.

As the number of clergy continues to dwindle the Church must be prepared to accept lay ministry and leadership or perish. Too many gifts are being wasted. The Benedict option is not God's way.

I'm hopeful that it will grow. I think it's essential for the long-term health of the church.

That lay ministers and ordained ministers are considered equal, but with different ministries, and that they work together.

Without lay ministry and leadership, the Church will remain a clerical Church. God is call us to combat 'power and control' and trust the people of God. The Holy Spirit is present in everyone.

It will depend on, say the successor of Pope Francis similar to Vatican 2

Change.

I believe the future is as bright as we want to make it.

Ever needed; will grow!

Move away from Patriarchy and Clericalism in that all roles are important with both men and women in various vocations.

God is calling us to get serious and move forward. Many bishops seem to be reacting with fear. As Jesus said, "Fear Not!"

Grow in a deeper eucharistic view on the Word. We are all Eucharistic people who can share our Christness with others.

This is a turning point in our church lives. The many organizations (FC, New Ways Ministry, Network, etc. etc.) and interfaith gatherings are opening the doors to a broader understanding of the message of Jesus for all of us. We must enthusiastically join the Synod movement as it rolls out until 2023 and then study the results and keep moving forward!

The future is bright IF the Church hierarchy desires it and permits it. Lay people and Sisters in particular are ready, willing, and able.

We all need to raise our voices and ask for what we want. We need to keep raising them, even after the synod process is over. If we find a voice now,

they can't stop us from participating later. Thank you to Futurechurch, and other groups for giving us the opportunity to let our voices be heard.

I hope Pope Francis can continue to promote call to ministry of lay people and help bishops and clergy lessen their clericalism.

Until our seminaries are reformed, not sure what will happen. I see House Church happening! God is calling us to "new ways" of being Church. For me, that is exciting! I am open!!

I believe the Spirit is leading the church towards a fuller collaborative process and the need for trained lay ministers is great.

God is calling for major reform and big money is fighting changes
God is asking for full Vatican II implementation.

Lay leadership is essential to the life of the Church ... if not structurally accepted, the Church will continue to live and thrive underground (ordained women priests, etc.

For lay leaders to hold any office, role, at any level when qualified and to partner with priests as equals, not subservient. Sometimes, the priest may even serve a minor role while the lay ministers hold decision-making positions. The priest could handle some pastoral duties or sacraments, as needed.

God is calling all to gather in love and respect for each other to share from our hearts how we feel the Spirit calling to us and to our Church.

God is calling us to step up and participate. Leadership will change when the pastor can be confident with the lay leaders.

I hope the forward progress doesn't end then next time we get a new Pope.

Renew ourselves in realizing the importance of everyone's voice.

Set up structures for pastoral teams that cannot be squelched by the changing of parish priests or bishops. So often the assignment of a new priest or bishop who disagrees with lay leadership causes so much disruption of parish life.

We need to include lay ministry, if for no other reason, to keep the church going. I believe God wants us to be inclusive in this regard. I believe that God is calling us to know, welcome and appreciate all in the church.

1. Get women involved. 2. Listen to the congregation, don't dictate from the pulpit.

Choose the reality that WE Are the Church, the People of God!!

Lay ministry should be expanded and developed within the church. We are being called to take ownership within the parish. We each must help others and be fed in order to feed others.

If the Church doesn't get out of its own way, God will rejoice in the small intentional communities that continue to do God's work, as Jesus called us to do. I pray that Church leadership will hear God and accept the gifts God sends.

Lay ministry will only grow. The times are asking for it.

Assess the needs of the community with the community and work to make their dreams realized.

Lay ministry must be expanded and recognized as vital part of a vibrant church. One would think with all the needs and the shortage of clergy that those in authority would have found the lay ministry to be God's solution. However, the men in charge appear reluctant to share authority. Are they "seeing the face Christ" in the face of the lay, especially women?

Well, it certainly is easier to just sit back and let the work be done by the clergy. Stepping up and educating ourselves so that we can be competent leaders is a lot of work. I think God is calling all laity to speak up and effect change. That is hard to do.

One with and equal to clergy. Allow people to go back and do ministries once done but cut off by pastors. Know that nothing can stop you. There are always ways around things. If inspired, DO IT.

It seems vital that we participate in sessions like this, speaking our truth

simply and clearly as the Spirit moves us. And simultaneously we need to create structures that enable, support our own faith life so we have more to offer the institution. Our future begins now. There aren't great numbers of men coming forward to serve the needs of the Church. Whether within or beyond the institutional Church, our time is now.

I know that the lay communities are meeting without the Church and are getting far more from the community than they say they got from decades of Church.

After 80 frustrating years, women obtained the vote in USA. I believe women will finally obtain full recognition of their value in The Church. In the meanwhile, many potentially valuable young women and leaders as well as mothers will leave The Church. Women are the current spine and workforce of The Church. God is saying to prepare for the future, since the Church has been growing stronger in Africa, Black African Women will save it!!

Perhaps this is why there is a shortage of priests. It is forcing the Church to depend more on the laity.

From what I've heard from Future Church the past few weeks, God seems to be calling us to form intentional faith communities and to do more social outreach; to practice Catholic Social Teaching, which the Cincinnati seminary has now dropped from its curriculum. The seminary also dropped the lay pastoral ministry curriculum.

Our current Pastoral Administrator has a masters from there. The young seminarians are now wearing cassocks and going back to Vatican I. They've even re-designed an altar in a chapel to be adapted to the Tridentine Mass! God is inviting us to get closer to God the Creator and to each other. What would Jesus really be doing? Jesus worked closely with his Apostles and Disciples. Let's remember Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and the other women who went to the tomb and were the first to find Jesus! Let's remember Martha who was outspoken, and who bugged Jesus because her brother Lazarus had died, but then her faith was totally strong and unwavering after seeing Lazarus rise from the dead. The "Martha's" of this world can get a lot done. The "Mary's" can lead us to our contemplative sides. If people were more contemplative, then they would value other human beings and God's creation, instead of getting into political culture wars (sometimes in the name of Christianity, unfortunately).

I believe it has to happen - we have all been given gifts to use which I have done in the past. I'm old now but still can use whatever gifts I have in other ways.

The church will only survive if we welcome the gifts of the Laity. We are called to call forth the laity, welcome their gifts and insight and empower them to be servant leaders.

I believe God is calling men and women, married and lay to ordination-sacramental and liturgical ministries

primarily, Other lay leaders, as needed in contemporary Church and World.

Lay ecclesial ministry has prepared many for such roles. In many cases they can't find paid ministry.

It must be included, or the church is dead.

As a retired person I can listen pray and let my voice be heard.

Value everyone.

The participation of all the people of God should be respected and encouraged. That is essential.

The People are the church. The hierarchy serves the general good, not the other way around.

Meet people where they are! If they need to be nourished by a priest, that's fine. If their need spiritual support from laity then it should be available.

I object to the word 'lay'. There's got to be a different word to describe a non-cleric. 'Lay' means unprofessional, unformed, and not responsible.

Spread the gospel of Jesus, love one another, speak the truth.

Come together and worship as one. Christ works through all people, no matter what their title.

I believe God, through Pope Francis, is making it abundantly clear that our

Church needs to return to its roots. To become less dogmatic and more Gospel-oriented. To be less hierarchical and for the leadership in the church to be shared between the ordained and the laity.

Don't know.

I think what God is called the laity and certain clergy is to open up the roles of ministry more, but I don't think the clergy is ready because they repeat the phrase "the church is not a democracy"

Transformation of consciousness is happening in the spiritual lives of the laity. This needs to be heralded as a great grace of God for the Church today.

God is calling us to be bold and brave - loving and just - and stop begging for crumbs from priests and ordained men.

If the church won't recognize the ministry, it will grow stronger and stronger and take over the institution.

Jesus and the apostles/disciples were not ordained-- we are all called to minister/care as Jesus did.

God is pouring out ecclesial vocations throughout the local churches of our world--we must recognize and welcome them as part of pastoral teams everywhere.

It will continue to expand as the clergy decreases.

Be open to the Spirit and to one another.

Open doors, invite and encourage lay leaders.

Share our experiences and lead when called (by the Holy Spirit)

Without lay leadership and ministry the church will not survive.

I believe the renewal of our church depends on the rightful place of the laity in all areas of the life of the church. God is call us to a more inclusive church that is not male priest centered.

God is calling us to follow Jesus and welcoming everyone to follow him.

If the laity is not given leadership, there is not much of a future for the Church.

God is calling each person to participate thru the individual gifts; some including pastoral counseling, preaching, officiating sacraments, even pastoring as equipped & called.

We are called to live our passion as laity, to have confidence in the essential role we have in the future of the church.

The future is open to possibility for laity's voices to be heard as an essential component to the mission of the Church.

I am very hopeful because the laity want to be involved in their parishes in the way they were after Vatican 11.

God is calling us to promote the laity as an effective and equal arm of the

church. The clergy is not ontologically different from the laity.

I believe that there will be an expansion of lay ministry and leadership in the future.

The laity is the church, we are many so we can be the voice, the hands, and the heart that can effect change.

Increase our numbers of lay ministers to secure the continuation of Catholicism.

I wish I believed that the Church would become a true vital and all-inclusive church in my lifetime. I do not see how this will happen when I see and experience the new clergy.

I believe that the church can survive and thrive only if lay ministry and leadership is promoted. The Church is the People of God -- all of us! Not just the clerics -- although they, too, are needed.

Lay ministers should be allowed to be administrators of churches and participate in Vatican positions.

Much needed but will deal with objection from hierarchy. God. Calling us to speak.

I am looking for a new, emerging church. A church that is welcoming, inclusive, hopeful and respectful of the gifts of all.

I think the future is to reach out and be inclusive. I think God is calling us to

be more loving and less legalistic in our faith.

Speak our truth not just the party line.

We need to partner with the Episcopalians, Anglicans, Orthodox and other Christians in widening the actual Body of Christ, rather than narrowing due to dogmatic concerns

Without it there will be no Church, so they must take on larger and more substantive roles in decision-making and in liturgy.

I believe and hope deeply that we break down those barriers that the clerical system has created and be God's people - the baptized with some of them being ordained to oversee the community and empower and encourage all the gifts.

Call to a new church, simple, communal, not big structures or institutions, welcoming of the poor.

I am hopeful that lay ministry and leadership can grow and flourish. Participation in intentional communities of faith—house churches—is growing; but don't want to lose the "mix" of a regular parish, don't lose identity as body of Christ with all its wounds as well as gifts.

God is calling lay people to lead, according to their gifts.

The church needs more lay leaders. As a member of a religious congregation, we are grateful for our lay partners

and know they will be able, by their leadership, to continue our ministries.

Priests come and go. Clericalism must go. Lay leadership is a support to the ecclesial community and to the priest.

I think that with the vacation crisis and the scandals and lack of recognition of lay people there is a real crisis in the church. I think for the survival of the Church, the hierarchy will have to reconsider its position on married men as priests as well as opening up ordination to women.

Lay leadership will be essential in churches as number of priests diminish so how can we prepare.

Lay ministry and leadership are critical to building God's kingdom. God is calling us to be in this together to create church--our spiritual life is connected with others.

Continue conversations like these.

I strongly feel that God is calling all of us to leadership according to the gifts that God gives to each of us regardless of race, orientation, and faith. Love has to be our top priority in relation to one another.

God is calling us to listen to each other and join ALL people's gift in love and worship.

God is calling us to recognize the calling of the laity - long overdue - and to act on implementation of assimilation in all

activities/leadership/decision making within the parishes.

If we don't acknowledge that lay people are as valuable and worthy as priests, the church will become extinct.

The future of lay ministry depends on the openness and support of the clergy. The clergy must be willing to encourage and accept lay leadership.

Without it we are going to Shrink even more and need the diversity to live in a world that is getting more complex with more world views and there is room for everyone. Hopefully.

God is calling us to open the windows again, as he did with Pope John XXIII, to enrich the role of laity and address the preponderance of clericalism in the universal Church. It has to go!

If our diocese/parish is an example of the future Church, I fear that more and more people will find the Church irrelevant. I trust that God is calling us through the voice of Pope Francis, telling us where to concentrate our efforts--which requires a strong lay response to reach those on the margins.

God- The Holy Spirit- is calling the Catholic Church to have optional celibacy for priests and for women to be ordained ministers of The Church. This will open up the entire Church to all levels of better lay ministry and leadership for men and women- For All people. That is the most important first step.

If lay ministry and leadership does not happen, it is my belief that the Church will not survive. I thank God for Pope Francis; I believe that his papacy is a sign of God's presence in the Church.

The laity has to be recognized, accepted and utilized. If not, the Church as is, will die! God is calling us to keep being 'sheep that talk'

I pray that if ministry opens up to all the laity, we will head the call of the Spirit and step up to take our place.

I do believe God is calling us all to speak our truth about ministry in the church ministering to all God's people.

I am cautiously optimistic. We must begin the journey of reforming the Church. I don't expect a lot to change in my lifetime (I'm 76). But a lot can be done immediately.

God is calling us to recognize the gifts of the laity, but until the hierarchy acknowledges us, we will not have equal leadership roles.

For any credibility and speaking to today's needs, Church needs to acknowledge that well trained laity are more than willing to offer their gifts to their Parish/diocese

That the whole church becomes a community of faith in practice not just actors and spectators.

Hearty participation of lay ministry. God is calling us to contribute our talents and our voice towards an inclusive universal church.

Don't walk away from the Church! Raise our voices! Raise our voices! Raise our voices!

The Church must be open to new forms of ministry simply because there are fewer and fewer priests to do the work of the church.

God is calling us to be Church despite those working against the value of lay ministry and leadership. This synod will hopefully help the church move in a more positive direction.

I think we are not listening for God's voice in choosing direction as a church. The future of the church WILL be the laity, or we will not survive to fulfill our mission that was given to us by Christ to love and serve each other.

God is clearly calling the church to involve all the people of God to participate in the life of the church. We all are called to serve.

Enhance our theology so it is pertinent for the reality of our lives now. A creation center theology must exist. Dismantle clericalism NOW. Get rid of the strangle hold the priest have on sacraments and allow the laity through their baptism to provide the sacraments.

Inclusion, inclusion and inclusion.

To be open

Begin anew, with a spirit of openness and inclusivity!

We have to topple the clericalism within the church because the Church is a loving and caring community from the onset.

There are groups that are doing this. Don't only rely on parishes. If lay persons are readied by other life giving groups they can set parishes "afire" with that life.

Many more, I fear, will leave the Catholic Church if they do not have an active voice, and feel a real part of the community. The church is NOT the clergy with all the power. It IS the people of God, alive and contributing!

Lay ministry has to be so much broader than the parish structure. Lay persons need to identify themselves As Church, not just belonging to a parish ...

With the current structure crippling itself with limited clerical leadership [male / celibate] there needs to be an openness to the ordination of women / married men etc. and a vast opening to the varied gifts of the laity who could so enrich their own lives and the lives of their communities.

Empower both lay men and women to take on roles that don't require ordination.

Lay people have to "wrap their heads around" the idea that "WE ARE THE CHURCH". We need to step up and help our Pastors in any way possible. They are struggling to meet the pressures of decreasing numbers of them, and some run more than one church! We need to be vocal with our Bishops and ask (or possibly demand) that we be involved in the running of our churches. We need to see the needs and fill them.

Allow me as a woman to feel like an equal in the mission of the church. I have the education and spirituality to bring Christ to others.

Vatican II lay ministry is the hope of the church. Our church is divided between those looking back and those looking ahead. We need to look forward with open-minded hope if we are to keep our young people involved.

I am hoping for many younger people in the church are willing to get involved in the church as I see so many older folks.

God is calling us to be faithful, to grow in love and to include everyone at the table. The number of men available to be priests is decreasing and those that are being trained are very often dysfunctional. We need leaders from all the faithful and we are missing so much by excluding so many.

As lay ministry grows in the church persons should be chosen to fill the right positions. A good preacher should preach, not serve soup. A loving, warm

person should be a counselor. Priest shouldn't be put in any position they don't have the God-given talent to handle. A Roman collar shouldn't be the determining factor.

Laity need to take more responsibility and leadership roles, and not just wait for the clergy and hierarchy.

The hierarchy has to allow the laity to be empowered first...and there are many there who are ready to play a bigger role. Especially women who are being called to preach. God is not calling the number of men to be priests as in the past. I think this is telling us a lot.

Greater involvement; not just cleaning the church and ironing the linens! (Which Mom and I did for many years).

Firstly, to be accepting of ALL of God's people, especially those who have left the Church because of not being.

The future is in the hands as well as clergy and religious.

Somehow, we must find more ways to work with our youth and younger adults. We must continue to be life-long learners: new issues will constantly emerge.

This is the age of the Holy Spirit and the time for the Laity to be encouraged and educated to assume leadership roles.

Be flexible in movement with world issues, life issues. Less ridged in the

norms/rules. Marat out of politics: i.e. with molding Eucharist to elected officials who support women's health issues. The Church, many priests are self-righteous and have tunnel vision to the thought and ideas of those outside the church such as gay marriage.

The future is on the threshold. We need the Pope and advisers to step over it. If we do this, the future is thrilling.

If the church continues as it is the lay ministry should have a major place in the leadership of the church. Pray, continue to question, look for ways to build our parishes, dioceses so that all are recognized and allowed to participate as members of the Body of Christ.

To be a people of equals ministering out of our Baptismal call, willing to serve doing justice in building up the Kingdom of God.

Nurture and promote lay ministry/ leadership. Listen to the experiences of laity and consider their responses in decisions.

Most needed at this time in the Church we so love. Open our eyes and ears to what is happening with the Priest shortage.

Place the ideas and actions on the table and see what happens. People must want this change.

God is calling us to listen to the women. She sees us and hears us and longs for our church to embrace the beautiful

ways in which women can bring us closer to the God to cherishes us all.

If the work of this Synod is successful, and if everyone takes the direction to heart, I feel hopeful. Vatican II was short-lived, but it was not entirely for naught. I have hope. I think God is calling us to be life-giving for the sake of our wounded world and that will also take some healing of the wounds of alienation that a hierarchical church has inflicted on its members.

I pray that Pope Francis lives a long, healthy life so that he can put all his initiatives in place for the laity. God is calling us to reform the world in love and justice.

We are the future. . . We are the church and as such must serve in more areas to make a positive impact on decisions that affect us and our families.

Speak up! So many people are leaving the church because they are afraid to speak up. It is time that the church realizes that it is nothing without God and His people. We are the church, no amount of wealth, property, or power can take that away from what God intended. The folly of man that let the church become a feudal system ruling from the top down has totally ignored the message of Christ.

I truly believe that if the hierarchy doesn't accept the fact that all people of God are equals and gifted by their creator with many gifts that can and must be used for the good of all.

Religion isn't only for the ordained. The church has to move away from the situations that have been created by a few to welcome all. I am afraid that if they don't the young people will continue to drift away and the church structure as it is now, will implode. I hope that these times are labor pains, and that a new life will be brought forth.

Jesus' call all to 'follow him' to be active disciples carrying out the great command to love by living Matthew 25.

To make our work in the world and in the Church holy. Ordain women to the priesthood and diaconate and strengthen the church by involving the laity extensively in the ministries of parishes and of the diocese and the Vatican.

God is calling Lay People to make decisions for the Church.

To be open to the creativity that Lay people bring. To safeguard the church for the future. To protect our young and vulnerable ones in church ministry and to bring the joy of the Lord to all the earth through the use of strong, intelligent and Grace filled discerning voices.

God is calling me to use my talents and expertise that I have come to learn in my ministry and allow me to make more decisions as to how women should be involved in church on an equal level with the men now in charge.

To participate in person in the Synod.
To take seriously the documents of

Vatican II and put them into practice.
Push Bishops and priests to do the same.

Given the shortage of priests and the extent to which the priests keep control, it is too much for a pastor to handle. The Church leadership must let go and let God guide us to a stronger partnership in parish life. What keeps them from doing so? They should prayerfully ask themselves this question.

The future IS lay leadership, or we will have a much smaller community. God is calling us to evolve - to be hopeful - to be a truly circular community of believers.

Both are essential. Perhaps this is why the declining number of clergy has occurred.

It is time for everyone to have a “voice” in the Body of Christ. Women, especially need to be heard and not have men deciding how they should think and act. Having both men and women in leadership brings a balance that constantly calls us to stay open to change, adjustment and growth.

Serve without preaching. We are in such a divisive time that I believe it is critical to get out of our comfortable silos and meet the people of God. Particularly the most vulnerable in our communities.

The future of lay ministry has great possibility if the clerical members would let go of their fear of losing power and fear of the feminine and instead thought

about the good of the Church - all the people of God

Francis’s call for lay feedback to the synod has us **TALKING TO EACH OTHER** - as we do here, and all across the world. As the current model of church shrinks, (people leaving, not enough priests) it’s on US the e laity to **BE** the church we were always called to be, and to model it for future generations.

We must continue to “kick up a storm.” It is no coincidence that there are so many groups (Futurechurch, WOC, etc.) Supporting and encouraging lay people to understand how many gifts we have to offer to each other, to the Church (meaning the people of God). We cannot give up now. I believe lay leadership ministry can thrive if we believe in it and invite more people to be leaders, i.e., providing the appropriate education and positions.

To reform His church....to spread His word....to encourage others to return and take part in the new transformative church....and to ordain women deacons to do it!

Listen and answer our own calling. Church needs to be open to variety of ways God (Holy Spirit) is calling and not close doors to women and married men.

God is calling the Church to move as He is calling the whole world away from a top-down organization. Those who are affected by decisions need to be involved in making them. That is the only way

good decisions can be made. Only those affected understand the full implication of a decision. Full participation of the laity at all levels of the Church is the only way it can respond to the signs of our times.

The future is very bright, but we need to do much preparation to assume our rightful roles, both education and formation, and also de-programming the “traditionalist” clergy. We need bishops who won’t thwart the effort and who enthusiastically and realistically welcome the laity into full ministry

Our role is more important than many of our clergy want to allow. We need to help the clergy understand their role as servant ministers rather than authoritarian heads of parishes and diocese.

I think God is calling us to reflect on what it means to be Church in 2022, be open to a future full of hope...one that may look different from what we have now, and act to bring that Church about. Need to recognize and call forth the gifts God has given each person, and to value that.

They are the future for the Church. If we don’t make this happen the Church will continue down the road of being disconnected from real people and we will have empty buildings, no parish communities and even sadder people.

Honestly, I think all of those called to be married priests, women priests, and lay ecclesial ministers should start

taking their time, talent, and treasure and put it fully into the alternative structures -- IEC’s, house churches, RCWO, Other Catholic Denominations, Reform Groups, etc. It’s easy to say though but tough to do. I send my kids to Catholic school, and we take them to the parish mass because it gives them the experience of sacramental life and a space to learn about the faith. But if there was an empowered group of young families running a really great IEC in Queens, I’d probably go there.

Sound teaching, theology, and spirituality about our Baptismal call and service within the faith community. Collegiality, listening to people in the pew.

I think that lay people should have a role in discerning this. I think the hierarchy needs to acknowledge the value of the vision of all members of the Church.

Read the writing on the wall. Women are not the inferiors of men. Their insight has not been allowed to lead Jeshua’s people for 2,000 years. It’s time for a new vocabulary.

It seems that in establishing a broader base for lay leadership, it is the present structure and its inhabitants that need to discern this. Power is going to be stubborn in re-shifting.

I truly believe that God is using Francis to let laity assume their rightful roles (Vat. Council. II) in the church.

I think and pray that lay leadership is ripe for going beyond words but are ready to be actively engaged as full participating members.

God is calling us to call forth the gifts of people in the pews and to enable them to use those gifts. They should be issued personal invitations--not just a "blanket" call for someone to come forward.

One priest delightfully called the laity "prophets from the pews."

I am hopeful that this synod will endorse broader and more roles for lay leadership.

The laity have a definite place in the church. 98% of the laity attend mass, receive the Eucharist and go home.... there is not the welcoming, sharing there should be and from the experiences of so many of the lay persons I have heard speak at this series, they have SO much to offer and are so very willing to participate.

The Spirit is calling us to move out of the buildings and toward the margins, the marketplaces, the places where we find people, all of creation most in need of healing and Good News.

God is calling us to reach out and include everyone. We need each other - our similarities - so important- and our differences.

Until the priesthood shortage is mitigated, the laity should be able to exercise certain ordained ministries.

God is calling us to a more inclusive Church we're anyone called to serve is able to do that regardless of their gender.

Welcome all, as Jesus did. He didn't send his apostles to school for years so they could learn how to minister. He showed them. Lay ministers, lay leaders would allow more lay participation in supporting each of us in our daily lives.

Full partnership of laity with clergy. The power cannot continue to be held solely by the parish pastor. Or, shared with laity with one pastor, but the power structure changes with change of pastor. Laity who participated in good faith get discouraged and move away from involvement in parish life.

A more inclusive use of the God given gifts of all in the church. We are all the church, not just the hierarchy. An end to clericalism.

As lay believers who minister we have a responsibility to do the work of the Church according to our abilities without being suppressed.

I believe that lay leadership and ministry is emerging in the Church even as the size of the traditional religious orders declines. There will always be some form of religious life but the laity would never have found their true role in the Church unless there were a lighter presence of religious.

It can only be done through the synodal process. General, open parish meetings

to discuss the mission and life of the parish. The priest is so needed for his pastoral ministry; the people are so needed for the maintenance details of the parish: The priest should be the advisor in spiritual matters and direct the laity of the parish as to how to care for and support the spiritual, physical, material well-being of the parishioners.

God is calling us to speak up and also that we will be heard and not silenced. We are called to walk together with the Holy Spirit.

I believe the lay leadership will need to increase if the church is to be vibrant, life-giving people of God.

The future is needed and needs to happen; overdue. It is for the survival of the Church, as well as its credibility! Gospel vision

I'm discouraged seeing that practically nothing is being done about the Synod in the parishes so the laity doesn't even know what's going on.

As the number of priest declines, the laity will have to assume more responsibilities in performing the mission of the church. We are called to listen more attentively to what the Holy Spirit is calling us to do.

Hopefully this will move and continue to move in a positive direction.

If we believe in Jesus, and strive to follow his example of what ministry looks like, we would have only lay

ministers, right?? Jesus was so critical of the religious leadership, the clerics of his day. I think that a return to the early Church model would be the right thing and is at least closer to what God is calling us to.

We need to reform and move faster. We can't make the necessary changes without both clergy and laity. Women need to be treated as equals and with respect.

I am sad but I think God is going to force this on us by their not being sufficient priests. This makes me sad, because I know that it will be an ongoing paring down of the local community. We all know how Covid decreased attendance.

The future is promising given the synodal process. And - currently the present church is fully dependent on lay people - whose roles and responsibilities much be recognized and high-lighted.

I think God is calling us to move forward or maybe backward to the early church where there was so much less emphasis on structure and authority-where lay leadership and ministry were important.

Too many churches are led by overwhelmed and exhausted clerics who feel responsible for impossible workloads. Shared leadership would utilize the personal gifts of participants in church life and can relieve the heavy burden born by priests, many of whom are elderly.

God is calling us to focus more on the beatitudes and focus less on those whose lives don't meet our measures of perceived perfection.

We need to tap lay ministry or we won't have much of a church. We'll end up with a Eucharist said in Rome and we'll "airlift" Jesus to the parishes. God is calling the hierarchy to conversion around the exercise of power. God is calling the laity to re-claim the exercise of their gifts and responsibilities in church governance and functioning as they once did in the two decades following Vatican II.

I believe the Holy Spirit is calling us to a more active role of service and welcome those on the margins so we can become a more universal church.

I am not really taken by the fact that lay people may now be the heads of Vatican offices although that is good and a step forward. We need a more horizontal approach to the living parish - perhaps seats all at a ROUND table where all have a voice/where there is no reach for power-

The future of lay leadership and ministry of the church depends on if the evil of clericalism can be exorcised from the Church. God is calling the laity to continue to lead, believe and speak the truth to the power of the Vatican.

God is calling us to go out of our churches into the streets and love our neighbors as ourselves, instead of bickering over points of doctrine or

politics that have no bearing on how to serve the needy and suffering among us.

In the near future, we are not going to have enough priests to administer parishes. The solution is not closing parishes but empowering laypeople. The bishops need to come up with a new canonical formula to name laypeople as parish administrators. The title of lay ecclesial minister and catechist needs to be valued in the Church and the Church should encourage and invest more time and money preparing the future leadership of the Church. Laypeople should feel that the parish belongs to them not to the priest, they are the ones sustaining the parish and probably will be there for many years while the priest is moved every 7 or 10 years.

The future of the Church depends on lay ministry and leadership in the church. God is calling the clergy to acknowledge this and collaborate with the laity.

Read the writing on the wall! If our people are to be guided, served, from whence shall come the ministers and leaders?

I think we need to make a distinction between professional competence in ministry, and ordained status. Ordination does not per se create credibility and competence as a leader. But "lay" should not be synonymous with amateur, well-meaning volunteers in the parish who lack serious coursework in scripture and theology. A study of church history, and the fact that

we have always been *ecclesia semper reformanda*, wouldn't hurt.

To be true brothers and sisters to each other and be co-creators with. The Holy Spirit.

God is surely calling every baptized person to participate in Church community, to develop and share gifts, to know and live the gospel so as to be able to bear witness to it and preach it - and sow the seeds.

Marriage prep and parent prep need to be revamped.

The 2nd Vatican Council called for lay involvement. New clerics are taught old ways. We need to have almost a revolution in the church. But it is happening. People are leaving and young not coming in.

It may happen by default, if not by design. I am glad of this opportunity for this opportunity to have our voices heard, and I believe that Pope Francis will push for this.

I do believe that it is the only way, in collaboration with the clergy, that the Gospel can be lived and spread throughout the world.... that, as Jesus prayed at the last supper, "ALL MAY BE ONE!"

All people of God with proper training should be ministers of/to God's people. The position of the ordained priests needs to be scrutinized and reformed!

I believe there will be more lay ministers and leaders participating in the service and mission of the Church. However, I think in many parishes this will happen because of the increasing shortage of priests and decline in those entering consecrated life. At this moment I believe God is calling us to preserve in calling the Church to reform, to be bold and courageous in speaking up for the kind of changes that need to happen, and to be hopeful in the belief that the Holy Spirit is transforming the Church.

We must listen and not be fearful to move ahead. The global situation needs the church to help it meet the needs of so many people and recognize God speaks to all who listen for his/her voice. God is with us! But we must approach change with a loving understanding of how it can be very difficult for many people. Let's not judge anymore! Let's just keep moving forward.

I believe it is the time for the laity to lead. Not in a way that would oust the clergy, no. Lead together in a collaborative way where lay and clergy can work together and bring out the best in each other's vocation. We have so much to give, and God is calling us to use our gifts, our life experience and our expertise to serve the Church and the world.

I don't know the future of lay ministry in the USA. Many Bishops & wealthy donors here do not support Pope Francis; I'm concerned they will do whatever they can to pull us back to before Vatican II. On the other hand,

I see active lay ministries in my parish and hear of lay pastoral ministers in other countries. So I have some hope. I do know if the US Catholic Church does not welcome lay leaders, especially in our Spanish speaking groups, that we will lose many to Evangelical churches.

I would love to see faith and religiosity become like it in Thailand where monks go for walks in the morning to beg for their food, allowing even the poorest in the community to be donors. That is humility. I wish we this kind of thing in western cultures. I wish we had monks and nuns in uniform moving about city life, and being met with respect, welcome -- that they were trusted, admired, valued, performing work that is unpaid while they lived simply in community so that they could dedicate their lives. Basically, I wish that lay life was more religious. I wish that life in western societies was more meaningful, serious, profound, sacred. I am tired of advertising and consumerism and shopping malls and pavement and electronic devices and alienated communities. Basically, I think the inverted pyramid (lots of lay people taking their vocation seriously and being supported by great clergy) is what God is calling for.

I believe lay ministry will contribute total all themselves for the church by the church give them opportunities.

People are the church.

Form base churches so that fellowship thrives, and social action follows.

God is calling for us to collaborate.

First of all, we must believe on the Holy Spirit. Pope Francis has the Holy Spirit.

Really tough question. There are the ultra-pious who smother toenails of marble statues in my church with lipstick. They are kissing the toes of a saint. In the same church gays and lesbians are asking to be married. The needs of people are so diverse in every parish. One-size-fits-all is not going to work. Need best minds, best hearts to figure this out.

I believe we need to train and carefully select people for lay ministry in our Church today.

I believe the future Lay Ministry and leadership in the Church is crucial for the future of our Church. God is calling all of us to pray and listen to the Spirit and speak the truth as Jesus did for the sake of building the kingdom of God today.

Greater involvement by the laity in all levels of decision making in the church should be allowed and encouraged.

TO be inclusive. God is calling us to reevaluate and listen.

Will we listen and will people speak out to be heard?

I believe that the church will rise or fall to the degree that she embraces the God

given gifts lay ministry and leadership can offer the church.

The Church's bishops can embrace and encourage the full participation by ALL the faithful in the life of the Church or they can covet their own authority and clerical power. Hopefully, the Holy Spirit will enlighten their minds and open their hearts to the former.

Lay ministers and lay leaders can contribute much to life in a parish and the church as a whole. Lay members have talents that could enrich the church. Also, greater use of lay leaders and lay ministers will free priests to be more pastoral, which I believe is their main calling.

I hope that lay ministry and leadership becomes fully integrated into all the ministries of the Church even at the Vatican.

Quite simply there will soon be NO Catholic Church if all people are not able to participate in ministry and leadership if felt so called. I understand that there are many Catholics who would like to return to much more conservative, traditional, orthodox way of doing things, who do not want women involved, do not want married priests, do not want women priests or deacons. Perhaps the Catholic Church will go the way of Judaism where we have an "orthodox/conservative" branch and a "reformed/Vatican II progressive" branch --- all under the auspices of the Pope. I would not be opposed to this if it helps us move forward.

God is calling each of us to create community and to discern with the community how best to nourish the church and the way I hope for the emergence of small communities rather than mega churches.

I'm not sure. Right now, to take a stand and to speak out more to the general congregations.

Lay leaders will soon take on leadership roles as there will be very few ordained ministers.

I think lay ministry IS the future. No need for labels like "clergy". God is calling us to what we are doing now... talking, sharing, listening, praying, discerning how to act. We are all about "the Fire of God's Love" and allowing it, spreading it.

As Vat II instructs us "Open the window!"

Be partners with priest, nuns, deacons to bring this church to what Jesus intended. It is currently divided and out of step with the needs of its people.

A move forward from a Council of Trent theology to an implementation of Vatican II and an understanding of the world in the 21st century. Education, education, education.

Lay ministers will save the Church and help recreate the new community.

Pope Francis' changes (officially recognizing, training and evaluating catechists) are in the correct direction but not enough. Woman deacons is a most important next step forward.

It has a positive future if promulgated. It will be able to voice real concerns of the laity

I sincerely believe that this is the time that the laity will finally be recognized for the important role they play in the church. I hope Pope Francis lives long enough to bring this to fruition.

I think we need supportive groups such as Future Church to remind us of Vatican II and its emphasis on the role of the laity. I also believe we should definitely encourage others to step up and use their giftedness for one another.

God is calling us to speak up and say it's time to listen to the people for a change. All the extravagant eucharistic congresses in the world are not going to bring people back to a sclerotic, dogma-dominated institution.

For the Church to continue it is crucial to have valid lay ministry.

Hang in there!

I believe it is most important. With fewer candidates for a male priesthood, too many parishes have closed in recent years. Support for lay ministers- both women and men- could have been the way to help those parishes to remain

open and become more vibrant. This is indeed happening in other places around the world as well as in our own country in some places.

I think God must be calling us to look at changes regarding clericalism and patriarchy.

Embrace all of his creation. And to walk with the poor, the disenfranchised, the sick, the lonely, the desperate and the incarcerated and help bring the Christ to them.

Unless & until massive changes are made dismantling the 'clerical culture' of control, 'power over' & wrongful notions of sexuality; any talk of 'lay ministry' only serves to keep 'lay folks' as servants of the clergy/hierarchy.

Unclear. It will be difficult to change our parishes when the majority of priests believe they are the only ones who represent Jesus among us.

Be inclusive of all. All are welcome!

The future of the Church depends on the formation of the laity to become aware we are the Church as much as the Pope, Bishops, clergy.

A firm commitment to Church, Involvement in the greater community issues and continued prayer and formation.

It will come, though with some difficulty. God is calling us to believe and to encourage a new Church.

The future is taking the “church” each person IS out into the world rather than clinging to old structures that hold us back. And separate us from the growing awareness of earth’s resources in the land, technology, science, medicine and the healing arts healing. God, our Trinity God is calling us to Trust, Listen & LOVE.

I think we are being called to listen to the people in the pews about what they see the Holy Spirit leading the parish. They can help reach out to fallen away Catholics from the church.

God is calling us to pray that Lay people take more Leadership and care in ministry and at all levels, The future of the church is in the hands of the Laity. Therefore, systematic planning, training, formation and Future Plans are to be drawn by the church authorities in collaboration with the laity.

Lay ministry and leadership in the Church will continue to be the norm but it will exercise deliberative power in all aspects of the Church’s life. The Church should focus, listen and consult especially with those groups that have experienced alienation from the Church: women, youth, and LGBTQ communities.

Increase lay participation and leadership following the answer to question #6.

This is a difficult question for me. I am not sure if God is calling me to stay and fight or make my voice heard by leaving.

I am not sure how to effectively fight for lay roles in the church.

Like a knitted blanket with a flawed stitch, we need to go back and recapture the essence of Vatican 2. During covid we needed to have Masses outdoors. We need to be enlivened again. God would be bored with us. We need some inspiration.

Naming that the context that draws me forth into a deeper relationship with Jesus is the gift of the Holy Spirit’s wonder and awe. Within framing of my limited wisdom are these models of church, per Dulles’ listing, as I lean into the sacramental, people of God and social justice manifestations of these models, I understand the prophetic expansion of consciousness brings a sense of hope and anticipation. Creativity and analogical imagination will prevail. I have not a clue what to expect.

I see that clericalism and returning to the past, prior to Vatican II, is preventing growth in the Church and lay ministry is being stifled.

God is calling us to act justly, love tenderly, serve one another and walk humbly with our Lord

Leadership needs to be taken out of the hands of clerical power, who act like dictators, and given to lay ministry leaders who are tuned into the needs of parishioners /Church. We need to see more women in ministry positions, instead of a Church that tries to thwart

their participation with a feminine genius ideology.

Looks positive.

Involve everyone.

Lay people are the future of the church. When consolidation of communities has created Mega Catholic Churches, lay people will move the church to a more human, more relevant and smaller communities. I believe God is calling us to prepare ourselves through education, spiritual direction and theology so that when we speak loudly, ALL will be able to hear

Full involvement according to the discernment of the community in which their leadership is needed and their charisms.

I feel that Pope Francis is encouraging lay involvement but is being criticized by a powerful few.

Equality and inclusion especially for the half of humanity not fully represented.

I believe God is calling us to unity, to widen our arms and include those who love the church and are willing to work hard to share the faith with others, and not limit this to vowed religious and priests/bishops.

More lay participation and leadership is essential which we have always had as Gods people.

We are the Church with us is the only way.

I think Lay ministry & leadership will increase to be able to have a more active, knowledgeable parish family. One priest cannot handle all that needs to be done in a large parish. And having lay persons involved brings a whole different perspective to the table, which the parish family may find much in common with and feel they are being understood.

Knowing that the church is the people of God and therefore all members of the church have a vital role to play.

With a shortage of priest in our country of Canada, I guess a lot of progress in religion to be taught properly its going to fall on the laypeople, but they need lots of education.

Major expansion of roles and scope.

God wants us to remember that absolute power corrupts absolutely.

It can only grow increasingly important as fewer male priests are ordained while the numbers of Catholics keep growing worldwide.

God is calling the laity to more responsibility for extending the faith to all.

To listen to one another and act in unity for the good of all mankind.

Much needed. Would bring a renewed enthusiasm for the Church, locally

and globally. God is calling us to recognize the opportunity to expand his missionaries through lay leadership.

I fear it may be the lay ministry that carries our faith forward as the clergy becomes more and more critical and irrelevant.

Lay leaders should be trained, they should have deliberate voice in all aspects of ministry in parishes. Lay leaders need to include all genders who exhibit talents that qualify them. When there is no ordained clergy, lay leaders of all genders who are trained/qualified can be pastoral leaders of parishes.

Hopeful. With the needed changes.

Lay Ministry, if the Church refuses to Ordain anyone other than heterosexual, single males, will be the future of the church. AND lay people ought to go on strike if they are not paid in higher regard (both in terms of respect and compensation) by the Church.

Collapse the stifling clerical structure of the Church.

I believe opportunities to being our gifts will be there. Just as Jesus missioned his “laity” we are being missioned to bring our gifts and voice.

Reopen the windows and doors and follow the teachings of Jesus.

Be involved and engaged in all aspects of the church.

I believe God is using this time to send a wakeup call to put the church on a course correction. We have had too many centuries of a church modeled after a feudal kingdom. I hope and pray this Synod will open the door to a church in which the all the people are fully educated in what our role is and then encourage involvement at every level. However, there still remain too many men who do not wish to give up control. So, what I want for the lay ministry may not occur (at least in the USA) any time soon. Sad but true.

As the People of God, lay ministers will continue to assume greater leadership and responsibility in the Church. God is calling us to this.

To be collaborative & equal in our approach to the needs of people.

Discern and gather in a Synodal fashion as prescribed by these sessions as model for Vatican III.

Challenging but a reality. I feel that God calling us to listen to the Spirit, that the Spirit is relying on us to create a new world, that our Creator is inviting us to co-Create, that Jesus is saying « Follow Me, I am the truth and the Way.

Laity need to take ownership of the church & become more educated.

God seems to call individuals to leadership...beyond obstacles.

End clericalism by democratizing and elevating lay voices.

When we acknowledge all of our sisters and brothers have a contribution and are eager to contribute to the body of Christ.

Fight for change.

We should reevaluate the separation of the baptized into lay & religious. To not do so will just continue the practice of clericalism.

Stay faithful to the journey into being the missional church of Jesus.

Fully inclusive church in leadership.

Create structures that allow for collaborative decision making and shared responsibility

We should kick the priests out. Catholicism is BILLIONS of believers held hostage by 3,000 +- proud, pagan, predators in the Church hierarchy.

Become true pastors and walk with us.

God is calling us to remain faithful and remain a bright light on our communities. This is extremely difficult, given our current circumstances.

We are the Church if we don't get involved there will be no Church. It's an emergency but the Bishops don't seem to hear the alarms.

The leadership is closing churches Lay ministers are fighting to keep them open and safe the communities. Also, they go to the periphery and take the Good

News to all peoples. People are leaving the churches because of different reasons but they have to do with the behavior of the clergy.

Lay people are picking up the pieces. Clergy and laity need to work together.

We are called to LIVE THE GOSPEL and to love one another. If we were intent on that, the rest would fall into line. We need to live more out of our hearts than our heads.

If the church hierarchy doesn't allow more lay leadership, it will die a slow death.

Continue to empower ALL members.

I'm not for women deacons because the church clerics want to control what a woman can do or not do and there will be no equality in that with men deacons. I am called to be a woman priest and have been suppressed because of my desire.

God calls us to "act justly, love tenderly, and walk with our God" -- God demonstrated to us how to do this -- God gave us Jesus, the Christ as our perfect model. We are called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus -- Jesus showed us how to live, how to serve, how to listen. The Church is Jesus' mission -- we must start living up to his expectations!

Great future if we listen to the Spirit through Pope Francis. God calls us to value each other as Jesus did without judgment or extraordinary restrictions.

As above - recognition, reimbursement, job protection plus educational avenues that are easily accessed (not so difficult to achieve with online learning).

As a Religious Community, we are already hiring lay persons to take over administrative positions and have boards in place to carry on the vision of our Foundress and are looking at the future when there may be no vowed religious Sisters in charge. The Church is the People of God. The hierarchical church needs to look towards giving back the leadership to the Holy Spirit and the lay disciples.

I think we should do whatever will bring people back to the Catholic Church. I think priests should be able to be married if they so desire. The "manmade laws" of the Catholic institution need to be strongly revised. The nun's need to be more compassionate. Our Lord taught us not to judge. If he wanted us to have all the rules, regulations and restrictions tied to the Catholic organization then he would have specified that. God gave us the 10 Commandments to live by Jesus taught us to love everyone and not judge and taught us about the 7 Sacraments. It's all simple!!!! Read scripture, sing loudly, and enjoy the teachings of Jesus Christ. He was made human for a reason.

Recognize that all of us have a role to play.

Co-leaders with priests, more education and compensation.

It is possible but will be very difficult. We must listen intently to the Holy Spirit for leading, creativity, and for courage in not giving up, ever. Careful training of the laity, so our priesthood is humanized and humanly/ spiritually mature.

Evolve.

Be inclusive. Stop judging people, and minister to us. Walk with each of us along our faith journey.

There cannot be much of a Church without lay ministry and leadership. God is calling lay people to claim OUR church and step up and make it happen.

As long as Francis is alive, I believe and HOPE there is a chance for the Laity to be no longer the bottom rung of the pyramid, and that we have a chance to utilize our gifts and energy for the Common Good and for the Church /the People of God and of our world.

The question of the Sacraments is a little weedy for me - and complex, but it seems really stupid not to just admit that we need lay people to run parishes!!!

Return to grassroots organization and leadership. Disciples are called by Christ and sent forth to serve all. We need to accept both of these for lay and clerical who work together in service to God and neighbor.

The future is for all the baptized on journey and lead the Church together in solidarity as ordained and nonordained, women and men. The Church need's a

change of mindset, a paradigm shift, in terms of understanding and promoting evangelization and Christ's mission.

God is calling lay people to be protagonists in the mission of Christ as priest, prophet, and king; to look at post Covid time as an opportunity for new ways of defining church, to ask ourselves, "What is Church?" With advanced technology, the world has become more interconnected than ever, a global village. This is an opportunity to reconnect the local parishes to the dioceses to the universal Church. We are in a state of disconnect. Ideological rigidities do not embrace the power of the Spirit uniting the Church in diversity. We do not emerge from a crisis such as the pandemic or the war in Ukraine the same as before. We cannot put new wine into old wineskins. Walls between the hierarchy and the laity built with the effects of clericalism must collapse. Instead, God is calling us through the Spirit to generate new forms of hospitality, fruitful fraternity, and universal solidarity in the Church.

Church will not survive without lay leadership. I also believe it will not remain relevant and open to the changing times. Clergy cannot not have experiences of so many diverse people. Lay minister must become implemented now.

The future of the Catholic Church IS lay ministry.

Our parish received little background, little information about what the synodal

movement is all about. Consequently, a small number of our parishioners participated in the Saturday, 3-hour consultative session (and additional 2 Zoom sessions, each attended by 6 people who did not come to the big session). There is little understanding of what this effort should and could lead us into. We are happy with the way things are in our parish.....questions of priesthood, equality for women, social justice, the option for the poor.....not addressed openly. Some parishes around us did nothing. Life will probably go on much as it has.

The future of the lay ministry and leadership is the future of the Church. If we rely on the current structure, there will be no Church, or we will have an underground church - smaller, more personalized gatherings without priests. If change doesn't come and the church is not in the hands of the people (with some accountability structure - staying true to faith doctrines etc.) Then we are no longer church. God is calling us to be church for one another and for the life of the world. We've seen what has happened when left to the devices of a highly hierarchical structure where lay people have no means to share authority. We have financial, spiritual, emotional and physical abuse. God is calling us to end this cycle that has and is destroying his church and to turn to what Jesus preached - take care of the poor, love each other as I have loved you, labor in my name and you can do all things.

I believe lay ministry and leadership is absolutely essential for the church

to become meaningful and significant in the ordinary everyday life of people living in today's society God is calling me to tell my story of the Ecumenical adventure I have been part of for 32 years. I have prepared a report of this story and will attach it to the email address of Futurechurch

Be open and allow everyone to be welcomed following the work of Jesus.

Lay leaders must become an integral part every aspect of parish life, in Mass as women celebrants, homilists, social justice advocates. Reframe church as Spirit not religion or buildings. Many young people are alive in the spirit-take advantage of that as have the communities of Nuns and Nones.

God is calling us to speak up! To organize and speak truth to power. And I think we need to continue to be organized. We may not have many religious sisters/brothers anymore but there are many who are still answering the call. We're just not organized yet.

The future lies in this shifting BACK to our roots and must happen as God has reminded us of this need.

WE are the church. We are all in this together. It is time to acknowledge, appreciate and affirm the entire body of the church.

Either lay people minister or we go out of business.

God is calling all of us to truly be a part of His Church - including the management of things!

The future necessitates lay ministry growth. Whether or not it happens is to be seen.

Open our hearts and minds to the Holy Spirit as we begin to try to understand & implement changes necessary in our Church

More lay leadership is the future of the Church - and it connects us to the early Church.

I am optimistic with Pope Francis. I believe God is calling us to serve.

I believe God is calling the Church to accept much more lay leadership and lay ministries, so that the mission of priests and deacons, whether men or women will be able to concentrate solely on their spiritual and pastoral ministries.

Courage. Courage.

There are so many "human" issues that individuals face. Either God is interested & this is demonstrated by well-trained individuals, or the Church is only for those individuals and families whose life is perfect!

Unless the Catholic Church has a radical shift toward accepting women's rights and dismantling patriarchal norms / attitudes / practices, then God is calling us to leave the Catholic Church and

start anew or join other progressive Christians.

The future will involve the laity at all levels - administration, decision making, responsibility in all aspects.

I think that God is calling us to re-imagine service - both in the parish and out in the wider world.

The Catholic church has lost many people over the years and the future doesn't look bright. Unless the church is willing to really look deep down and take mega steps to improve and re-assess how it functions, parishes will close, people will continue to leave or be an inactive Catholic.

Administrative responsibility for parish in collaboration with the priests and bishop.

I believe the HS is calling us laity to stand up and be counted. I do NOT believe there is a priest shortage - I believe there is a problem with the current definition of priest.

That there be no more hierarchy... clericalism be totally abolished...be a church of service totally.

The church is going to have to recognize that there are other capable lay ministers and leaders to oversee parishes and other groups. We - the lay people - need to be more vocal in our parish, our community, our world.

Q5. Please add any other comments you may have regarding lay ministry and leadership in the Catholic Church.

We will cycle back to early church - church in the homes!

As a church, we need to allow lay women and lay married women/men to be ordained - and to “solve” the priest shortage.

So much needs to open up in the Catholic Church. I see Pope Francis is our Obama. Will there be a backlash when he is gone like there is today in the U.S. after Obama left office by the conservatives to impose their patriarchal view of life on us.

Priesthood and diaconship should not be solely for men. Women have a voice, and we need them to make right was have been wronged in the CC for centuries not. Our time is NOW!

If they don't cede some of this power and responsibility, we'll seize it elsewhere.

I feel the Ukraine and Russia situation is unifying our church worldwide politically, their Catholic and Christian

witness, their sacrifices and being martyrs.

Thank you, Future Church.

We are missing so very much without women & people in the pews who could enhance, enrich & fortify our faith communities

Lay leadership is the future of the Church if the Church is to survive. The millennials and Gen Y,X,Z-ers will not be a part of a church they cannot fully participate in.

This is probably the most important topic that the Synod needs to address and of course, there are no voting lay people at the synod which says it all.

I am concerned about the faction within the church that wants to go to pre-Vatican and refused to take the synod process seriously. How will they embrace lay ministry and leadership in the Catholic Church! May God's Mercy and Love be with us all.

I always wanted to be a priest and the Pope (smile); my kids grew up knowing that and were confused by my intensity. I believe God calls whom God calls - and sometimes humans pridefully think they know better. Either we are all God's beloved daughters and sons or we're not!

Thank you for the opportunity to explore this topic. It is so vital to the future of our Church.

ALL souls are created equally. If someone is called to ministry and leadership, they should be able to follow that calling.

**Many religious sisters are leading us.
We need not fear other denominations.**

Create teams in each parish and diocese that are truly pastoral and truly a team.

Our church leadership needs to TRUST lay ministers and lay leaders.

Also, we need to remember that consecrated religious are lay people in our church.

Lay ministry and leadership is not and will not always be perfect, there need to be checks and balances - at the local and higher levels; priests need to be part of and not above the laity.

The position of the laity in the parish would be more secure if the priests and bishops were hired by the laity instead of being appointed.

Nearly all programs and services at the parish level is provided by women...the parish would simply collapse without our involvement and yet we are denied the opportunity to be heard...I deeply believe Pope Francis is working as best as he can to change this and I pray his efforts are successful....we are all the Body of Christ and only with full participation will the church truly move forward.

The Church will die in its present structure regarding authority and leadership.

Thanks to Future Church for these opportunities to share our concerns and hopefulness for the future of Christianity. People sure are thirsting for a way to turn around the destructive forces within our world today. Sharing has helped me a great deal. It has given me hope.

I was especially moved by Lisa Frey's phrase, "memories of vibrancy and hope..." I too had only memories of such collaboration and was lucky enough to have experienced equality and collaboration in the 70's and late 90's... but for the last 20 years continue to work from the edges...these Synod sessions have given me more than memories now! I want to believe with all my heart that "this time will be different!!"

The current position of many in the hierarchy of the Church, to deny the contribution of lay leaders, is totally unsupportable, is clearly a defensive reaction and is doomed.

In the parish of St. John, the Evangelist in Loveland CO I lost my home and ministries and place in parish when a new priest came in. He destroyed our parish community, and it has never been the same. I left and moved to Alaska.

Thank you to you and today to Lisa for the wonderful sharing and hope as we move forward.

Very discouraged by the USCCB.

The future of the church must be collaborative... or perhaps the Spirit will lead the church in a direction we can't imagine as the early church developed.

Bishops and priests should NOT be able to come into a dioceses/parish and change the charism of a parish. They will be there for a limited time. And many of these parishes are "home" to families!

Last chance - take it!

Every Pastor should develop a system where he meets on a regular basis with all of the parishioners in small groups to get their ideas and feedback, especially for homily input.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views. It has been a revealing year for me to have moved into an ecumenical community, instead of leaving the Catholic church.

More inclusive instead of exclusive leadership; truly looking at Jesus as role model of action; more in tune with needs of community and better listening skills.

A major problem is clericalism and pastors, and bishops have to acknowledge the expertise of the laity and empower them for ministry in the Church.

Power to the people. Right now, I truly believe that many of our ordained (Not

all - there are some who are saints!) Are a bit full of themselves?

The future can be bright with inclusion of all of humanity. Exclusion of any of God's children is not of God.

Lay leadership is a necessary voice and presence.

If it wasn't for lay ministry more churches would be closed or clustered. We recently had an elderly (already retired) priest fill in and bless his heart, he tried hard, but it was too much for him. This is cruel to priest and people alike. It is time for the Church to grow up and let all the people take responsibility for it. Right now, it is only half as far as it could have been had women been allowed and the former priests who are now married are wasted. Also unmarried priests are out of touch completely with what lay people go through with families and pressures. Let men get married too.

With the current clerical church, its hierarchy, its resistance to change, its addiction to power, its lack of good seminary training, I don't really see how we can have a renewed church. I don't have a lot of hope how this can be replaced by vibrant lay leadership or teamwork in my lifetime.

Thank you for being here. It keeps a spark of hope alive.

Thanks to Lisa Frey for her work as a minister in the Church - and her reflection today. Russ - you rock! Thank

you, Future Church... I'm so glad I was able to join this group!

Lay ministers are real people dealing with the problems of life and can contribute more than clerics living in castles!!!

“Back in the day” just after Vatican 2 those directing the parish were considered a team and the power was shared, decisions made by consensus of official leaders and lay members leaders on a parish council that had real power. Now we are back to “the staff”, not “the team” and so under the direct control of the priest and bishop. They seem never to have heard of Vatican 2!

IT IS LONG OVERDUE!

It is the key to maintaining the Catholic Church in the world. Vatican 2 gave me hope for the Church, but that hope has been gone for many years as the Church became more conservative, elite and patriarchal. Pope Francis has given us some hope for the younger generation to be a part of the Church in the future. I only have one niece, out of many, who attends a parish church.

Lay ministry is NOT a substitute for the ordained. The Germans have said lay cannot baptize because there are not enough priests. This is wrong. Lay people can baptize because of their own baptism. Likewise lay people must be able to exercise and use their gifts from their baptismal call.

I feel that certain factions and traditions have taken hold of the Church as an invasive vine that surrounds a tree. It is time to water, prune, nurture our living, Church.

The Church needs to support formation on many levels for the lay people who God is calling to be God's leaders at this time in our history in our journey to and with God.

Leadership lifts people. Seek leaders. We are the church, the Catholic Church with small letters. Room for all. Encourage diversity.

It should be more than obvious that the “Church” needs its lay people. People will go where the Spirit leads them. If our Church does not feed them, they will go elsewhere.

We need to have a total change in the preparation of priests because it is totally pre-Vatican and not applicable to this time.

I believe that “Lay ministry” is also a call and perhaps, this might be a good point to make. It is not just a job.

I LOVE THE CHURCH.

I hope that as this becomes more broadly accepted that the training for this leadership is done in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. I am concerned about the leadership training I'm seeing coming from the seminary.

I was lector and Eucharistic minister for many years at college chapel and it was spiritually enriching for me. But when Pope issued statement that talking about possibility of women priests was akin to “sin of clerical abuse”, I quit. Too many lay people, especially women are other respected. Thank you for chance to participate.

I think we need to honor the Universality of God and let go the dualistic thinking and structure we not have.

When I was involved with the RCIA program, I found every person I came into contact with was brought in by a lay person, not a member of the clergy. The more people we have involved will spread the good news. I often wish the bishops would keep their mouths closed. The scenario in AZ where a bishop decided all baptisms were invalid due to the priest saying “we” instead of “I” is a perfect example of lack of common sense. It makes our church look stupid. Also, the lack of acceptance of the gay community is horrifying to me. Jesus accepted everyone. If only those without sin could fully participate in the church, there would be no one in line for communion. Why pick on certain “sins” especially those like sexual orientation.

It continues to become necessary in a Church that is finally recognizing that 50% of the Church has not been allowed to lead, and also that un-ordained men can have significant roles.

Our Laity do not know the Vatican II image of us as the People of God

journeying together to the Kingdom. Each document had such a beautiful vision of the way things should/could be now in this modern age. Our returning to the early church to re-capture the meaning of our rituals and community and spiritual life.

Thank you for asking. We need to take responsibility for our Church.

I think we need to show good models such Diocese of Tallahassee and Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Milwaukee, WI.

The membership of the Church must be taught that lay leadership is not only necessary for the continuation of the Church, but it is a blessing. Exclusion is not of God.

I think that there should be a vehicle through which people in parishes, after prayer, thought and consultation can suggest who might be called to be their pastor and/or bishop.

I pray that we will grow to be a true Vatican II Church.

Not really.

God bless all our endeavors in the Holy Spirit.

It is vital that we can all respond to the call of our Baptism in various vocations whether ordained or married or single life. All vocations are equal.

Thank you for this opportunity!

Vatican II teachings and the 2,000 years since Jesus lived on earth is plenty of time to prepare for the needed changes. We can make change happen. Thank you, FutureChurch, for your leadership with all of us!

In this country at least, the Sisters are the “movers and the shakers” and lots of lay people know it!

The 125 graduates from our Lay Ministry Program never found a place in their parishes...but now do outreach ministry...Hospice, AIDS ministry, Food Baskets, retreat work, senior homes.

The future lies in supporting the nuns. They are in the trenches doing the work necessary.

We've GOT to invite and empower youth... they are the future and have the commitment to invest in meaningful “movements”!

In Racial Equity issues, and social justice issues lay people are taking the lead now. That's good.

We have been fortunate at my parish, we are less fortunate throughout the archdiocese and unevenly and even less fortunate in particular diocese and particular parishes, as all power rests with the ordained bishops and priests and it is only their discretion which allows even parish councils to have a voice or ability to make decisions. We need lay advisory structures for bishops,

too. Ordained clerics have canonical power, so the laity can be ignored.

Much needed both to be inclusive and end unrealistic expectations that are place on priests. There are also numerous other reasons.

Lay input, women and men, in priestly formation institutions.

I really believe that the lay ministers and leaders have so much to offer our Church. Their varying backgrounds and skills are essential to so many issues in the church. They truly inspire me and I think they should be valued and their talents used for the good of all in the church.

Our closing prayer called for a Church that seeks unity in our diversity. That may be the best way to characterize the opportunity before us. Let us take that opportunity and welcome all to contribute their gifts to the People of God.

Lay ministry and diversity are the future. We will live by them or die by them.

We need to do away with them and “us” mentality. If we could see all are “called by God” and just have different roles.

The church must change or die out. A structure that is too rigid does not allow the Holy Spirit to work. I hear reasons to hope, frustration in the slow process and a willingness to participate in necessary change.

Having a culture in which a priest/ bishop think his is the only valid opinion is not healthy. There are many priests and bishops who already act in a “synodal” way. I would wonder, if you looked, are those parishes and dioceses thriving where others are not? Going back to a question asked before--how the church has hurt you----I imagine the church has hurt many, many people by treating them as “lesser than” members of the church body. By this, I mean, having a new pastor or bishop come into the parish/diocese and completely undoing the work of so many lay people ---with no thought about their feelings--not healthy and really just mean.

We are so blessed as a church, but it was heartbreaking to hear our room share stories of rejection. Four women, myself included, as well as a married priest detailed our contributions, our experiences of shared joy, deep connection with the Spirit in following the direction of Vatican II only to be deserted by the institution. It broke my heart to hear an 80+ year old woman, describe her many ministries throughout her life in religious education, lecturing, serving as Eucharist minister, visiting the sick, only now to be so disenfranchised that she’s unsure she wants a funeral Mass. It’s not that as lay people we need the USCCB’s evangelization on Eucharist, we need evangelization OF the hierarchy on how to be Eucharist both ritually and in lived discipleship. The laity have become the prophetic voice to the institution.

I hope that there will be reckoning with this whole synod process, including integrating the lay ministry and leadership in the Catholic church. After all, a church has a complicated functioning, needing a bunch of different skill sets to run harmoniously.

I believe a larger presence of women in the Church’s power structure and seminaries would have prevented the child abuse practices from flourishing. Studies have shown that economic enterprise practices of preparing and giving opportunities to the mothers in a family are very successful—I believe women have the talent and responsibility nature to better care for The Church than most of the men have shown.

Lay people are perfectly capable of being leaders! I think priests (some anyway) would welcome having someone else do the administrative work, as is currently done at our parish. I am friends with some priests who also feel left out of any decision process by the Archdiocese. They are as left out as the laity right now. I just wanted to make that point. The clericalism is coming from the diocese and some priests, but not all by any means. Religious Sisters should also have a lot more input. They would give wonderful homilies! I’d must rather receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation from a Sister than a priest.

In general, this time, the Survey Monkey messed up the format for the comments under the multiple-choice comments. It scrolls left to right, and I couldn’t get to the next question without

using my left arrow to scroll back. That took about 30 extra seconds for each question. I kept the window open to answer later, but it was annoying. I hope that Survey Monkey will have these longer boxes like the one I'm typing in now. There is an approaching tornado in the next county, so I'd better stop and be prepared to log out and take shelter soon. I wanted so much to share my thoughts while they are still fresh. Thank you to Pope Francis for having this unique Synod opportunity and to Future Church for having the weekly meetings during Lent. I sense new seeds of hope coming and sense a new energy among the lay people. God bless!

I believe that it is a terrible disregard of God's gifting of the church when we do not empower the laity and invite them to the table where all are welcomed and gifted.

Taught many women and men in seminaries who were outstanding in theological understanding, internalization of Catholic tradition, and served with compassion and love.

Bonding to church requires participation not just an observer role.

Done my best to participate as a woman. Disappointed that we are not yet ordained generally.

The time has come to honor God's gifts in all of his people and include them fully in the Catholic Church.

Be the change we want to see. Amen. Stop waiting for permission.

We wrote a book: A New Pentecost In the Time of Zoom by David and Mary Emmick.

Would like to see one Church and one people of God that includes everyone. No exceptions!

I fear the younger generations are reverting to pre-Vatican 2 ways because they think it is a more sincere and deeper form of piety and even like the Latin Mass because it is such a novelty.

Thank God that the laity are taking leadership in many capacities

We need YOUNG people in this group - I'm so sorry. But we're mostly older and while we have experience, we are not the FUTURE of the church. Young people need to be encouraged to speak their truth - not just what we WANT to hear - but their lived experience of life, faith, injustice, love, sex, money, social. Media, climate change, etc.

Welcoming to All!

It is critical for the integrity of the gospel and the work of healing the world

Lay people built the church in the US. The Holy Spirit pours out her gifts on everyone--we must make room for all the gifts God graciously sends.

Lay people have a variety of charisms that should not be wasted.

We lost a lot of time since Vatican II. And now it seems we have lost a lot of people as well. I hate to say it but we might have missed the boat. Perhaps a NEW boat will appear on the horizon.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my experiences

The Mass is so far from how Jesus celebrated the Last supper. He reclined; he didn't stand up and sit down etc. He offered the bread to Judas as he would offer the eucharist to Joe Biden etc.

Most priests are not really shepherds. Their attitudes toward the laity are off-putting. They don't listen, and it seems that they do not care about the parishioners.

Education, affirmation, people skills, acceptance & tolerance of all of God's Children

There are so many talents and gifts waiting to be brought forth to enrich the life of the Church. Let us begin.

A pastoral team now needs someone on staff who is trained in communicating with persons with mental illness, LGBT or trans, divorce, seniors suffering from depression, suicide, etc.

When the role of the laity is raised, it must include women as equal members.

Lay leadership is an alternative to a hierarchical leadership. We are the seeds of hope.

It's time for us -- all of us -- to wake up and live!

Certainly, they should be more accepted and given roles where their life experiences would benefit their parishes.

Thank you!

As with other things, every Catholic should not be put in the same box. We all have different gifts, and the Church needs to encourage and support and include laity in using their gifts for the Church and for Jesus.

Empower the laity. Listen to the people. Too much decisive power in the hands of the pastor.

1. Get rid of the ban on contraception. Just take out the one paragraph in Humane Vitae, so that Catholic couples can feel they are doing what they should do, when they plan to have smaller families. Acknowledge the right of couples to choose the way they live the vocation of parenthood together.
2. Continue to speak about social justice in giving equal access to healthcare to the poor, and equal access to education all over the world. Canonize Dorothy Day and Paul Farmer MD.
3. Get together a response to provide clean water to all, without cost, in the whole planet, and make Catholics care about making sure it happens. Work with governments to find incentives to pay for it from their governmental funds.

4. Speak loudly about the fact that God understands every language and speaks to every heart, and that we need to uphold human dignity, courtesy and respect, in the way we deal with human rights everywhere.
5. Speak out in protection of gay people and people who are persecuted and denounce cruelty and injustice due to gender.
6. Encourage women to be visible members of parish work and community life and pay them. Do not assume they should be volunteers without pay. Give women the right to be deacons, and work in ministry in all the ways they are already doing so but acknowledge it. Let women preach the Gospel!
7. Give scholarships to Catholic students to get them the best possible educations and ask for community work as the payback.
8. Work on providing housing for elderly Catholics who need assistance, and for homeless and mentally ill people who need safety and shelter, which will help offset the burden for nuclear families, and build community ties.
9. Set up free childcare centers in each parish to help women who are working know their children will be safe and well cared for. This is provided in France by the government, and each center in each neighborhood has staff with early childhood education, nutrition guidelines and safety plans and

mechanisms for these “creches.” This will take a huge amount of stress off families, and also provide links to other Catholic families in the neighborhood, so community is deepened.

10. Bring parish records up to date, with 100% transparency on how funds are used, and make the parish councils democratic, or at least with some lay oversight. Follow the guidelines from Voice of the Faithful. And do NOT give parish funds to pet projects which many of us don’t support. I was furious to find out the bishops used the funding from the people to defeat the gay marriage law in California. I advocated FOR gay marriage; it is one of the best ways to stop HIV transmission to respect relationships enough to at least allow secular marriages. (Personally, I think they should be blessed as covenantal relationships, even if not accepted as sacramental.)

11. Work with 12 step programs to help people understand their own Higher Power in a truly engaged personal relationship, which also encourages deeper and more mature reflection on faith, and the lived lives of self-transforming spiritual growth in our communities of faith. Let the laity inform the work of revising dissolution of marriage and divorce. Trust that the relationship knowledge will really help us get to deeper more committed faith lives.

This new era of the synod process feels like the current of the Holy Spirit that guided Vatican II becoming more alive

towards a deepening and living out of the dynamism of Vatican II for our 21st century and beyond. It will take time and we need patience and perseverance and courage.

As Pope said turn the pyramid upside down.

It is sad that we must seek soul nourishment elsewhere for our faith when our own parish is not life giving. It is also sad that online Masses can be more life giving than the face-to-face Mass.....what about Communion in online Masses?

Clericalism must diminish if lay leadership is to be prominent

Very valuable questions, need more time to answer (reflect)

Given the numbers of Catholics that are now "former" members of parishes, we need to listen to them and reform for inclusion.

Our small group all pointed out the conservatism within the church today and that our young priests tend to hang onto clericalism.

Lay ministry IS the Future and it would put less pressure on Priests who feel that they MUST do everything. We are ALL God's Beloved Chosen not just the clergy- We MUST change the institution of WHAT A PRIEST SHOULD BE.

I hope I live long enough to see the changes in leadership and the active/

respected role of lay ministers within our church.

I am currently worn out from having new priest come in to a vibrant parish and dismantle the community and their work. I am looking, but there's no parish around that is a true Vatican II parish. No wonder people are not coming back to church after Covid. Not much to come back to.

Lay leadership to the Nones especially and support of all ages especially Youth.

Bishops have to let go of their idea that they are the ultimate authorities in the Church. They often are far removed from the demands of everyday living. They are provided for their basic needs, and often live quite lavishly so cannot relate to some serious problems that many people face. If Bishops come to relate to the needs and issues of the general population, then they will influence priests to do the same. They (bishops and priests) will take on pastoral roles and not that of ultimate and final authority over people's religious and spiritual lives.

My frustration is obvious. I hope that real reform follows the 2023 Synod on Synodality and that the voice of the laity will receive the respect it deserves.

Thank God for all women and men for all they do for God and for all people.

My experience of parishes in which lay ministry and leadership is strong is that

they are dynamic parishes, and the Holy Spirit is moving!

Our church is not a healthy church right now. The more people that have the chance to get involved and add their voice, the better it will be for all of us.

I was well formed, challenged and honored in my roles in the church in my paid ministry. Now I know as a volunteer, I am still appreciated, and my wisdom acknowledged.

As frustrating as it is fomenting change, it is following the example of Jesus! And it Will bear fruit, in Faith.

I feel hopeless, even though our pope is doing great ministry the bishops and cardinals are not moving in the direction of lay leadership. They must feel threatened. And would rather close down parishes then let the laity revitalize them! So sad!!

It's organizations/opportunities like this and others (e.g., Root and Branch) that provide the format and means to bring likeminded people together and advocate for change. It's not an era of Change...it's a change of era!

The church is the body of Christ and through their baptism should be treated as equal members with different gifts in preaching the gospel.

If the church must "know their sheep" in order to lead the flock. How can it know us if it doesn't listen to us?

Thank you for this opportunity to share our experiences in lay ministry and giving us hope for the future which often looks bleak.

I thank you for this opportunity. I am not super hopeful, but it is confirming to have community!

The laity hold up the Church. The Holy Spirit is calling us to answer the call to serve each other including leadership and ordained roles.

We have a lot of work. This work is not for us, but for our children and their children.

It concerns me that new priest and some young people are trying to bring back the old way of been a church. Meaning before Vatican II

Prophetic Ministry has always been about "the call" from the Holy Spirit, training and experience. Presently the patriarchal/hierarchical church has excluded these ministries of women, married priests and "the laity"!

Hopefully, this Synod opens and cracks the walls that synodality may become a lifestyle within the Church. This is my hope.

Continued prayer for this to happen. As a Religious Congregation member encourage such lay participation through Associate Membership ever able to be more alive.

I pray that the synodal process can truly bring life and freshness to our Church through the active involvement of lay members. We all need to be listened to and be encouraged to share our gifts for the good of all.

Mutual roles in ministry and preaching the Gospel message is essential for all to exercise and feel a part.

Without. Change for the better. With inclusion of lay ministry and leadership, the institution will diminish and solidify into having no meaning and no voice in the world.

If you have any vowed religious women in your parish or community, seek them out and ask them for their ideas, thoughts and suggestions. They really know the heart of the community in most cases.

Church needs to diversify, allow equality and be inclusive. Need to reach out to the marginalized. Allow laity to use their time, talents and treasures in service to the church.

It is essential, but in the spirit of Vatican II guided by the Holy Spirit.

I am trying to imagine who will be at the table of the Catholic Church Community in 30 years.

My mother attended lay leadership training for 2 years after she raised us 6 children. Then she co-directed the RCIA in our parish for 14 years. She was excellent. So many people tell

me how much she helped them in their faith journey. Now the RCIA is a shell of what it was, and women are excluded by the Bishop at almost all diocesan departmental levels. I'm not surprised that young people aren't part of the institutional church and are going elsewhere. I'm interested to see where they are going, and I join in with Laudato Si Movement to participate with them. Maybe Covid and the war in Ukraine will cause enough institutional chaos that so much will collapse we will need to wipe away the debris and begin again?!?

Parish Councils have all but disappeared. Why? It will probably take a long time to grow an active, effective laity because we are so used to just doing the volunteer work.

It's so hard to change our language and ways of thinking. Even tonight's presenter (Lisa) at one point asked if "the Church" will listen to us? Did she mean "the bishops"? The Bishops are not "the Church" - but all of us (laity and clergy together) are "the Church. So a better question is: "Are we all truly listening to each other?" And: How can we foster "shared leadership" models?

Wake up and listen to God and to God's people!

All people need to revisit Vatican II and the ideals that are being put forth by Pope Francis - cardinals, bishops, priests, deacons, laity in the pews and especially, the marginalized and those who have no place at the table.

Lay leadership is an essential part of the Church.....we are all baptized into the true priesthood.....let all bring their gifts to the table.

I feel in this short time, I expressed my main concerns.

Let's get organized. Perhaps a loose. Structure that would be world wide that can affect the progress. Start, perhaps, by simply ordaining the candidates of women and married men we already have who are prepared.

Somehow the clergy need to realize that their role is more than celebrating the Eucharist, baptisms, forgiving sins, and following the present bishop. If the changes do not happen, they may find themselves without a parish to manage because the laity have moved on to form their own parish or join another group that answers their needs as Christian people, not necessarily Catholic. I heard long ago the expression "there is more than one way to get to Vermont". We may be finding out.

I feel a great deal of work is needed to build up parishes given the scandal and the Pandemic. A true sense of welcome and belonging is needed to build the community of faith that all may come to feel they are deeply loved by our God in the parish and called to serve freely in whatever way they feel called. We have a long way to go in rebuilding the faith community.

Multicultural leadership teams are needed. Must have representation from various groups that make up the parish. Be open to various cultural expressions of the broader Church. The richness of cultures is a gift and true expression of the faith.

Thank you, Russ and Deb and so grateful to you Lisa for sharing your experience, your commitment and your hopefulness!

Lay ministry should be involved in the administration i.e. Finances/plant operations/ liturgy/committees/ public relations/using all the gifts the parishioners offer of themselves.

I would truly love to be involved again in my local (in-person) parish, but I am so afraid of being rejected for my ideas. I am so tired of sitting quietly in the pew during Mass and going home sad and angry because I could not find Christ's presence there.

I like the expression "A people united will never be defeated" Tonight I heard all strong and unified voices calling for us to be church. This represents the Spirit alive in us. May it be so.

Too much time is still being spent inside the walls of the church attending to the pastor's needs. We need lay leadership courses, and we need to be empowered consistently and not left to the vagaries of rotating priests.

It is time for the church to mature and trust in God's Will that all are children

of God. We are the church and to dismiss the fact that God gave everyone the power to know good from evil and to receive God's wisdom is ridiculous. The church is still treating the lay people as children who have no say and must do what the clergy dictates...and unfortunately, they have not been very honest or Christian. The Institution needs to be changed to reflect God's Will NOT man's. I trust God NOT the church, because it has proven to be untrustworthy. Those who want to go backward and have the church rule by fear, need to read the words of Jesus who preached love, forgiveness and unity and humility.

Many lay people have been educated in theology and spirituality. We need to use their gifts to spread the gospel in our time and place

We have a great opportunity to strengthen the engagement of the laity in the ministries of the church. We must end the patriarchy and empower women to shepherd God's people as lay and ordained ministers.

Thank you for this opportunity to be heard! God Bless this ministry.

Push and push Bishops and priests! Change seminary education! More open, more diverse. Psychological tests for candidates.

I've noticed that with the increase in Deacons, there is a gradual pulling back of the involvement of the laity, particularly in the Liturgy. This seems

to be the answer to the priest shortages. Just add more men, and all will be well. It will not. I have experienced a parish where this great involvement of the laity. It was a vibrant community because of that. I still am blessed that I can participate as I do, but I see the participation gradually declining. Going in the wrong direction! Covid has been used as a reason, but it is more of an excuse now.

Stop refusing/welcoming wonderful lay involvement. Celebrate where it is being life- giving for so many. Lay leadership should be the norm, not the exception. Let us give thanks constantly for Pope Francis who courageously calls us to be truly church!

Bishops must be aware that their role is service as well as leadership along with sincere listening to their people. They need to welcome lay ministry and leadership. Many are threatened and therefore unwilling to accept their true role.

Young people are hungering for spirituality and community. The institutional church as it stands is not what they want. Lay leadership can make the difference for them.

One common element that surfaced in our group was the openness after Vatican Council II. Then that was followed by a retrenchment - going back to pre-Vatican way of being Church. Hope in rekindled with the Synod if all voices are heard.

Celebrate the energy, passion, thirst for justice of young people. Put them in the pulpit to tell their stories, speak their truth. They are the church in our time.

People are hungry to serve. Why should we not?

An active lay ministry will invigorate the future Catholic Church.

Clericalism has handicapped the realization of God's kingdom on earth and instead supports a warring self-righteous attitude - instead of Gospel to life.

I hope Francis has appointed enough cardinals and bishops to keep the effort alive and bring V2 to its full potential. Groups like Future Church and many others must sustain the effort. We need to continue the sharing and networking so we know where good things are happening and can be supported, and where bad things need to be flushed out.

Thankful that Pope Francis is leading us in the direction of serious lay ministry.

Thank you and keep up the great work!!

Many gifts and talents are being overlooked by not allowing the laity to assume their rightful roles. Questioning and critical thinking should not be rejected.

Pope Francis has asked us to become engaged in response to *Laudato Si* and this, in turn, calls for engagement with

the social issues of our time as well as the ecological and scientific ones.

Too many people are disheartened, sad, and walking away from the structures that fail to give life...as one person in our group said: "the present situation borders on the sinful." And "we won't shut up!"

Thank you everyone!

Lisa was a wonderful example of one who has experienced disappointment with the church but continues to be hopeful- a wonderful example for all of us!

I'm not sure what all the changes since COVID are going to have on the future of lay ministry and leadership in the Catholic Church. I hope people will come back to church and remain active on councils and committees, and I hope young people will be active. They have a lot to say about what they feel they need from their parish.

Again, in my experiences the various lay ministries are completely dictated by the pastor. They have grave responsibilities and give tremendous hours of time all on a volunteer basis and are not rewarded for their efforts. We all would be more willing to participate if we felt support and encouragement from the pastoral staff. Many anxious and educated people could offer much more to the functioning of the parish if given the chance or opportunity to meet in groups to discuss the needs and "ideas" of growth--encouraged by the pastor, of

course. Not all people will speak up--without that encouragement! There could be and should be an “outreach “ in each parish to discover the talents of the many parishioners --one of our speakers in the breakout session suggested an “ideal”!!!

Thank you for giving a vehicle for my voice to be heard.

We all recognize “what it is” - some have it in abundance. Let’s ensure that they are recognized and ensure that they bring others along.

We need musicians.

Recognize and respect that the laity today (as a whole) are not the poorly educated, passive, subservient “sheep” that was true centuries ago.

Welcome us-trust us. Recognize that not all the wisdom in the room is speaking to us from the altar.

There are so many qualified lay persons who are able to administratively run parishes, such as sisters, that could relieve priests to be able to have time to care for the spiritual needs of their people. Many lay people, including former priests, should be allowed to preach at mass.

This is a good start.

Thank you for having this series with regard to the Synod. Dioceses do not seem to be doing much to prepare for it.

Good lay ministry/leadership means discerning and acknowledging the special gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. Each one of us possesses special charisma. Are we invited to share them? Are we called forth?

We have to move forward!

I hope that the excitement that percolated up after Vat II will result from the Synod.

We are encouraged by the energy of all the participants and this movement.

I welcome the lay ministry, their voices should be heard and acted upon.

Ironically, In many ways - like Catholic Social Teaching - lay leadership in the Church’s best kept secret. Lay people make all the programs, ministries, RCIAs, choirs, food banks, schools, hospitals and universities happen. Two things are needed - highlight those leaders within and without the Church, and second, make lay leadership in the parish and diocese meaningful, not an illusion or abstract. Ironically - the Church - which like all institutions - is concerned foremost about self-preservation - would itself be enhanced and strengthened.

I pray that progress is made before we lose whole generations because the Catholic Church is not relevant.

When A friend who founded numerous successful ministries for those suffering from poverty and discrimination often

said that if you do ministry, money to support it will follow.

Directors of Religious Education and female School Principals should be consulted more and appreciated more. And praised publicly more!

Have women in more active roles, deacons, priests, etc. Encourage confirmation candidates to more active in their communities and have the service projects they perform have meaning for the community.

I believe the REACH for power in a parish/Diocese may be partly due to fear. Then too I have been in places where I have heard and witnessed the “politics of a diocese.” Maybe we have to be open to intentional community/parishes. Just now the U.S. Bishops are going ahead with plans for a Eucharistic Congress in 2024 and have the sheep anything to say about it or can they be involved from around the country and will the Congress be life-giving?

Through the practice of Lectio Divina and as a woman in the church, I can easily identify with the marginalized and oppressed in the Scriptures and also how Jesus is constantly calling the religious leadership into account. To me the only hope for laity is to dismantle the patriarchy power grid.

The church has been in crisis over lack of priests since the 1990's when my parish church was shut down. It looks like we are headed for another round of closures. The parish model, led by

clergy, isn't serving us well. It's time to turn over our functions to (lay) people who actually know how to do them. It's time to give up the pastor-bishop-pope hierarchy and let the faithful “lowerarchy” come forward to serve God and neighbor.

Lay people are not second-class citizens at church, they have responsibilities, but they also have rights. They should be treated as adults and be involved in the decision-making process; they should not be treated as children. They should never be humiliated, mocked, or retaliated by the priest. The priest needs to be accountable to lay people. Charity is key both from lay people toward the priest and from the priest toward the lay people

Very much needed for survival.

Ordained ministry may well have a role in the future, but that role needs to be discerned. Rediscovered, and re-expressed in living community. The reforms that we are ready for now - the work of the German Synod, - have already been largely lay led. Some form of authorization from existing Church structures is needed for the reforms. A reformed Church in turn will need structuring to link the past with the evolving future. The Church is a Sacrament of Christ present with us for the long-term.

The solutions to the present crisis of adequate leadership in the Church are obvious to me. Share power with laity, allow women to be ordained, and

allow married men and women to be called forth to ordained ministry by the choice of the community, as was done in the very early Church before it was corrupted by Roman hierarchical ways. All of us are Church. Vatican II informs us that we are the PEOPLE OF GOD and share in the priesthood of all the baptized. Unfortunately, although there are many good and open-minded priests, many of us live at the mercy of priests who are incompetent, arrogant and hold on to power and give no voice to their parishioners. If some laity try to exercise their voice they are often labelled as troublesome and are ignored. I am experiencing a Church without a pastoral council or finance council, and all the former active ministries in that community have been shut down, by being edged out and unsupported. Some priests refer to the parish as “my parish.” It is particularly difficult in rural areas where parishioners have no other option, as do those who live in large towns and cities where they may choose to join another parish. Many parents find their adult children choosing to leave such dysfunctional churches, and it grieves parents a lot. The present structure of Church communities customary in the USA is for the most part not working. Most of these parishes work on the premise that laity pray, pay and obey. The gifts of the laity are mostly not being utilized or promoted. For many if they go to Church it is to get a fill-up as one fills one’s car with gas. Marred laity need to have their voices heard especially regarding the rearing, education and formation of children,

understanding and accepting those who have gender issues, and strengthening and supporting marriages, and on family planning. Issues.

Know my prayers are with all of you who bring “Future Church “ to all of us. Your Ministry is an excellent example of Lay Leadership in the Church! “Peace and all good things!” as Francis of Assisi always said. Thank you especially for the opportunity to be a part of the Synod experience.

The position of Priest should not deserve more honor than any other position of the people of God. We are all on this journey together, side by side.

I think lay ministers and leaders, by virtue of their baptism, ought to be able to preach at liturgies.

I think we need to bring the priest along with us. This is a change for them too. They are challenged if working with Bishops who are holding back or being deliberately uncooperative about the Vatican II changes being instituted under the leadership of Pope Francis. But there are priests who agree with their Bishops who are digging in their heels and cannot see that the current situation in of the church is causing the people of the world to continue to be discouraged. We need to meet people where they are at and help them find God the Spirit within. We can bring so much more hope if only the Bishops and priest really saw themselves as one of the flock as Christ showed us when washing the feet ...there are too many

examples to give here. Also, we should stop focusing on the sin. Christ has saved us. We need to focus on how to overcome the separation from God that a poorly lived life causes. This energy should be channeled to focusing on the joy of the Risen Christ who has made us worthy to open our hearts to God and find the strength to truly serve our brother/sisters. Ukrainians are showing us that in time of need people all over the world and of all different faiths and philosophies can connect through our deep feelings of mercy, love and generosity and belief in respect for each other. The horror of war is being fought by people of faith, people who believe they are worthy to be saved! I pray the laity will keep pushing forward and drag the priest who resisting change/ growth with them!!!!!!

It's important for me to remember that 1st c. Church Leaders were all lay people (men & women) who grew into their ministries by experiencing the Gospel. So, our Church was formed by lay people. I hope that as we participate in the Synodal process that we will continue to Listen as early church leaders did & hear about what people hope for their church.

There is a chance that through Synod listening sessions, people will gain the confidence to propose actions & programs that support expanded evangelization of the Gospel in their parishes, schools, & other communities. I pray for the energy & faith to do so myself.

I think Future Church underestimates the people who attend the Tridentine Mass. There are a variety of people there who just love the space for unself-conscious worship, and silence and some 'bells and smells'. The world is insane; the Ancient Mass often feels more sacred to me than a regular parish. Yes, the baptized can confect the Eucharist at home but humans need ritual.

These communities feel like an oasis from the world, and a lot of the saints and popular piety feeds a theological imagination. Personally, I need that. I can get "community" in other places. Not many places can I find where others are on their knees together and making that very public statement that "I am not God" / "I don't know." / "I lay this burden at your feet, Lord" etc. I feel that progressive Boomers don't understand how sublime it can be to just express religious sentiments. There can still be lay leaders in communities with the old Mass; I've seen it. Sometimes I wonder if too much breakdown of centralized power would mean that things would change too much.

None so far.

Let's not distinguish. All have a role to play in community.

I believe lay ministers and leadership should be given power after all we walk together in the Catholic Church. If those are very well prepared!

If any church is lucky enough to have a devoted lay ministry, please let it

flourish. It is one of the best hopes for the future of the RC Church.

I think we have waited way too long to bring the laity into the church leadership, especially women! We have missed many opportunities to get good leadership in our Church.

Be assured of my prayer for the wonderful Lay Ministry we have in our Church yet I also see the need for more younger members to take some responsibility for the future of our Church. I see mostly the elderly people continuing to do what they can to volunteer and maybe one sisters helping to keep the parishes going. This is wonderful but the church needs more adults to take leadership and courses to help them with the future needs of leadership in the church. I would hope this would happen. There are many gifts in the Church and we all need to use our gifts to build the Church and keep it alive in our world today. God is with us, and the lay people can do this.... not to be afraid, have courage and God will do the rest.

The Catholic Church could benefit from the wisdom displayed by other denominations.

It's vital to involve lay ministry, also to give women equal status.

We have been encouraged to pray for vocations for my entire life. My sense is that God is saying "I've already given the church all she needs to fulfill her mission." The problem is that the

institutional church refuses to honor, respect, and embrace the call (to laity and ordained ministry) God has given to Gods people. In my mind and in the long-ago history of the church that call is blind to gender and hindered by a lack of imagination on the part of the institutional church to the detriment of the people of God.

Lay leaders and ministers MUST receive adequate training and education, which is expensive. Bishops MUST find ways to fund such training on an ongoing basis. And lay ministers and leaders must be paid a living wage for such a life to be possible for more than a chosen few.

Lay people have contributed much to parish life for years. Now they need to be respected for their contributions and given the leadership roles they deserve.

Lay persons make up a large portion of the Church. They need to be seen as leaders and ministers in the Church with as much authority as Priests and bishops

As a lifelong Catholic woman, I have always found it difficult to become "involved" in the parishes I belonged to in the many different places I have lived in the US. As a professional woman I had lots of skills but objected to always being relegated to traditional "women's roles" [i.e., helper, assistant, secretary, set-up person]. I found it incredibly frustrating to not be welcomed to the decision tables by BOTH the priests and male parishioners. To be honest I had enough to contend with in my

professional life with men I worked with and for and was not willing to spread myself thin on 2 fronts in my life. So, I gave up parish “involvement” and shopped for parishes with a rich sacramental/spiritual life and participated there personally and financially. The last thing I want to say is that I think the Catholic Church is doing the wrong thing by “importing” priests from other countries to parishes where a priest is needed. It is taking these priests away from their home country and causing a lot of problems related to understanding our culture and society.

I see a lay quasi clerical class emerging in our large parishes - staff mirror clerical organizational model. I hope small communities emerge a vibrant influence.

Learn from need and experience.

In the US the growth of radical seminaries contributes to loss of people in the pews certainly along with the sexual abuse crisis.

Pompous priest and bishops do not open doors when they proclaim allowing non-Catholics to participate is “not Catholic enough” (this is an actual quote from the pastor.

I thought the chapter on Community in “What Happened to the Roman Catholic Church? What Now? By, Gabriel Moran was very informative and articulate. I have copied the last paragraph for you. “The church did offer some resistance to the autocracies around it. But the original flaw in the church’s organization

was that the church was a men’s club, that is, an organization in which the men became the leaders. What is amazing is that the Roman Catholic Church continues to be an organization in which all the “ordained” leaders are men. One might excuse the original flaw, there were no good models to imitate. But if it were to be “new people” for all the world to look up to, the relation between women and men should have been rethought, if not in the first centuries, then surely in modern times. No true community can exist today without mutuality of women and men.” Moran emphasizes the importance of language in the introduction. I would add using male pronouns has been very harmful on peoples’ image of God (father). I would like to see inclusive language in the liturgy.

Training for ministry should be open to men and women in every diocese/state.

It is 50 years since advocated by Vatican II. Hopefully it won’t take 50 years to take affect!

The church has grown too large and clerical with decisions all being made top down. We need to recognize and include lay people in decision making and recognize the need for smaller communities that will enable all voices to be heard. The church also needs to recognize that uniformity is not necessary for unity. What works for one culture may not be the answer for all. Living the gospel message is what is important and there are many ways to do that. Jesus adapted His message to the

people he encountered and in so doing
He ruffled a lot of feathers!

Keep up your Gospel work.

It would be good to keep in mind that there are “clerical” lay people who can be just as rigid and pre-Vatican II as the most rigid priests and bishops. We’re going to need a lot of discernment at many levels for lay ministry and leadership to be democratic and effective.

Because of clericalism this will never happen, but I would like to see an orchestrated day (worldwide or national) when every un-ordained minister, volunteer or paid stayed home. It would definitely wake up our bishops.

The Catholic Church cannot survive without dedicated lay leadership in all areas of church life. WE are all called to be church and to share our God-given talents and gifts to build up the People of God. We are called to be Light for the world where too often there is confusion, despair and a lack of light.

That is Good News. We are called to live it and share it!

Our present leadership is too beholden to the super-rich arch- conservative Catholics. They want abortion legislation but what about all the other things that people need, like affordable health care, birth control. Decent living wages, and a legitimate chance to vote in elections that are being rigged across this country. Time for them to speak out.

Serious pathologies involving ‘authority’ & ‘sexuality’ must be addressed.

It is sorely needed.

It is to unleash the power of the People of God to bring about the Kingdom of God as Jesus called us to. And the Spirit is at work!!!

This is perhaps more of the call to today’s young people, rather than to the religious vocation of former days.

I am just grateful that we have had lay leadership growing and preparing for this day and the times ahead. Lay ministry may have been underground or in the background for a long time, but it has been all round in my lifetime. Many have been told maybe. (as I have been) you are not good enough yet , you are not ready yet, but we are Good enough and we are ready NOW. So let’s move forward in the sacred dance of life with the Trinity who calls out “ you are my delight my (Lay) people!!

The parishioners want to feel welcomed and invited to be involved in the future Church.

Women must be entrusted with Leadership Roles in the church in Sacraments, Theology, Administration and pastoral Ministry. We need also justice to victims of clergy abuse. Abusers must not be allowed to be in Ministry in the Parishes.

The Church will continue to diminish, especially among the youth and young adults if it doesn't pay attention, listen and respond to their lived reality.

Allowing women and married priests is not contrary to historical church doctrine and would help address the clear crisis the Church faces in providing an adequate number of parish priests. The question of a larger role of the laity should be addressed more fully once the clergy issue has been resolved. Solely dealing with the laity only acts as a band aid on a much larger problem.

We have people with the qualifications to be Pastoral Administrators but the Archdiocese of Cincinnati have, through the "Beacons of Light" program have given one Pastor from 5-8 parishes to lead. They are putting a newly ordained in each "family of parishes" but they are relying heavily on retired priests. This can't be sustained.

Liturgy was the work of the people. We need to get back to work and bring the people and leadership together. We need to allow the church to become a people of God again.

Thank you for being the best lay ministry model I have found among many good Catholic lay ministry groups, Future Church. Thank you. My faith is more vibrant than ever because of you and your leadership.

Lay Ministry and Lay leadership is of the people and needs to be recognized and encouraged by the Church.

Many priests, bishops and cardinals ignore the lay ministry and leadership because they have never been TOLD or Forced to listen to lay people.

Grateful for the Synod process and the movement of the Holy Spirit in the process of contemplative dialogue and engagement.

As the Church closes more parishes and loses both priests and nuns (either through attrition or not enough young people interested) it will be imperative that the Church open its arms and hearts to allow lay ministers to be in more active roles, including preaching. Lay ministers are often the heart and soul of many, if not most parishes.

Trust that our God will give us the grace we need to open our hearts and minds to our God

We trust lay person in every aspect of our lives except Church. Is life not Church?

Gratitude to Lisa Fry for her insights and wisdom that were very transforming in this Synodal time for the Church

A lot of education would be needed for laypeople to take over some of the work of the priest or the nuns. If money is a factor, then money should be made available for them to pursue what they would like to do and contribute to their parish.

Thank you for giving the laity some small voice in the church I was told was “we - all of us” by Vatican Two

Sorry, I could not answer all these questions. They were not visible on my screen.

My most important comment is follow where Pope Francis is leading us! The Holy Spirit is guiding him, just as Pope John followed the Holy Spirit in Vatican II.

Lay ministry may recall those ordained ministers who were forced to leave because of disillusionment, disagreement with the hierarchical process or choice of marriage.

As the number of clergy decrease, qualified lay ministry is vital for the future of the church.

Glad to have these weeks of Synodal listening and talking.

Lay people, by nature of our baptism, are invited to serve the community as equals, and as priest/prophet and royalty. The Church, for the most part, needs to greatly improve on this.

Lay ministry and leadership is expanding in a positive way. Let women take a more involved role.

For too long, the Catholic Church has concentrated all its education efforts on the young, not a bad thing. But that leads to an attitude that once I've graduated high school and in many

cases even sooner, that I have learned it all. As Catholics, we have never been encouraged to engage in lifelong learning. I would like to see more Adult formation opportunities so people can mature in their faith journey as they mature in life.

Clerics are not the only leaders in our church!!!

We need to be paid for our service to the church!

The Samaritan Woman at the Well. – St. John in his Gospel gives a long account of her apostleship BEFORE the resurrection. The Disciples were only baptizing and Jesus himself was not baptizing.

The story starts with Jesus sending the Disciples off to town while he sits at the well in the heat of the day and waits for her. She comes by herself. Fetching water was a communal activity done in the early morning out of the heat. The rest of her town had ostracized her.

Jesus then speaks to her, totally shocking her.

Father tells the story of being on El-Al when one of the ‘devout’ Jewish men reached into the overhead bin to prepare to pray. He knocked his case right onto the head of the priest’s mother. Father’s mother was hurt that he didn’t even apologize. Father explained. – He couldn’t. His religion forbids him from speaking to a woman. Even (or especially?) To apologize.

Also remember that Samaritans were considered half breeds and blasphemers by the Jews. They were part of the pre-Babylonian split of Israel that no longer worshipped solely at the Temple. They had their own facilities and didn't pay into the Temple fund. The Jews considered them enemies. (The only Good Samaritan would have been a dead Samaritan.) Jesus had to pass through Samaria on his way from Galilee to Jerusalem.

The woman could not have been more surprised if her bucket had started talking to her. Jesus then proceeds to tell her of her life history. Unlike Peter who took years, she IMMEDIATELY starts to believe Jesus could be the Messiah. She runs off to her village to tell them of the Good News and convinces many. By the way, SHE WAS DIVORCED 5 TIMES. (So Christ and the early Church WELCOMED the divorced.)

The Acts of the Apostles.

Women are listed as part of the Company in verses 1-4. The Apostles draw lots between 2 other men who had been present with them since the beginning to take the place of Judas. So the construct of only 12 special disciples was artificial. The group is listed as being about 120 brothers.

A Mathias, who was not mentioned previously, is listed as a Disciple. Joseph/Barsabbas/Justus and Joseph/Barnabas are listed 5-14 includes both men and women. Stephen, Philip,

Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Nicolaus of Antioch. They convert the Samaritans. (It would actually have been easier to convert the Samaritans as they weren't under the thumb of the Temple hierarchy.)

Tabitha, a seamstress, is explicitly listed as a new Christian. Finally – women as considered important enough to list. 8-3 has Saul harassing women – Why? Jewish men don't speak to women. He would have no reason to harass them, IF THEY HAD NOT BEEN PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL! 8:26-40 has the story of the Ethiopian Eunuch. The Holy Spirit orders Phillip to chase down his carriage where he is reading Isaiah. He had been coming back from offering sacrifice at the Temple. No he wasn't. A castrated man would NOT have been allowed into the inner courtyard with the 'real' men. He would have been separated out at the immersion baths and sent to join the women. (They didn't want any of them thar deviants in the Temple.) This would have been the closest to transgender that the medical 'science' of the day could accomplish. What is his reaction to the message? When told that he can be accepted as an EQUAL member of the church, he is so thrilled, he orders the carriage stopped at the first water he sees and Phillip IMMEDIATELY baptizes him. I wonder if Phillip also told him that God ordered him to chase him down and convert him.

So the Church has ALWAYS had a strong message of the acceptance of the

LGBT community from the beginning. I have no idea how the Vatican or the evangelical 'Christians' come up with anything different.

Being in charge of the treasury, he would immediately have taken this message back to Ethiopia and related it to his Queen. I'm sure she wasn't happy about being excluded from the Temple either and probably also joined immediately.

Chapter 10 has the Holy Spirit descending on the Roman household of Cornelias before they are baptized by Peter and without him laying hands on him. Even then, GOD chooses, not the pope.

Chapter 13:15 – The Jews stirred up the influential women against the Christians. Why would they do this? Jewish men don't talk to women. – This would acknowledge that early Christianity was a WOMAN'S movement. Think of Christ's message of love and honor to the poor and downtrodden and those who serve. The poorest and least powerful are WOMEN. They would have been flocking to Christ's message in droves. The men would have been invested in the power structure of the Temple and would not have left it.

It was the same in the Dust Bowl during the Great Depression. Those who left and went west to California were the poorest – those who had NOTHING to lose. The landowners stayed. Women were not considered full members in

Judaism. They are in most sects of Christianity. (At least pre Benne Dick)

Chapter 16: Timothy's Jewish mother is listed as a believer.

Chapter 16:14 Lydia and the other women of Phillipi convert. Paul converts HER household and leaves her in charge of the church. (Single mother?)

Philippi was also where the slave girl possessed by the demon prophesized. The authorities don't care about their preaching until the demon is expelled and they lose their cash flow. The Bible states she is happy with her new state and probably immediately began spreading the word.

Paul converts his Roman jailer and his household.

Chapter 17 – More conversions of Jews, Greeks, and numerous prosperous women.

17: 8 Beroea – Many Jews and influential Greek women and men. – Women listed first ~ the converts were mostly women or stressing the importance of the women converts in the early church?

End of chapter 17 in Athens lists 1 man 1 woman and others.

Church in Corinth - he converts a husband and wife team and takes them to Ephesus and sets them up in charge of the church. They are joined by the orator Apollos.

Paul baptizes 12 more men at Ephesus. The silversmiths who made miniature statues of Artimas objected to the new religion because they did not want to be out of a job.

Chapter 21:5 Wives and children included in the assembly.

The Roman Governor Felix and his Jewish wife listen to Paul preach.

King Agrippa and his wife Bernice listen to Paul. They all get together to try to figure out what to tell the Emperor what Paul is being accused of.

Paul's letter to the Romans.

Chapter 16 has Phoebe listed as a deaconess of Cenchreae.

We hear from Prisca and Aquila again as the church meets in THEIR house.

Rest of list of Chapter 16

Beloved Epaenetus

Mary – who has worked hard for you.

Andronicus and Junias – they are outstanding apostles and they were in Christ even before I was. (Paul and the early church acknowledge women apostles.)

Ampliatius, Urbnanus, Apelles, household or Aristobulus, Herodion, the household of Narcissus, Tryphaena and Tryphosa – who have worked hard

for the Load (Husband and wife team? Brother & sister?), Persis, Rufus and his mother, Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patobas, Hermas (feminine?) And brothers with them. Philologus and Julia, Neraus and his sister, Olympas

Paul's letter to Corinthians.

1:27 – Single out the weak to shame the strong.

9-5 has married apostles.

Chapter 11 – women's head coverings – judge for yourselves based on societal norms.

Men shouldn't wear long hair – This doesn't make a great deal of sense as Samson and other early Hebrew holy men took oaths to never cut their hair. The pagan culture seems to be creeping in here.

Chapter 14:34-35 No woman should speak in assembly – which doesn't make sense as he was calling them apostles and deacons previously. Father says the deaconesses just helped with the clothing during baptisms. This also doesn't make sense as Pliny the Younger was asking the deaconesses about their religion. When was the last time you asked a wardrobe mistress questions on theology? Pliny the Younger seemed to only be able to find women to question or was Christianity seen as primarily led by women or did the men bail?

The synagogues were setup with the women in a balcony in the back so they

could duck out with screaming infants. For them to speak in assembly, they would have had to be screaming from the back of the building. The rest of the ladies at Bible study wanted to know how to get their husbands to come to Mass so that they could tell them what was going on. The men would have also been the ones allowed to go to school to study scripture at this point.

This chapter is all about keeping order during services.

Chapter 15-4 has further inaccuracies. It has Christ appearing first to Peter. He appeared to Mary Magdalene first.

So these two Vatican documents are full of inaccuracies and can both be summarized as I is male – therefore I is holy.

According to Father, priests were not encouraged to read the Bible until Pope Pius the XII around World War II. That makes no sense. Represent Christ and blow off everything he said. It is blatantly obvious the no one in the Vatican has ever bothered to read the Bible.

These documents are the prime evidence that the Vatican is a billion-dollar international organization totally dedicated to worshipping their dicks. They look at Jesus and see nothing other than the great penis in the sky. Benne dick's response to the pedophile crisis spotlight's their practice of offering our children in sacrifice to their dicks.

If they had bothered to read the Bible, they would have realized that NOTHING infuriates God more than offering children in sacrifice to false gods.

The Father You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. That is what you must tell the Israelites. Ex. 19:6 The Son: On the other hand, it would be better for anyone who leads astray one of these little ones who believe in me, to be drowned by a millstone around his neck, in the depths of the sea. Mat. 18:6 & Luke 17:2 The king will answer them: 'I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me.' Mat. 25:40 First Pope You too are living stones, built as an edifice of spirit into a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. .. You, however, are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people he claims for his own to proclaim the glorious work" of the One who called you from darkness into his marvelous life. Peter 2:5-9 The New Testament 'misogynist' There does not exist among you Jew or Greek, slave or freeman, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, if you belong to Christ you are descendants of Abraham, which means you inherit all that was promised. Gal: 3:28-29 Their belief in the sanctity of their penises trumps their belief in the Bible!

It is vital that lay ministry and leadership become a part of the larger world-wide Church in structure.

It would take days to list my comments. There is a crisis with leadership and so much division among the leadership. An utter lack of leadership.

There are many lay women ministers capable to take the leadership. We hear there are no priests, we'll let the laity fill the gap.

I hope I live long enough to see these changes come to fruition.

I love my church and want it to live on. It must change or that cannot happen.

Priests do not want people with leadership skills. They want lay persons that are needy of their direction and needy of the priest's affirmation. Priests continue to associate with laity in that capacity. It makes me sick, sad, and intentionally distant from the church who belittles my call and my contribution. That is not growth for the laity.

My preference is for all of us to learn, pray and act as Jesus showed us and "just do it"! Maybe it's old(er) age, but I have little patience for whiners and complainers... The Church is a big tent and there is ample room for all, no matter the political stripes. The Church is pathetically polarized, especially in the US and this saddens me. If each of us would find our true self and pursue Jesus' model for living out our true self,

we might enjoy a level of JOY! Be at PEACE! And spread the LOVE of God to all God's creation.

Time to realize the dignity of all: married or single, male or female, straight or LGBTQ, all races.

As long as the priesthood is male-only, it's ridiculous to just allow priests in some of these roles.

The Church is all of us, so let's start acting like it!

The mystical heart of the Church is beautiful. The early church had its roots in Judaism. There were home churches. These accumulated graces through the centuries should ground our priesthood in marriage, in shared ministry, shared power, shared issues, NO clericalism! Oh to heal sexuality in the human family, please God!

Lay ministry has always existed but has not been appropriately recognized. Lay people have many gifts to share but those gifts must be called forth, recognized, and blessed. Lay people can and will develop their gifts if they are given appropriate training. And the whole church will benefit!

May it be So!

Leadership should be a ministry that is a calling. Leaders should serve.

We must be respected, we must be affirmed and appreciated for our own spirituality, our unique charisma, our

OUR STORIES

SESSION V

RACIAL JUSTICE IN THE CHURCH & WORLD

- Q1. Share a time when you recognized that, because of your Catholic faith, or because of the witness of a Catholic bishop, religious sister, priest, or lay person, you had to take action for racial justice. 1
- Q2. What steps could your local community take to more enthusiastically embrace racial and ethnic diversity. 22
- Q3. What could the Catholic Church do to help transform the hearts and minds of its members so that racial justice in our church and society would be a greater reality? 41

Q1. Share a time when you recognized that, because of your Catholic faith, or because of the witness of a Catholic bishop, religious sister, priest, or lay person, you had to take action for racial justice.

As a community organizer in El Paso, TX, I worked with Hispanic women to raise their voices for the rights and services needed in their neighborhoods

I have gone to Haiti 3 times in the past.

Trying to post messages about racism on our parish website (which was taken down because of pushback)

Uncovering the church's and American church's racist history i.e., Doctrine of discovery, enslavement of African people, silence and inaction on civil rights and racial justice, prison abolition.

In beginning to understand the abuse that Canada's indigenous people suffered through colonization and the imposed residential school system

I have had to speak for unrepresented ethnic communities because our local clergy speaks for no one because they don't want to ruffle feathers. When Trayvon Martin was killed, the bishop said he didn't want to make a statement because things in Raleigh were "pretty calm."

Black Lives Matter has been a time to educate myself and take action around racial justice. It comes from the education I got as a child in Catholic Schools, from the nuns' teachings and my family.

Lived in community for 16 years. Spoke up. Community now has racism as a critical concern. Now an Associate working on this.

The response of a Black Catholic priest to my inquiry about setting up an online organization of Catholics fighting racism. It's 2 years old now and still small but growing!

It has been my life's work as a Catholic and as a woman of color.

I realized it when a black woman left my religious congregation because she felt unaccepted.

In the Black Lives Matter, I participated in peaceful rallies and search for ways to take active participation in diverse events.

To defend a racial minority unjustly imprisoned.

Has not happened.

I have simply withdrawn and joined Future Church for which I am eternally grateful.

Leaving a Church gathering during a homily disparaging of a racial minority.

Through our community making racism a priority in study has helped us to get more involved in action for racial justice.

As a student we were organized by the Jesuits to try to stabilize communities within the city to allow for peaceful integration of neighborhoods.

My brother, when I asked if he believed we are racist, he was clear we are not. I ADDRESSED

the real estate situation of red, blue, green lining. Unknown to him.

Open letter recognizing Pres. good choice of Supreme court nominee Tanja Jackson Brown.

We have welcomed a black Sister into our religious congregation, but I think that over her years with us, it has been difficult for her.

I assume this question will be interpreted and answered differently by color-rich and color-challenged folks. As a member of the BIPOC community, I have to take action daily to navigate the impact of implicit bias and racism in both church and community.

Having taught at an inner-city school in Chicago, and more recently as a counselor for 26 years at U of D Jesuit H.S. have been tremendous personal influences on me and my family.

When I was part of Catholic Conference on Urban Ministry in 1974. The church is big enough for ALL.

In the 1960s when a social justice professor at St. Bernard's Seminary told me a black candidate for priesthood was told to go down south to join the josephite fathers as we had no need for him here! just a few years later seminarians trashed a when professors office. they did not like her field work assignments.

Working with NETWORK.Org has given me a broader perspective of the economic injustice that Black Americans have suffered. Pushing for legislative changes is important to effect racial parity.

I lived in Charlottesville for 20+ years and had just moved to a neighboring town when Aug. 12, 2017, occurred. The Catholic pastors were totally absent, and I was ashamed to be Catholic. I did join with others in my neighboring parish to work on racism and justice, but our efforts received little support.

I came into full communion with the church in 2003, I was aware then. My education and background were in African/Afro-American studies.

Learning liturgical music from Fr. Clarence Rivers...very powerful!

I worked in Mississippi in the late 60's for Catholic Charities. That was my first exposure to the reality of Racial Injustice. I had been unaware previously. Even Catholic Churches were segregated at that time. It was a shock to me.

Can't really recall any specific incident.

I taught in a racially mixed school in a racially mixed neighborhood. I felt drawn to attend civic meetings dealing with the red lining going on in the neighborhood.

Catholic social teaching, supported by my parents, formed my opinions on this topic. But I have been blind, I think, to opportunities for me to bear witness to my faith and convictions.

I never had a problem when being an elementary principal. Although we had a number of children whose parents came from India's and the Orient, we had no black persons. In my office I had a picture of a poorly dressed picture with the words "God does not make junk." Even now in the parish we only have one person who is black and a few Hispanic immigrants but all are equal.

I recently had a friend ask me (in a way that indicated she hadn't) if I had ever experienced white privilege.

Became an advocate for African Priests and Sisters studying at our universities.

I am inspired by a sister in our religious congregation who has made it a priority to try

to create personal relationships with persons of color.

I am involved in action for racial justice starting in the 60s working for SCLC and have moved from there into other populations experience discrimination including divorce Catholics.

I think because of Catholic social teaching, I have been made aware of racial injustice. It made me want to take steps to know and understand those of different races and cultures.

I was waiting in a drug store and a young black man was paying with a check. The clerk (a young black woman) asked him for his license for an ID. I searched for my ID as U was waiting. When I got to the counter, she did not ask me for my ID. So I asked her why she didn't ask me for mine. She just shrugged her shoulders. I took it as something she was told to do in her dealing with people.

I try very hard to pay attention to disrespect and unjust remarks and/or actions and speak up about the wrongness of such.

My perception is that there is just a sense of apathy or avoidance in acknowledging the inequity that is present in the Catholic Church. Financial support comes from the conservative right.

Current cases of Black lives that are in the news were a concern to our prior pastor and he marched in Black Lives Matter events. We followed up with action by parishioners.

Our parish sponsored a refugee garden. The gardeners were from Bhutan. They came to the diocese through Catholic Social Services. I befriended one woman gardener. She needed help with transporting her produce to a citywide farmers market, pricing and signage, and veggie prep. We became good friends. I think it takes personal experiences to build social justice.

Working for a social services agency in an urban setting I volunteered to serve on the agency committee that led workshops for staff on "healing racism." It was challenging but very worthwhile.

Honestly, I don't think I've ever been in such a situation actually

Unfortunately, I do not think I ever had this experience.

I collaborated for nine years with the Holy Child Sisters in West Africa (Nigeria and Ghana). During that time, I facilitated trip with students, teachers, and donors to Nigeria and Ghana. There's nothing like processing lived experience to bring people to a different level of awareness of the bias they hold. Many of my dearest friends are black. Hearing their stories has enriched my perspective and my life.

Being a member of Peace and Justice Committee at my parish, I can partner with other like-minded people on initiatives such as reparation for red lining in our community.

Religious sister's open reaction to accepting a black student to our small parochial school. A come-to-Jesus moment for each of us to welcome him. YEARS ago.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot, I prayed that if he died, I would work for racial justice the rest of my life. Sometimes I have been able to do that. I acknowledge that I am racist.

We live in a racially diverse neighborhood and have friends who are of various "races".

I would say the Civil Rights movement when I saw & knew religious sisters who were involved in the March in Selma.

Bryan Massingale and Larry Dowling continue to inspire me. Many POC authors, podcasts,

webinars, etc. inspire me, but I don't think they're Catholic

when my son who is black was not accepted in a catholic school by a Marianist brother by saying "those people."

I stood up for students' other black students in my predominately white high school. This has continued throughout my career as an educator.

Demonstrations for justice in farm organization in California went through the campus of Santa Clara U. 1962-66.

In 2009 a 15-year-old boy was murdered in our community in the afternoon because someone thought he was breaking into their house. One of the women in the community wrote an op ed in the local paper calling out racism. She was someone I knew from Catholic grade school and our parish.

In hearing stories shared by some who had left the church given their experiences of exclusion. I didn't do well except to empathize and sympathize; I did know what to do!

I was speaking to a parishioner just this morning and she alluded to the mindset that indigenous are 'Indian givers'. I reminded her that it was actually the colonizers who gave and then took back the rights of the indigenous here in Canada.

I have been gifted to work for anti-racism for about 25 years. I have been in many dialogues, given and participated in workshops, learned the stories from many POC, studied about racism and I read many books about racial justice. I must continue to take action for racial justice.

I was involved with the Ramadan experience my pastor was trying to bring to the parish for openness to the other Muslim and Middle Eastern. Many in the parish resisted this attempt. Also, the pastor commemorated at

Mass the killing of George Floyd and was booed. The all-white parish barely tolerates the Chaldeans who attend Mass here. Tolerance is not acceptable to many parishioners who have money and use the withdrawal of money to coerce the pastor into doing what they want.

The unjust death of black men in our country as recently in the last 10 years. Also, to support the Black Lives Matter movement openly within my Catholic community and circle of friends.

I am embarrassed to say that I can't think of a time I've taken action for racial justice.

I attend a parish that is 50% or more Latino. I notice the Woman's group I belong to has said things that I consider racist. I try to say something in a nice way that shows that is just a stereotype or false information and not how it really is.

I have adult children who are not white - we do well with charity but not with justice issues. George Floyd's murder needed to be addressed other than just as a prayer of the faithful. Within our parish we were more concerned about how the message of justice would be received. This holds true on many issues.

Many. But my attending public schools, winning fellowships to public universities, and teaching in both Catholic and ecumenical Seminaries make exchanges with different races and cultures possible. I recall one tiny black boy who did not notice my white color but said, "You got the purtiest smile I ever done see-d."

Often times there is no response and so we must question why? Prayers of the Faithful ... bulletin omissions, homilies?

We started a racial justice circle which facilitates Honest Conversation about racism in parish settings. They include Lutheran and Presbyterian as well as Catholic. We are also part of a Black Lives Matter interfaith coalition which includes forty faith groups.

When my pastor said Black Lives Matters is against Catholic teaching, and a parishioner said saying Black Lives Matters causes violence. Also, the audacity of Bishops to deny the Eucharist to white politicians giving themselves the power of exclusion exercised among peoples i.e., Black and Native, also the unwillingness of church leaders to recognize the sins of racism in the Church.

Not really an action but an increased sensitivity. I recall Bryan Massingale once sharing that Bishops had told him they couldn't be more racially proactive because "our people" wouldn't understand that. His question was, who are "our people"?

Book "Good Catholic Girls" made me see for the 1st time that the problem in Church was systemic.

Using racial justice inclusive of all human beings, BIPOC, addicted, unhorsed, etc. I have spoken out/acted to raise awareness of racism present.

The focus of our CSJ most recent chapter is racial justice and we have had congregational meetings and required reading of books such as White Fragility.

Teaching in a boarding school where there were few persons of color, we had a nun who was getting her PhD in anthropology talk to the girls: she asked an Asian and an Anglo to walk towards each other and stop when each one was comfortable - the distances were very different; she asked a Black girl and a white girl to get up an dance - they could only do it to music they knew. The experience led everyone to become more aware of difference and similarities and the need to explore what was happening, not just assume one knew. I have always believed that God/ Jesus/ clearly the Spirit appreciated differences and was leading me to learn this path too

Fr Massingale speaks to my heart. And Catholic sisters, and lay people are leading the Church. I have 3 personal friends who are Black, and I admire them, and they impel me to take action for racial Justice. I cannot sit back.

In my own family I have siblings who are very racist. Making comments whenever possible in very snide ways. Yet they are strongly opposed to abortion and make it their greatest priority.

My Catholic faith turns me towards respectful curiosity about each person's story which includes ethnic/racial identity. Radical hospitality is something I have presumed from growing up in a predominantly Irish Catholic community. "Put the kettle on" was my mother's response to anyone.

The Norfolk Catholic Worker actions encouraged me to participate with a friend in weekly BLM vigils on a Main Street in my neighborhood.

Taking part, nearly daily, in the Prayer Tent in Minneapolis after the murder of George Floyd opened my eyes, ears and heart to the reality and effects of systemic racism. I led me to engage in further reading, in taking a seminar by black leaders and promoting it among my peers.

I am actively seeking a church home that is more racially and culturally integrated for my own growth and to support its activities in the neighborhood and area.

Reading Father Berrigan, Reading Father Massingale, Reading Dorothy Day, and Thomas Merton.

The pastor of the parish where I was teaching in the Catholic School was angry with me when I invited students of color to join an activity at the school; it was in the junior high grades.

When I read Books by Catholics (priests and others) who dared to question the institution and help us see that the institution is flawed

and in need of repair, especially in the area of accepting differences. The Institution has not loved diversity, but rather has tried to annihilate it, caring more to change, assimilate and condemn than to learn, love and accept.

St. Thomas University presented a series of Lenten lectures and discussions on the role of our legal system in keeping the races separate: states overriding the 13th Amendment, sending violators of petty laws back into slavery, the heavy enforcement of minor drug violators and inordinate numbers of Blacks incarcerated, redlining of neighborhoods, etc. all involving condonement by our legal system. Many of us had not been aware of the effects of such laws on employment, transportation, lack of earning power, disintegration of families, etc.

Jesus taught us to love one another. All of us. If we believe that, we cannot condone discrimination.

I will share a story of my daughter when she was 4 years old. She had an outstanding teacher, one that I wanted to nominate for a provincial award. One day, my daughter was playing with a black girl after school when a black woman came into the room. My then 4-year-old daughter asked if that was her mother. I got a phone call from her teacher (the one I wanted to nominate) telling me this story, and that I need to deal with the racism in my child. I was more than shocked. An adult would have recognized that a 4-year-old is learning, and made an association based on skin color, which is a very human thing to do. An adult could have talked with my 4-year-old daughter and asked her if a white woman walked into the room, is it fair to think she would be her mother? But instead of this teaching opportunity, I was labelled as a racist mother (as opposed to a mother of a perceptive thinking girl), I did not go forward with the nomination, and I had to tell my young daughters to not talk about skin color at their multiracial Catholic school, as it will just get mommy in trouble (as the white teachers have

no racial training - notwithstanding the school being very multicultural).

Cardinal Wilton Gregory has inspired me with his words and actions.

A recent pilot study on Racism in the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia brought me to action.

My husband and I joined a spiritual group which helped to financially support a Catholic school in the inner city which was primarily for black children, and we still contribute to our group's financial support of groups that help children in the inner city.

I took action back in the 1980s to protest outside a Catholic Church when a gift Black religious sister was told she could no longer preach in Church. There was a protest march outside the church. When no change happened, my family and I left that church.

I am very involved in racial justice and have worked for 30 years at community issues involving racial justice goals.

I was visiting my daughter in Texas and the priest started talking about babies that didn't get baptized before they died. He called them pagan babies. I was mortified and deeply saddened. I wanted to stand up and shout. The babies were born out of love. Such poor, poor theology!

Yes, above all for native people in our area.

I have had only a small number of one-on-one encounters people of color BIPOC, but I long for more personal and communal opportunities.

I was invited by some other sisters who were ministering in southwest TN to learn the skills of community organizing and assist the Blacks there to organize, speak out, and demand their rights and the normal amenities of life,

like clean water, paved roads, care at the local hospital, etc.

I worked with the Navajo (Dine' as they call themselves as a Tribal identity) and they are traditionally shepherders. They care for their sheep like they are family because the sheep and goats care for their family with wool for their rugs, food for their gatherings etc. One particular Sunday the priest spoke of the dirty, lazy shepherders in relationship to the Gospel that day. These derogatory remarks impacted half of the congregation that day. His response when asked why he said this was, well they are! Unbelievable!

Because of my rootedness in the gospel, I have taken some small actions.... workshops, Seeing White podcasts, friendship etc.

My husband was an active Catholic priest before we married. The Documents from Vatican II were significant in his life and encouraged him to always focus on social justice. It was his Catholic faith that led him to speak out and, when we worked together at the WNY Peace Center and for the Sisters of St. Joseph, make sure to gently offer actions people could do.

A time we took action: We rented a van in Buffalo New York and, with several others including one man of color, drove to Tchula Mississippi and back in one weekend to a rally in support of the Black mayor.

In my religious community we have religious of color - I have heard demeaning comments which I have had to address. The last archbishop of Philadelphia, PA had meetings - he did not have a clue about racism - it was embarrassing.

Influenced by some leaders but they are few and far between.

See above. I joined Monroe County United - breaking barriers and building bridges.

local religious leaders, educators, and law enforcement & me the civil engineer. I can balance a check book. I'm the treasurer. No Catholic clergy. We marched WITH the Black Lives Matter protest.

Sr Anita has inspired me. What a message!

When I was in line to buy something and there was a black person ahead of me. The clerk looked beyond them and asked me to come forward. I refused and said that the person in front of me was here first.

For the Blacks at our Church. I am involved in Ministry, and I try to step back and let them speak and be heard as they have as much to say as all of us. I try to promote equality.

Strangely it was from a celebration of all of the ethnicity and racial groups in the diocese. A special Mass was held. It was beautiful and wonderful and inclusive. However, it was a one-shot experience that was never to be repeated and had been needed for a very long time.

Rather than the church, my father was instrumental in making us aware of racial and social justice.

I became more aware when George Floyd was murdered, but never had a Catholic bishop etc. witness.

When I was greeted but my black co-worker was not

Became very active in immigrant rights social justice due to experiences volunteering with women religious

When my father intended to keep a Black family out of our neighborhood, I protested and begged him not to. Ultimately, he refused to sign the petition.

Unfortunately, I have not had that opportunity

I taught in a predominantly black catholic school and the students were unjust to each other within their black community, seeking superiority amongst themselves.

When protests following George Floyd's murder were taking place, our parish refused to address it because they "didn't want to upset anyone." Who is the "anyone" we're protecting?

Integrating a parish in Louisiana, our Sisters were run off the road, threatened and called names because we work with the poor, especially those of other races.

I participated in JustFaith (formation) and really became aware of Catholic Social Teaching.

I have always felt strongly about the importance of justice, however I feel, based on my experience, that the church only talks about justice and the importance of justice in society. They never look at the lack of justice w/i the church.

I was a member of a Catholic youth group in the 70's that was integrated. We went to a restaurant that refused to serve us. We left. The priest who was in charge involved the FBI. I don't know what was ultimately done to address what the restaurant did.

Hearing the stories of the exclusion of women of color from religious congregations, which included my own for a while.

Sr. Thea Bowman and Rev. Massengale reminded me of what happens when others are made to feel unimportant in the Catholic Church.

After reading Fr. Dan Horan's book on racism and white privilege, I changed parishes.

Most recently with the Black Lives Matter. Our parish was hesitant to speak out in solidarity. It

was law people who encouraged the pastor to have prayer and an informative session

After watching the news on TV during the early pandemic and seeing how George Floyd was treated.

Within past few years as has become focus for country.

Gene Cash, a black member of our parish, started a book club two years ago. We joined the book club.

Hearing Fr. Bryan Massingale speak.

As a social worker, mediator, and writer I advocate and tell stories of people advancing racial justice. I also try to give witness to blacks by inviting them socially into my home.

We moved to Wilmington in 1978. We intentionally chose to live in the center city, which is racially diverse. We still live in that area. To this day, I have to defend our decision to live in this area rather than the suburbs. We are active in civic affairs.

Can't think of anything at the moment

None

In general, Catholic clergy do not speak out, join demonstrations in social justice issues like other ministers in other denominations do.

I take action by helping incarcerated men (majority black) reenter society, advocate for legislative changes to bring about a more just criminal justice system and restorative justice to bring about healing.

My Catholic faith and my belief that we are all God's children has encouraged me to get involved in a local Black Lives Matter group in my city. We have a monthly rally on a major street in Baltimore City and hold up BLM signs to show support for our fellow citizens of color.

Network Lobby has been the strongest voice in my life challenging me to work for racial justice.

I have abdicated from the American Catholic Church because of the racism that exists among the bishops, priests. I currently nourish my Catholic faith within the Hispanic, Spanish speaking Catholic community of faith.

My Congregation, Sisters of Charity of Halifax (Nova Scotia) is focusing on racial justice and our obligation to deal with anti-racism in our lives and at large.

When I hear racial comments, I feel they cannot go unnoticed as acceptable conversation.

When I visited the Civil Rights Movements historical sites in Montgomery and Selma, Alabama (on a Good Friday one year!)

I believe my call to action for both racial justice and social justice began in Stone Mountain, Georgia at my childhood Parish Church- where we had 2 convicted pedophile priests serve, one after the other, in an area where the Ku Klux Klan had also been active. It is very important for the Church to make the needed changes for both men and women- to have optional celibacy and ordained women. This would then Open Up the Entire church to more Cultural Diversity.

I have not had that experience.

Sister Ardeth Platte OP and Sister Carol Gilbert OP worked to support the poor in Saginaw for years. Ardith got Delta College into the city, was a Saginaw councilwoman. Both worked for nuclear disarmament for all nations.

Bishop, Priests & Sisters, and a few lay people helped me to grow in my attitudes and activity back in the 1960s & 70s but with recent Bishops & Priests there is little good example.

Hearing from Black Catholics in our racial justice group of how they feel and what they have experienced.

I can't think of a specific example.

I have had to change my language when telling stories.

I belong to a national group called Campaign Nonviolence. Each year we explore a different aspect of violence. the year we explored racial violence is the year that I did a deep dive into its history and that is when I started to take more actions.

At work in a Catholic high school, I was made a buffer between the people of color and the principal (I am white). He wanted me to tell them things he wanted them to improve upon and didn't want to come off as racist in doing so. Because I had a good relationship with them, he wanted me to deliver those messages. After a few exchanges, my colleagues said how insulting it was and so I confronted him and said that he needed to speak to the certified professionals he hired himself.

Currently the Pope is welcoming a delegation of indigenous people in Rome, listening to their stories of oppression by our residential schools and offering empathy. This was organized by our Bishops and laity. we hope the Pope will follow up with coming to CANADA and to apologize to our indigenous people for our role in colonization, taking their culture away from them

In the wake of the George Floyd murder (I was living near Minneapolis at the time), I felt called to be of service in the very communities that were laid waste by unrest/sabotage. Currently, I am trying to explore a way for systemic racism to be a part of my Catholic Social Teaching unit in my ethics & social justice class - for many years, I've not had it in the curriculum; partially because I didn't have time to plan those lessons well, and maybe

partly because I was scared to open up those conversations in the school I was teaching at in the past. The Jesuit school I now teach in is, I think, VERY supportive of including the topic in our classes.

Our mission in Gary, Sojourner Truth House continues to speak about racism, women and of color plight. PHJC continues to educate and make aware social/systemic racism on various levels of social and political engagement.

Have participated in civil rights marches and protests; spent over 20 years living/working in the Black community and learning more than I ever could have imagined; am involved in advocacy work in issues of race and immigration.

I prepared young adults for confirmation at an all-black church. It was a mission to procure liturgical music or teaching materials geared to the community I was ministering to.

I walk with my sister of color in an environment of cultural dominance and that as witness it is an action for racial justice.

In the novitiate, we had an African American young woman enter. There were many postulants and novices who rejected her. I witnessed one time when she took chips from a bowl, another sister refused to take chips from that same bowl. She was a wonderful sister and did much to promote the equality of a vocational call. She died way too young. We would have grown greatly if she had been with us longer.

When Archbishop Gomez made his statement, I wrote a letter. I have been in contact with USCCB when destructive practices occur - such as racism and child abuse.

I cannot recall any.

When I was denied a job because I was not a black woman. In the spirit of being integrated

and since they already had a white man, the woman they hired had to be black. I accepted this due to my faith and acceptance of equality.

I supported anti racial injustices occurring in other parts of the U.S. by participating in demonstrations, writing to my elected officials, and initiating groups to read books that focused on racial histories and form discussion groups,

In conversation with parishioners, bringing attention, gently, to how a comment might be hurtful, dismissive, violent, stereotypical. Discussion of the Chris Rock-Will Smith event at the Oscars led to some insights about all of the above.

A couple years ago, I confronted the fact of racism within my circle of friends (a group of graduate-level educated individuals) and called us to discern and discuss. However, I felt they were so out of touch with reality, and I was out of sync with them that it was difficult to reconcile for quite some time.

After the first 1987 coup in Fiji the Members of Parliament were captured and held hostage and separated - the Indians in one place, the Fijians in another. We sent members to both places to hold vigil.

Can't think of one.

When on our city's Human Relations Commission, we encouraged and fostered racial justice.

I spoke face to face with two different bishops about their emphasis on anti-abortion and indifference to anti racism.

I attended a semester-long racial justice workshop in New York City in the '60s. It was attended by black and white religious, ministers, and workers for social justice. It was challenging and transforming.

I really cannot think of any.

I did this all my life. This is why -- when I found Christianity -- I recognized myself as a Christian!!! Then, when I joined the Catholic Church, I met the opposite of Christians IMHO. I do think the last generation of Catholics just lived unconsciously, with privilege and are now being challenged to accommodate a lot of new complexities. Things in the 50s and 60s and 70s and even 80s were just not as complex as they are now, to be fair.

We had to confront relatives who were from the south who were not even aware of the prejudice they held.

Changing my own heart after being awakened to the extent and depth of systemic racism in our country through a yearlong book study sponsored by St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Being a religious missionary, we have to take action for those people in the border and seeking asylum, for LGBTQT, not only for black but all people of color and the indigenous.

In my community, there have been several Sisters who have set an example of witness and solidarity with Black and Brown people and have demonstrated against racism. They have inspired me to look at myself and have challenged me to respond.

When I worked for the Archdiocese under Archbishop Hurley, we had inclusive liturgies. People objected to the languages being used other than English, they objected to people of color wearing traditional clothing - I am talking of indigenous and Asian peoples here. We had to stand for this inclusivity. After Archbishop Hurley retired, the staff that had worked for inclusivity were all moved out of their offices or let go by the new Archbishop. Recently, The Filipino priests had all had trouble getting their visas renewed because of the pastoral center not being on top of the

process. Now they are all being deported as are the Indian priests. This is unacceptable. I have written to Archbishop about this.

When we traveled in central Florida with black friends and were not permitted to stay with certain family members. We refused to stay with those certain family members.

In the seminaries that I attended I was able to learn how to speak about my faith & if racism was a barrier. Now we're discussing Vatican II with a Jesuit on zoom with many but mainly whites. I feel spiritually fed when Jesuits doctoral students from Africa say the Mass because they're more inclusive of their diverse culture & more down to earth.

I cannot think of a particular instance. My faith means that I must support and accept all people.

As a public-school teacher, I had to address this issue in my classes or with individual students.

As a teenager (from a Catholic high school) "a black" friend was discriminated against...store clerk wouldn't look at or take her money at the cash register. I was so angry but surprised my black friend did not want me to speak up for her...didn't want to be embarrassed any further. I did confront the store clerk, nicely, then reported her to the manager. Didn't see that clerk back there afterwards.

In the past, because nothing blaring comes to mind, I was either not attuned or very insensitive. I am in a different place now. Thank God.

I take actions within my community regularly, attending protests for example. I do see that as my responsibility as a Christian Catholic - if I look at Jesus' teaching on inclusion of those at the margins, I have to speak up for racial justice.

My only experience was my ministry not racial but the gay community in the 1980s-1990s. It was an awful time for those living with AIDS. Only three priests would come to the hospital to anoint. The cruelty was unacceptable within our Church.

I think that instead of racial prejudice spoken by Catholic leadership, bishops, religious sisters or priests, or lay leadership, they have actually ignored and never even acknowledged that equity was an issue in the church. I can't think of any time I ever heard one of these roles having spoken the word "racism". They didn't seem to see or acknowledge that racism was anti-Christian.

When they fight for the rights of our indigenous peoples especially when their lands and lives are threatened.

Right after the George Floyd murder, our pastor and his staff had a mass for racial justice, but nothing has been said ever since. I have been working with a religious sister and other lay persons to collaborate on racial justice education and issues.

I'm not sure there has been a time. I have been woefully unaware of how racial injustice affects people of color on a personal level. The Catholic Church in Anchorage is very diverse because Anchorage is diverse. and I think each parish is becoming more diverse as the years go by. I have been educating myself about my own racism and privilege as a white person. I'm discerning what this is going to mean for me going forward. I have noticed that there is not a Catholic presence from the hierarchy in addressing the injustices found in our state and community. It seems that that is all left to Catholic Social Services--which is great. But that is not the same as the archbishop coming out and addressing the issues we have around homelessness, substance abuse, violence, poverty, etc.

No such experience because I have had little personal experience with Black people.

My mom's favorite saint was Martin De Porres, yet when my sister married a gentleman of color, she had a very difficult time to accept that marriage. Her friends and those of my father also treated both rudely which didn't help the healing
They did reconcile after 17 years.

Our religious community is usually ready to confront issues of racial justice. Many examples.

I was so strongly influenced by St. Oscar Romero and Fr. Stanley Rother--it made me work to address racial injustice embedded in our treatment of immigrants. It was harder to recognize my white privilege in my daily interactions with Black community members. It's still a work in progress.

Our parish had no active peace & justice committee- along with friends we formed one such committee. We need to do more work on racial justice issues

I have always been concerned about racial injustice and have looked for ways to speak out. Last summer I took part in 2 JustFaith racial equity programs through zoom that raised my understanding of racial inequity by leaps and bounds. Our bishop has banned JustFaith programs from our diocese, so many of us do it outside the parish.

In the Medical Mission Sisters, I saw how much the sisters loved and honored people of all faiths and colors and educated them to the highest standards so that they could turn over hospitals and clinics to the local communities in Africa and around the world.

Upon seeing my classroom bulletin board on Martin Luther King, a maintenance man attempted to throw his wet mop at it. I yelled, "Don't you dare!"

Anytime there is talk of bigotry or slurs made in reference to any person because of their race or religion or lack of a religion, I do speak up and inquire why they feel that way.

I chaired a Black Student Catholic Scholarship program because its founder, a woman of color, invited me to do so. I am white. The scholarship could go to any black student to attend any area Catholic HS of their choice, regardless of their religion. It was a great opportunity in building awareness for me.

I was born and raised on the S. Side of Chicago during the racial change in the neighborhood (78th & Merrill Ave.) (mid-late 1960s). My parents & family stayed in the neighborhood and did not flee as most white people did. They are my example of Catholicity, as they made new friends among their new neighbors and joined “neighborhood watch” groups under the direction of Jesse Jackson.

My parish has been making a pledge for racial justice at the end of every Mass since George Floyd’s death. This has generated quite a bit of discussion (positive & negative). The parish also started an Anti-Racism Study Group that is becoming a recognized ministry in the parish. We want to see faith in action, so the group is looking for ways to sustain everyone’s right to vote.

At a lunch with women friends from church, I was stunned to Roseanne say that she could not wait to move from her neighborhood and away from the “filthy and smell” Indians on her street. The week before at a Walking with Purpose event she stood and spoke how Jesus is her best friend and that he walks with her throughout the day. I questioned her about her remarks and what Jesus was thinking when He heard her words. She told me she was just stating facts. We did have a discussion about why these facts were even part of our lunch discussion.

A dear friend was put off from joining my religious congregation because she is black. I apologized to my friend. I was not able to talk with the person who made the offense.

I have worked in education with aboriginal children here and also with students in Fort Smith Canada.

Helping set up Tribal Filipino programs like basic education/ schools up in the mountains to help uphold their dignity rights and to empower them.

I have worked with people of color in the court system as well as in Church and I have stood up with and for them in a variety of ways. When our one African American candidates for the Easter Sacraments were seated in the back rows at the Rite of Election, I wrote to the person in charge and let them know that we can no longer let our Black friends be invisible at our celebrations.

Actually, the Saturday after the election of Nov. 2016, I felt I needed to do something. A friend of mine who was active in social justice ministry at another parish was sponsoring a day’s workshop on racism. This was an hour away from our home, but we attended. There was an excellent presentation by a pair of religious women from the same congregation, one black and one white. There was good discussion among a predominantly white audience. At that time, I was convinced that the four years ahead were likely to be difficult for African Americans. I realized that there was an active anti-racism group in our town, at the Baptist Church. I joined and have been attending weekly meetings for the past 6 years. Most of the white people in the group are Jewish. I may be the only practicing Catholic. I have seen minimal to no interest in discussing issues of racial justice in the five Catholic Churches in our town, although two of them are quite diverse. They may be personally welcoming to people of color, but it is not a subject they want to discuss in public.

Participation in community wide Black Lives Matter demonstration and walk after George Floyd's death.

I worked as a RN at a free health clinic in the inner city of Detroit and saw firsthand the effects of systemic racism. My African American patients were working 2 jobs just to try to put food on the table. They had no health insurance and had diabetes and didn't know it until they got so sick, they ended up in the hospital. Then they would lose their jobs. The gentrification of Detroit is an effort to push poor blacks out because there is no affordable housing for them. The big developers are given tax abatements to tear down tenements and build high rises for the rich robbing the city of taxes that could go to schools and public transit is given. The diocese closed the churches and schools in Detroit abandoning the poor and kept the wealthier suburban schools open.

Racial justice was a constant presence in the parish founded by black Catholics. I was happy to hear a parish priest in my majority white church announce from the alter that he had recently become aware of this privilege as a white male.

The death of George Floyd.

I never had that experience.

Visiting and subsequently promoting the Civil Rights history of Montgomery, Selma, and Birmingham.

Yes, now in my country (Canada) there is a shift in awareness of the long suffering plight of our Indigenous People as we are forced to look at the injustices as settlers or colonialists of the lost indigenous children recently found in mass graves on the property of the Church and government run residential schools. It is our shame.

When I heard a talk by John Howard Griffin.

The husband of a niece of a Catholic Sister friend was incarcerated for 15 years, although innocent. This man was African American. I personally was so upset with the murder of George Floyd that I could no longer go to church on Sunday when one of the musicians was sending racist emails.

We, as a community, provided ministerial assistance to a family from Democratic Republic of Congo. We provided housing and food, health care and school for a young teen. They are now reunited with the rest of their family and living in Louisville.

I have marched in events, nationally and locally to seek for greater justice and equality. Sr. Thea Bowman was a great witness to me when she participated in National Pastoral Music Conferences. I continued to share her message to my High School Students, using the film of her life, to help them to see her witness and the importance of the inclusive Gospel Message of Jesus to the present day.

Several experiences over the years with my Religious Community.

I was in a group in which Mexican immigrants were being demeaned. I had to say "those are my kids" - I teach Confirmation in a mixed community - many of my kids are Hispanic & are really interested & committed to learning about their faith & doing service.

I grew up in the segregated south and saw injustices even though we did not live near each other and joined a religious community. Next year I will celebrate 70 years professed, but even though I spoke often about inequality and injustice, I don't remember having to take action for racial justice. I did take action for women working in a sewing factory for 6 years, but all were white women in Appalachia. I saw very few blacks except when I taught in the prison system for 17 1/2 years. I did stand

up for the men when I saw injustice, black or white.

As a result of the Just Faith modules on race.

Ten years ago.

In conversations with friends, I feel the need to speak up when their opinions reflect racism.

I really cannot say that there was a single time. It has been an accumulation of stories and knowledge, especially over the last few years: Stories about violence and race-motivated murder (historical and current), racism in the American Church, including African Americans being denied entry into seminaries and orders of nuns, the dearth of Catholics in the leadership, including canonized saints, my growing knowledge of gaps in education, healthcare, and food security, voter suppression, and my growing knowledge of local history and the huge part that slavery and segregation played in the history of my community - and the injustice that remains to this day. It has been important for me to read and to share with others who have these concerns, and I have been blessed to know other African American Catholics, who were generous about sharing their stories and their perspective with me.

When the pastor controls everything and he has little to no interest in racial/social justice issues nothing or little is done. These are never front and center in the parish. An example is Daily Bread Soup Kitchen. When the current head of Catholic Social Services arrived in C-U she had no knowledge of Daily Bread which is run largely by Catholics. They provide a meal to 300 people a day and also social services. A man requested the parishes to provide a room to allow immigrants to learn English. The parishes would not allow it. The Catholic hospital did provide them a room. A young Catholic woman is very prominent in providing needed services to immigrants.

Have not had that experience.

In the sixties my catholic high school sponsored a biracial panel on racial justice- this foundation led to many subsequent public witnesses for racial Justice- including demonstrations at the White House to intervene over violence in Selma

It came from within and not from any of the above. I worked with black clergy and a black religious community very comfortably and maintain some of those relationships.

Picket line for farmworkers. Asked our local community to live in a black neighborhood. Speaking up about dark and light skin people and discrimination against dark skinned people.

Black Lives Matter was the topic of discussion with a former student of mine who said all lives matter. I agreed to the truth of that but tried to explain why the phrase was so important at this time in our history and how it makes us aware of our past neglect and our present responsibility. She was not willing to give in but said she'd have to think about it.

When I heard a homily in a Catholic Church by a deacon that black lives was a fringe radical group. I wrote to the bishop and never heard back

Many times, in my college years at Manhattanville, urged on by the RSCJ'S who ran the college until the 70's, racial justice on the front burner. '63 March on Washington, tutoring, enrolling minorities, etc. Some classmates remained prejudiced, even to this day, but for others of us the seed for action was planted.

Support for BLM.

George Floyd experience woke me up.

We are a United-Multicultural-bilingual parish. We were told that our parish will be closed, and the bishop did provide a church close by for the English speaking community but for the Spanish speaking he ignored them, they were not even mentioned in the letter. In one of the listening sessions one of the bishops said that they can go to any church. There are many. This is a racial, economic and religious discrimination.

At my first diocesan Chrism Mass here, I was surprised that the entire liturgy was euro centric. I had become aware due to my position that our diocese encompasses to Native American reservations and has a small but vibrant population of Spanish-speaking people. When I suggested including bilingual songs or other cultural rituals as smudging as the assembly gathered, it was “unnecessary.” With our change of bishop, our plans may be more inclusive, recognizing our universality.

Never have had to do so. . .

Only once when a dear friend from church used a racial slur. I let them know that I detest the use of the word and didn't want to hear it again. They informed me that they had been robbed at gunpoint by a Black person. I let them know that one bad apple didn't rot the entire basket. I went on to inform them that my grandmother had been raped by a Black man when my mother was 15 years old. And yet, I never heard her use the word or say anything bad about an entire race.

The example of Bishop Edward Braxton (our second bishop) and the witness of Father Massingale's writings/speeches have spurred me to be actively anti-racist.

Working in a catholic hospital serving inner city and rural poor including migrant middle eastern and black I had to verbally and in practice witness to non-partiality and equal service to all. Also, how to work with

professionals from middle eastern, oriental, black and minority backgrounds.

Locally a group of Christians wanted to counter the narrative that Christianity was opposed to justice for African Americans and contacted pastors of all 40 churches in the area. Notably absent were the evangelical churches, and the two Catholic parishes. I personally reached out to both Catholic parishes and did not receive any response at all. I therefore worked as a solitary Catholic in an ecumenical gathering against racism and white supremacy.

Support Direct Action Research Teams (DART).

Because of the witness of the Congregation of St Joseph, I participated in several Anti-racism vigils.

Rising violence in the city and my presence on a board of a justice organization has provided me an opportunity to give input and encourage more action and participation.

Our parish has been going through a regular series of meetings for almost 2 years to learn about the history of racism and identifying our role in racial inequity. We have now identified concrete steps we are going to take to address these issues and make reparations for our past failures.

Ministry to families in crisis.

Hearing (in 2020) a Black woman from Miami, FL (my hometown) tells of Black people having to sit in the rear pews of Catholic Churches in Miami and wait to receive Communion until all of the White people had received shocked me. That, along with racist incidents and outstanding anti-racist people made me commit more strongly to racial justice.

In the 1960's and 1970's there were priests, sisters, and lay people of the Diocese of Pittsburgh who consistently took action for

racial justice. This action was taken because of our faith.

When I was training to teach in high school (in the 1960s), I participated in an internship in a local public junior high school. The young people were disciplined by having them kneel on the floor and they were paddled in public. I was appalled! Later, as an administrator, I reviewed the applications of young girls from a local public junior high in a surrounding neighborhood which was primarily black. The scores of the students were manipulated so that they would appear as average on their applications, but further examination demonstrated inadequate preparation. They were not receiving the education that they deserved, and their lack of preparation was concealed by lies! We worked very hard to make sure that they were able to achieve whatever their gifts, talents and abilities made possible for them, and they produced accordingly.

The Spanish community was being given equal rights when a white woman said to me “I was afraid to go on vacation, because I might not have a church to come home to.” In that sentence called for action on my part, by way of enlightening and educating her.

As a religious sister I am vigilant to take action for racial justice. Other religious alert me to opportunities and join me in taking action for racial justice.

Our 7-person member parish justice ministry team continues on in our work even though the parish membership of a many thousand family affluent economically family of faith are indifferent to this justice ministry after 8 years of major effort to stand with the other 23 interfaith congregations that are multi-racial and diverse of the county.

Bishop disinvented a priest in good standing and an expert in evangelization from Georgetown

and Matthew Fox from addressing a reunion of RCC priests and Matthew Fox.

I grew up feeling that way. I guess I took the teachings of loving everyone to heart. Growing up in the mid 60's - early 70's, I think we embraced the civil rights movement. Most especially when you would see white nuns and priests present at demonstrations.

I have recently heard some clergy and religious speak out on the matter, but it certainly is not something that I have experienced in my own personal church or even the greater church during my 73 years. For me, I think it has risen to the surface since the Black Lives Matter Movement. It has always been a concern, but I never really attempted to educate myself more until the events following Brianna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd. Being sequestered during the Pandemic (some good things came out of it) allowed more time to delve into our American past and to be able to learn more about the shameful occurrences that were commonplace. Being white, I can never really know what it is like to walk in the shoes of people of color. But I do feel it is my responsibility to learn more and then do something about it even if on a small scale.

I came to realize that I could not sit at the sidelines, that I had to participate in the social justice activities which were taking action for racism. My participation helped me as I was then taking action rather than complaining. Our parish and 2 predominately white parishes have built a relationship where we have looked at racism through various activities and prayer.

As a child, our parish regularly talked about the world church and the diversity of her people. We were taught to pray for and try to help particularly for areas experiencing poverty, crisis, and conflict. We sponsored refugees and promoted and worked for many international and local charities.

As a 7th grader attending a black classmate's birthday party.

My Catholic friends, who are lay people, discuss these issues and attempt to be active in pushing for changes in our government, local, state, and national, and I use resources that are Christian and non-religious, but not Catholic, to do this since the Catholic Church is less active in this respect.

Hearing people such as Fr Massengale speak, listening to livestream from African American parishes, such as St Columba inspire me to speak out about the racist media in Archdiocesan media platform Angelus News, was especially noted during time of George Floyd murder. Supported Call to Action letter writing campaign to address this. Similar when Archbishop Gomez in Fall 2021 talked of Black Lives Matter as pseudo religion... wrote letters/emails, phone calls about this type of characterization of social movements.

Involvement with my Alma mater which was almost all white when I attended and then became majority black. Also, the awareness of the IHM Sisters of Monroe.

I'm inspired to action by a Justice & Peace group from my former Catholic parish.

Disrespect for female African American mayor (new) in Gettysburg by a priest as her husband's service at Lutheran church. Her sister, a former religious sister, walked out of the church when a comment was made at another service at local catholic parish. Sadly, I didn't have the courage to walk out after her. I did follow up and spoke to the pastor.

The JustFaith discussion groups on racial equity helped me more than anything.

In a discussion with one of my brothers after George Floyd's death, I realized the understanding and experience of the gospel that we are all children of God and must speak

out for racial justice and educate for both the sins and the ideals of the gospel and social justice documents.

Each time another black, brown, yellow sister or brother is murdered--I cannot simply pray and look away. I will go to my grave for racial equity healing and justice.

My motivation to take action for racial justice is my Catholic faith. About nine months ago the chaplain where I live told me about an employee whose young male relative had been shot dead on a city bus about a mile away. I had never met the employee due to Covid restrictions where I live. I had never heard his name. I talked with the employee's supervisor who gave me more details. I was angry at the horror of what had happened and the appalling lack of enforcement of gun laws in the United States. I felt that I should acknowledge the employee's tragic loss. I wrote to the employee and expressed my anger at the root causes of the gun violence: lack of enforcement of gun laws and the successful effort in the Ohio Legislature to make guns as accessible as possible to anyone who wants one. In the Ohio legislature there has been a push for some years to make guns more accessible to whoever wants them, including concealed-carry laws and allowing people to carry guns into more public places. I wrote to the employee that although I had never met him, I wanted him to know that I was recommitting myself to continue to fight racism in the ways I can.

Hiring practices.

I awoke to the fight against racial injustice when I was in college in the 60's. I don't remember well enough about the role of the Catholic church in my geographical community at the time. My cynical self says there was probably very little involvement, but these were turbulent times, and the Vatican II Council was still in the throes of the work of reforming the Catholic Church and I was in the throes of starting a career, falling in love, figuring

out who I was and what was I to do... But in the early 70's when I moved to VA with my husband and newborn baby, I found myself in a parish community where Vatican II was ALIVE and kicking...and had everyone on fire. The clergy were leading us and at least one of the young priests was on fire for all things justice. He was a clergy leader of social justice in our diocese for 40+ years until he died (too young) just a few years ago. My current parish leadership (clergy, staff and lay leaders) are on fire for racial justice.

Taking action for racial justice is not even a concept I have named. I grew up in the projects of Cleveland Ohio. All races of persons lived there. Many single moms due to abandonment, widow, husbands in jail or frail health. Raised without making distinctions. As a public-school child, the "Project" public schools were integrated and CCD class was taught by a Black nun. Ingrained for me was justice for All. Then when in my older years, "bussing" to integrate all schools in The Cleveland area was made law, hundreds of "whites" got vouchers to attend Catholic schools. Although, the Bishop of Cleveland at that time even appeared on TV to say, "we are not tolerating "white flight" to Catholic schools". It happened anyway. My youngest brother, and sisters (15. and 17 years younger than me) participated in the busing and became racially intolerant and negative due to the experience. Their engagement in RCIA and Parish. Nurse programs of the 80's helped enormously in opening them up to the wider issues of justice and inclusivity. There are even inter racial marriages in my family now which have helped to increase and strengthen Gospel teachings of "ALL are welcome."

In the mid- '60's I was teaching music in our small woman's college. In the city we were having riots. A Jewish woman called me to begin interfaith concerts with her Jewish children's choir, my white choir, and a black Baptist inner city choir. It was magnificent! 800 people filled our theater our first concert. We

sang in schools, at the reform Temple marching into a black band beat. My girls rode in a bus with the black children to the Temple. Most of my girls had never been with Jews or blacks. In rehearsal I spent half the time talking faith and issues because of the beauty of the black and Jewish people. This continued for four years, and it continued after I left the college for further study. This experience changed my life. I learned a Hebrew Jesus. I went to Israel twice. My heart opened to the beauty of black people. I participated in "Summer in the City" here, going into Inner City with active social justice personnel, to learn the culture, and experience their lives, then pray, reflect, share. I have worked in Guam periodically for 30 years, and in Japan, and with the Cree Indians and the sisters living there in northern Alberta for three weeks every year for ten years.

Massengale and a few others who spoke out.

Group of people in a lay ministry decided to hold weekly vigils in a public place in support of Black Lives Matter. I made a sign and attended several times.

I could not stay silent when President Trump was caging our children that came from central America. I spoke up when someone was saying that I should only speak English. I could not be indifferent to the murder of George Floyd.

Our Detroit Archdiocese had progressive and social justice-oriented hierarchy, religious and lay leadership in the immediate wake of Vatican 2 that sensitized me (and many others) to become more involved.

Always.

This came from my father who from the beginning told me that Indigenous people weren't treated right in this country. I never heard that in the Church.

I am a social worker and a Catholic. By that very definition, I live my life, every day, working for social justice for ALL.

I have been very appreciative of the African American family that moved next door to us. I know the lady of the house was raised Catholic. I passed to her our parish's Advent booklet of daily Scripture reading and prayer. I have also become a friend to an African American woman whose husband is the pastor of a small fundamentalist congregation. She and I have prayed aloud together many times. Otherwise, I have few occasions to socialize with people of color.

Fr. Greg Boyle certainly opened my mind back in LA thirty years ago.

I challenged others who supported former Pres. Trump's policies regarding the treatment of migrants at the southern border.

I live in Canada and there has been a long history in our country of residential schools run jointly by federal government and various religious faith. 60% of these schools were run by various Catholic religious communities. These schools began in the late 1800s and the last of them closed in 1996. They took Indigenous children from their families and placed them into these schools, sometimes hundreds of kilometers from their homes and instituted children into the Catholic faith and into settler (white colonial) ways. Children were often brought to schools and didn't see their families for years at a time. It was illegal for Indigenous children not to be placed in these schools. Indigenous men and women who survived this experience, speak of the emotional, physical, and sexual abuse they endured at the hands of those who ran the schools. They talk about having the "Indian" beat out of them. In recent years, it has been discovered that over 4000 children died while in attendance at these schools. The Canadian Catholic Bishops have finally issued an apology as did the Pope this passed month in Rome

when he met with delegations of Canadian Indigenous people, but these are only words, and much reparation and reconciliation is needed. As a result, I have removed myself from my parish, written to our Bishop outlining my anger, sadness, and utter disgust at how this situation has been handled. I have taken steps to educate myself on these matters so I can speak more knowledgeably and to determine how I can individually work to reconciliation and to be watchful and if the opportunity arises be active in the Church's response.

Related to the abuse in residential schools it became important to acknowledge the sinfulness of many within the church and become part of the reconciliation process now in process

I belong to the local Call to Action group. Several years ago, we sponsored a talk from a local group, "Race Talks" that fosters understanding and racial justice.

Supporting the Recommendations of Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

I was raised and am still part of an all-white parish.

As a high school teacher in a mostly white Catholic high school- teaching social Justice. I was accused of favoring people of color over whites

A parish wide book discussion of Racial Justice in the Catholic Church led by newly ordained associate pastor in 2019, followed by STAMPED in 2020 on my own.

Fight for scholarship application inclusion for Catholic School students of color.

Many years ago, I was ministering in a vibrant church community. When I moved on from there I moved to Savannah, GA and engaged in a Black Catholic Church. It was a life changing engagement.

Our racial issues lie more around our treatment of indigenous persons. At my brother's funeral (he had worked in northern Canada with indigenous groups) a band of indigenous drummers came to drum. They would not do this in the church because they had been told that their drumming did not belong in church. None of their rituals - smudging, drumming etc. were allowed.

Mostly regarding political stances taken by our diocese over the years.

The residential school crisis - the need to acknowledge and atone.

None come to mind.

Attending a small country town catholic primary school where many of the children were Aboriginal children-built friendships between us in a very natural way and lay valuable groundwork in experiencing the essential equal value of us all. This stood in contrast to realities of social inequity as I grew older.

I educated a dear friend who is much more religious and involved with the church that our parish is not inviting of black and other non-white parishioners. I pointed out to her that our music selection is slow and geared to 'white' preference. We are very adherent to 'looks' and not emotional, rather subdued. Father is more concerned if the altar boys/girls hold their hands in certain position versus whether they are benefiting, or the congregation is.

I honestly cannot think of an example of this.

It was the Holy Spirit promptings in my mind and heart, rather than a person or a group, which prompted me to take action for racial justice.

I have been standing up and advocating for racial justice for children with disabilities within the school systems for decades. The injustices are hurtful, harmful, and embedded.

There have been both priests and lay people in my parish that have encouraged taking action for racial justice. Personally, I aided my parish in starting an outreach for African American children through the local food bank, providing a hot dinner three nights a week. I spoke out when the YMCA who was offering a place for the children to eat, pulled out of the program. It was a very sad day for children and volunteers alike.

Q2. What steps could your local community take to more enthusiastically embrace racial and ethnic diversity?

Publicly and loudly announced our welcome to POC.

There is nothing here now.

Join the activities of non-white organizations.

We're trying!

Bring up this topic in homilies.

We are searching for ways.

Reparations in the form of financials.

Invite representatives of other racial communities to speak to their experience of racism.

Include more diversity in Diocesan liturgies. The bishop loves to commend the colorful dress and music of various ethnic groups but does nothing to include these groups when we have the Chrism Mass or other Diocesan liturgical gatherings.

My community already has a group that has taken up that banner called Respond to Racism that began over a racist incident in our city 4 years ago. It is not Catholic based, more secular although many people of faiths in the group.

Have diversity events.

Join in liturgies.

The archbishop (and EVERY bishop) needs to write a letter to his flock centering on racism as a LIFE issue. Lay Catholics need to step up to

be leaders in anti-racism efforts in parishes and community.

Would like to learn ways to do this.

Education and commitment to working for change.

Host multi-cultural gatherings and celebrations.

We need to leave our comfort zones where everyone is white and find ways to meet and relate to people of color.

Become more involved in diversified activities, rallies, participate in racial justice discussions with one another.

Sponsor more events, such as family meals, for casual interaction.

Ask people of color what they want; don't decide for them. Have members of the Church talk to people of color in a neutral place. We are all equal children of God!

It hasn't been welcoming!

Make the diversity more visible through public acknowledgment, valuing of the diversity.

I think that we, as local and universal church need to acknowledge our racism and seek forgiveness and exercise public apology.

Simply to acknowledge the diversity in our parish would be a good thing. Perhaps we assume all are comfortable with it, but are we?

Accept more refugees.

We need black Catholics to speak to us about racism in our church

Homilies, Synod listening, I could give spiritual retreats, in spiritual direction I open up avenues.

I regularly attend Mass, but I am not a member of a parish. I am still looking for a community.

Deliberate invitations to groups from other parishes that are primarily people of color or another ethnic background.

Our parish is ethnically diverse, but African Americans are a very small minority, with Hispanic and Filipino majorities. Racism is almost never mentioned in preaching or in outreach.

Parish - need to move beyond 'country-club' level (using Crossroads Ministry's anti-racism spectrum mapping)

Continue to sponsor inter-parish sharing with inner city parishes - along with educational opportunities.

Offer specific programs.

Durham NC is itself a very diverse community. I have comfortably moved into it.

Mandatory seminary overhaul to social justice spirituality pastoral care.

Promote education on the parish level for "antiracism" training.

Incorporate music and dance that is racially sensitive to other cultures into the liturgies

It needs to be preached as it is the gospel message. It needs to be addressed on all levels. Where is racial justice addressed in our prayers of the faithful, examination of consciences, in our telling of our stories. Whose stories get told? No parish synodal process addressed racism and we have a large Latino population.

Include more in homily, education, more social justice ministries.

Specific adult ed programs, mixed social events (serious and fun), having culturally sensitive art that represents everyone, etc.

Our Church could be more welcoming of diversity on many levels (women, LGBTQ,) Schools could teach more truth related to slavery and even modern-day movements like BLM.

Awareness by talks.

Highlight the accomplishments of those racially and ethnically diverse. Taking notice will hopefully make such things seem more normal than extraordinary.

My parish could celebrate the diversity of our congregation (Asian Indian, Hispanic, Eastern European) in both liturgy and our Sunday fellowship hour.

Be careful of our language and encourage all to respect ALL HUMANS as being made in the image and likeness of God. It is the heart that matters most, and all have the same physical hearts.

The more events that involve a diverse community the better. I think, most important, is that people put themselves in situations to meet and get to know people of color.

It begins with us as a church to move out of our comfort zones and cozy power centers to be truly a brother or sister.

Having celebrations of different cultures would be one way.

It's hard because the racial, ethnic groups are most often separated geographically separated - how to get them together for meaningful encounter/dialogue?

Have more personal, face-to-face connections with POC.

Mu small town in central MA is actually very ethnically diverse and has been since its origins. At present the Hispanic population is the majority and over the decades since they first began to arrive in the early 50's have gradually taken their place as business owners, public servants, and leaders in our Catholic parish (a merged parish from 3 others all ethnically diverse).

I know the answer is to be more active in outreach.

Educate the masses of White citizens of the history of Blacks in America and the result of injustice/prejudice. This starts with the public school system and needs to expand to the Christian schools.

Have more information about racial and ethnic diversity.

We need to step up and create personal relationships with those different from ourselves.

Advocating for fair and affordable housing in ALL communities. Housing barriers are the beams that support segregation and keep people of color from living in white communities.

They could recruit a black parish member for the parish council but then the parish council would have to truly have a voice which it doesn't seem to really have in my parish; We could invite the few black members of our parish to speak about their experiences with racism...also we could have a retreat on racism to help introduce the topic more directly to the community.

I think we could recognize the diversity present. In my case I see a few Filipino families in our parish, I am not sure if my community even recognizes this diversity. We closed parishes in highly populated African American

communities and combined them with prosperous churches.

We have partnered with interfaith churches of color in the town where our community is physically based. We also offer joint services on Ash Wednesday, Thanksgiving, and Holy Thursday.

Pastors and parishioners welcoming ALL new people at masses, functions, etc.

Join other churches and places of faith in local community endeavors, i.e., homelessness, food shortage, housing, education.

Invite other non-Catholic parishes to join in an effort to learn about one another's communities.

I have to give them credit. Evanston is the first community in the US to pay reparation to black residents who were or whose family was a victim of red-lining and bank loan scamming.

Step No. 1, easiest: include at least once sentence from the pulpit regarding this. One sentence in the Prayer of the Faithful. Relating a sentence in the homily. Recondition us - even gradually - to be open.

Support Networks efforts and Sisters lobbying in Washington.

Priests could mention it in homilies. We could have parish workshops. We could have Black, Latinx, and Asian speakers at these and sometime when the Church allows, they could give homilies. We could do outreach to the nearby Black community. We could have joint English speaking-Latinx Masses and events.

Sponsoring seminars, films & books & actually inviting people of color to come & share their life experiences. Making an effort to invite people of color to join the parish.

More integration within both community and churches. White males especially try to whitewash the Tulsa Race Riot.

In the community next to mine, they have passed legislation on Reparations and have begun the process. We support them.

More homilies regarding racial justice, more events with various churches in the community of all races and ethnicities

Have parish visits, Blacks. Hispanics with predominantly white churches

Add a position for that purpose to Parish Council and purpose to the parish mission statement.

The local paper has included a column from a young African American man. The faith communities are trying to promote ecumenical activities that shine a spotlight on racism and speak out against it. There is a lot going on in our community.

A parish in our city offered 6 sessions last fall using the US Bishops letter on racism to attempt to start conversations. About 40 people attended - it was a good beginning for those 40. They hope to build on it in the coming months.

Have ethnic festivals. The priest could mention at Mass this is Ramadan beginning Friday, or Jewish Passover time.... and say a few words about them so we get to know of their high ritual times.

It's important to get fully engaged. Dialogue more. Read more. Lots of books are written now. Then encourage ACTION!

See beyond their white self. Become curious and open to other ways.

First recognize it as an issue and talk about it on any and all platforms necessary. . .media both written and digital.

Actively integrate our established groups - St Vincent de Paul, Women's Group, Prayer Shawl Group, Knights of Columbus. Form a Social Justice group. Form a leadership group from both predominant racial groups.

My experience tells me that when we come to know the "other" - be that a person of color, trans, or LGBTQ, as a person with the same needs, desires and dreams as mine we begin the work of transformation. We need to meet each other one on one to share our story. I think once we begin that work, we will start to see that we are more the same than we are different.

I am a lay person. I would like to see the church leaders speak out more and more activities to know one another better.

Support the effort within schools and throughout the local community to speak truths. Support immigration issues and initiate discussions regarding racism. Supporting issues such as Affordable housing could be a good start!

Such listening sessions as these, or the AA groups. Also, engaging people of diverse backgrounds in a common endeavor, as in repairing results of climate change.

Continue to be honest with each other/ challenging and willing to put items on parish council agenda, notices in the bulletin.

When we are no longer under the Covid restrictions, we should have person to person meetings and celebrations.

The Sonoma County community has taken many steps to embrace people of color, for the most part Hispanic as there is more Hispanic, not as many Black people.

Small groups have to be vocal and not afraid to challenge the hierarchy.

Support more ecumenical efforts, not just Catholic Church efforts to embrace diversity.

True dialogues about racism, the contributions of the church to racism, the silence of the church about issues related to racism such as poor health care, education, housing for people of color.

Continue to offer opportunities for discussion of films, books, or personal growth workshops on the topic.

my parish really does lots; the parishes around the city often do very little - it will have ramifications! I believe we have to have not just the people embrace the reality of our common humanity, but we need the clergy to embrace, speak to it, explore it.

Change local laws that stop inequities. We have neglected our black neighborhood roads, schools, environment which pollutes their air and water, and treated Black communities less than they deserve.

Invite more people of color into our parish to be able to speak or become more visible and give us more opportunities to interact.

Invite twinning with more diverse parishes Have worship leaders from various ethnic and racial backgrounds Education on Catholic Social Teachings Projects worked on jointly with other races and cultures. Diversity in schools

Please see above. I also have a vision of joining with older African American women elders sitting on the statehouse lawn, visiting with each other with a large banner, "Black Lives Matter say the grandmothers/ Big Mamas

The churches could invite black church members to participate in specific interactive activities and also, of course, for white people to attend services at black church and

fellowship afterwards. Get to know each other in a church environment.

Not sure in this predominantly white town. I am relatively new here and don't know enough about the way it works.

Educate white Christians about the Doctrine of Discovery and how it still dictates legal decisions today to maintain systemic racism and poverty.

I don't know any steps at this time; I would like for our church to try to find some ways to reach out for racial & ethnic diversity.

Talk honestly about it. Admit where we are falling short. Be INCLUSIVE, invite others in without judgment or trying to convert. LISTEN with open minds and hearts. STOP CONDEMNING and LEARN from those who are different. THEY are ALL Children of GOD, to be loved and accepted just as they are. That's what GOD does - aren't we supposed too as well?

Create affordable housing communities close to our retirement communities; this may not happen soon, though, as we are a very "red neck" community surrounded by other "red neck" communities.

Good question. I need to think about this. I think it begins by breaking down sexism. To the degree that we begin to dismantle the patriarchy, and ordain women to the priesthood and the diaconate, and eliminate the requirements for celibacy, we begin to open the doors to greater participation and engagement by all God's children.

Allow people to tell their stories - have an inclusive view to humanity that accentuates wonderful aspects of similarities - and differences.

Somehow bring people of every race and background together...work for the poor?

Joining with other churches to do social justice work?

This is hard because we don't live in the same areas but there must be ways to get us together more. Left to ourselves, we don't necessarily go into communities of greater racial diversity.

More teaching and sharing experiences, especially among the young.

I live in a fairly stably racially integrated community in the Chicago area. (One of the few) We are diverse, yet we still lack equity in many areas. So, it is not enough to just embrace diversity! You have to work on this every day in many areas. It is never done, and you can forget about it.

My immediate parish community needs to participate in local programs and events to a greater degree than they do now.

Having members of racial and ethnic diversity lead, when possible, like readings, ushering Eucharistic services.

Openness to listening to others of color with their experiences.

Awareness of training and educating the laity ...formation training...and educating the parish through workshops.

Bring in persons from different ethnic diversity to speak to us in the community.

They could invite guest speakers of different racial ethnicity to speak. Hold festivals of different ethnic backgrounds with costumes food dance etc.

Our parish has a small but growing number of people of color, primarily from India, some Philippine, some Latino, some Black from Africa, but our community is predominantly white. We have been blessed by a cultural sharing the last several years from the Indian

and Latino community, with spiritual and foods. I value our parish leadership inviting this cultural sharing on a large scale. I wish diversity was discussed more frequently in homilies and in parish wide efforts to large gatherings of our community to focus on justice and catholic social teaching.

Individually and with others interact more with persons of racial and ethnic diversity, listen to them, share food and fun times with them. Invite the homeless persons that surround my parish church to participate and share more of their lives and concerns with the parish community, even during our liturgies.

To give significant time to dialogue with the bishop, priests, religious, and the diverse faith community about the culture, beliefs, of each cultural group who comes together around the Table of Eucharist where everyone should be welcomed.

To support the different causes of the people who fight against the images of Native Peoples, uranium mining, water rights, health care and education.

Stop placing the right to life of the unborn above the right to life and equality of other oppressed groups and people. Every lent my parish places signs in support of the right to life on the lawn in front of the church. Right now, there are several hundred pink and blue flags on the lawn. The pink flags have pictures of infant girls and the phrase, "Abortion Kills Babies." The absence of signs in support of other important human rights issues (such as: Black Lives Matter, immigrant rights, rights of the poor or disabled, rights to affordable health or child care, expanding voting rights, gender rights) leads people I have talked with (Roman Catholics, other Christians and non-Christians alike) to believe that St. Anthony's of Padua Roman Catholic Church, Southern, Pines only cares about ending abortion.

Furthermore, if I were a person who'd had an abortion, signs like these would shame me instead of inviting me to Christ and a fuller understanding of the value of life. I believe this would be all the truer if I was Black and wondering why I didn't see BLM signs outside the church in the period after George Floyd was murdered. Or if I immigrated from Mexico, Honduras or Haiti and didn't signs supporting immigrant rights. I could go on but will end by saying that the Roman Catholic Church in Southern Pines, NC will grow to the extent that it welcomes racial and ethnic diversity.

Education and experiences made available.

It's important to have safe places for people to share their lives, but it's equally important to take action at the systemic level (e.g., oppose voting restrictions and police violence, etc.). Knowing my neighbor isn't enough; who are the people in my not-neighborhood? What would it take for us to welcome each other into our lives?

We have meetings, workshops, retreats. We need to really talk to each other.

I'm committed to learning more about privilege afforded to me as a white person.

Work on liturgy and pray experiences reflecting diversity.

We have various sessions at the local universities.

Offer ministries that attract a variety of cultures, INVITE!!!!, incorporate sacramentals, music, and preaching's from a global perspective.

Partner with an inner-city parish. Diocese had Church in the City partnership initiative 3 bishops ago, but it fell by the wayside.

Our community has opened a series of discussions to all in the local community - not just Catholics.

Learn to be aware of the feelings of all people.

More explicit, non-political attention from the pulpit.

I really don't know.

Training and getting to know Black, and BIPOC and indigenous peoples.

Step up and speak out. Educate to understand. Figure out how to allay fear that justice is a threat.

Since our parish is almost all white, perhaps there could be joint activities with a nearby predominantly black parish.

Training as mentioned above.

Among other things, my church could display a BLM sign.

Offer courses in Catholic Social Teaching. These should be part of the seminary curriculum for priests and deacons.

Claim some of the energetic and gospel music from the black churches.

Be more welcoming.

Greater education on unconscious bias, racism, and training on how to be systemically anti-racist in institutional Church and as individuals and as community

Integrate our Anglo and Hispanic communities more fully liturgically and socially.

We have done this to a very great extent.

Make an effort to include everyone in all the groups available.

Education about the immense privilege we experience based on racist or unjust structures that we are not aware of and then work to change those structures.

Recruit, encourage minorities to positions within the church of leadership.

We're so white I'm not sure how comfortable a person of color would be. We need to open up discussions about racism and be a mission-oriented church to build relationships with diverse groups of people

I would like to see more "passion" in our hymns and liturgical functions. We have some native Americans, and they so greatly enhance liturgies in their parishes.

Host a dialogue session, reach out for open communication.

Do some exchanges between parishes. Priests of color exchange saying mass, joint parish discussion groups, etc.

More joint activities, including working together on common goals.

I feel we need exposure and education... an education that covers the history...and role that the Church played in creating this racial injustice.... such as being aware of the 'Doctrine of Discovery.'

I think every white person would benefit by visiting the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama created by the Equal Justice Initiative.

Educate the local community on what is social justice and how it is so connected with Jesus' teachings.

Challenge the Connecticut political structure which authorizes individual town Councils to reject low cost or multiple housing units on the grounds that they do not fit the "character"

of the town. It was a shock to discover that Connecticut is the 3rd or 4th most racist state in the country because of housing discrimination.

Education: sharing with other churches where the numbers of African American Catholics/ Christians is predominant.

By having a listening session where people of color could share their hopes and concerns.

Have more diverse gatherings like the synod discussions. Informative, but most of all listening. Getting to know people as people.

Begin with socially crossing the barriers and inviting other face traditions (both black and white) to come to celebrate with us; and be sure to include the style of liturgy that makes them welcome - not just white euro-centered worship.

We need to be more actively welcoming and including others to make our churches more racially and ethnically diverse.

Have events where others can share and celebrate our ethnic diversity-like our parish is having a potluck lunch on Pentecost.

Allow ethnic groups religious services in their tradition. i.e., Pilipino 7 days of Christmas.

Speakers, employ more people of color, etc.

Being more hospital able to ALL new and unfamiliar persons attending Sunday Mass.

Small faith communities.

We have good diversity in the center city. The suburban areas need more diversity.

education and growth in awareness of how racism is part of our mindset.

This is difficult because of where we live. Other parts of the diocese have more racial/ethnic diversity.

Awareness of racism is key. Only after awareness can come mobilization to do something about it. - Provide opportunities to learn more about racism, bring in speakers who have been impacted by racism to share their stories, a provide a list of resources, conduct group discussions, offer concrete ways people can work toward greater equity,

We need to invest money and time in our Chicago neighborhoods that have a history of poverty. We must invest in the education of the children and help the adults.

Do this through education and experiences.

We could have dialogue with neighboring communities to work with each other and embrace each other as humans and children of God.

I live in a pretty much exclusively white rural community. To see a black person is rare and the few that have tried living here in time found themselves driven away. Ethnic diversity?? Getting the Germans and Polish to worship together??

More activities and education.

Meals for students who are far from home.

I think that within the American Council of Catholic Bishops it is a lost cause.

Intentional outreach to people of color, even though they are not Catholic. Educating oneself to the inherent racism in US history and culture.

Definite embrace of the issue to educate ourselves and to speak with conviction about the presence of racism among us.

Our local community is very diverse, and I think for the most part that is embraced and appreciated.

To preach from Jesus and St. Paul, and even the Old Testament: that there can be NO discrimination among Christians.

Really preach the Gospel message and encourage one another in actively living the Gospel message of inclusivity and love for all.

Ordain more Black American men and women to live their calling.

Have more social informal get-togethers and go out of our way to invite ALL of the community members.

More support in schools, curriculum.

Proactive community policing rather than reactive. Listen to both sides of argument. More training in de-escalation of a situation.

Diocese of Saginaw under Bishops Francis Reh and Kenneth Untener significantly financially supported Catholic grade schools, junior high and a high school in the 70's and 80's for Black and Hispanic youth to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Answer to number 5 above.

Wherever I see the need for action to address the issue by taking care of it myself or making it know to Church Authorities and be unafraid.

Perhaps run for public office or vote for candidates who would work for the needs of the poor and minorities, rather than for their own or their friend's financial gain.

Encourage on going education to define the difference of cultural difference, good and bad.

The city has undertaken a task force to address racial issues and ethnic diversity and now

has to find ways to implement their findings specifically.

Talk about it! From the pulpit, among lay members. We are going to start a Sr. Thea Bowman guild in our parish. We hope that supporting her cause for sainthood will inform the congregation.

Make sure they are welcomed into the community/parish, but not so that they are made to stand out as being different. I would think they would want to be accepted for themselves, but not with special treatment or acknowledgement.

Open our doors to hospitality to people of color and diverse ethnicity and learn their culture and religious practices.

We have already begun. Our spiritual choir director plans to invite choirs from Black colleges to celebrate Mass with us. We had St. Augustine University come about a month ago and two of our new groups studying racism helped welcome them.

Have intentional encounters with all members of your community and genuinely get to know one another not because you need to do white people homework, but because you really want to enrich your life.

The indigenous population needs to teach us, we need to be open to change our attitudes and welcome them and their traditional ways. we need to be receptive of their culture.

Multicultural board members on boards of PHJC missions.

Reach out! Don't assume or expect that those we see as "other" have to come to us first, meet us on our "turf," adapt to who we are as white.

We could begin talking openly in organized church small groups about issues of race and racial justice today.

Talk about racial injustice which is systemic from the pulpit and unite around what our call to walk with God as we walk with each other.

The pulpit is a good place to begin. Before this can happen, the priests need to be sure that there is no racism in their personal thoughts and living.

Our former pastor started a 6-mo. time of learning about racism with book, movies, etc. after George Floyd's murder. We have reconvened.

At the local level it seems to me the most effective practice is to JUST TREAT ALL PERSONS THE SAME. Others, hopefully, will learn from that example more readily than making a big deal out of the differences.

Be more diverse in positions of authority.

Each parish should have a racial justice / diversity ministry. I believe there are resources for this at the diocesan level, but they're not making their way down to my local parishes.

Give visibility to diversity in liturgical ministries, in leadership, in invitations to serve.

We need to do more proactive outreach and journey with the people of God.

For Pentecost Sunday we have a community cultural gathering and people wear their traditional clothing, and we have a meal together. BUT there needs to be greater effort to MIX. It is not a coming together if we just sit at different tables.

I live in a racial and ethnically diverse community/city. There are many activities that bring people together.

I think our bishop is interested in pastoral care for Catholic First Nation communities - but he is not good at sharing, delegating to laity.

for him it is more a personal witness not a communal one.

Invite speakers of color to talk about racial injustice.

Promote more inclusive educational opportunities for all.

More education and outreach to learn more about each other, e.g., what makes us alike and diverse with respect and acceptance for all.

We have a large Hispanic population in our small city. Events aimed at bringing both groups together could be arranged.

I think in SF we think of ourselves as being more inclusive, tolerant, and diverse than perhaps we really are. Perhaps the Archbishop could direct the parishes to undertake programs such as what we are doing with Future Church that could be ZOOM or in person and provide the resources to create and implement these programs. I might suggest that the groups be purposefully mixed from across the parishes to create a sense of belonging to the larger “whole” of our Church. These Future Church sessions have really been quite wonderful and thought provoking.

Discuss it openly in small groups. The resources exist; leadership just has to choose to set that agenda, and lead by example.

Book Club discussions on books about racism, racial justice, etc.

As a religious community we have had many conversations and workshops to help our awareness re racism. As an international community we have had to be aware of this issue in our written and verbal communication.

Hold joint celebrations; personally invite people of color to events in which I am involved.

My section of the local community has foreign medical and scholarly “doctors” but not average persons who would be my peers.

Our local public school system has initiated many opportunities for students and staff to be educated to respect diversity.

Welcoming everyone with loving kindness and reaching out to everyone regardless of color and ethnicity.

Since the Bishop has not encouraged parishes to join groups seeking to act for social justice, I belong to such a group as an individual. It is an interdenominational group whose aim is to change racist policy within the criminal legal system. It also seeks to educate members on the roots of racism and take steps to take action.

Inviting those of ethnic and racial communities to the parish to share their cultures - making their food, etc. We did this under the last priest, and it was amazing how the parish flourished. The new priest shut it all down.

Recognize that Black Lives Matter is a legitimate way for people of color to bring systemic racism out into the light.

I live in a big town with primarily white folk, many churches are re-thinking how to invite other races, but the town is expensive to live in. In Spiritual Direction I have met some Latinas that feel comfortable to be my directees & with me as director.

This is difficult. It can often seem like an add on. Maybe Faking it until we make it is all we can do.

We, as Catholics, could stand up to our public-school boards and communities in support of greater education about racism, its effects, and how to create better systems in our communities and world. We should not

be afraid of “Critical Race Theory”, and we should openly challenge that fear or opposition.

Fun get-togethers (suppers?) could offer an opportunity for sharing over a particular ethnic meal.

We need honest talk about why people of diverse heritage have not been included in our “circle”.

A group of us made simple suggestions as first steps - to add to the bulletin a small section about Catholic leaders from a variety of backgrounds (like Sr. Thea Bowman, and figures from different Latinx communities, and Asian/Southeast Asian communities would be the most relevant ones for our parish). We wanted to bring in rotating artwork depicting saints and symbols from diverse (non-European) communities. And we wanted music from a broader range of communities and in a variety of languages. Our pastor never really said no but has been unwilling to move forward. If I could suggest, I'd also love to see some 'exchange' of preaching and choirs among parishes with different ethnic backgrounds. Finally, I think clergy have to be willing to take the risk of preaching on racial justice topics - so many Gospel readings lend themselves to the topic.

In Las Vegas there are multiple cultures or a melting pot of people here. Educational programs in schools, in churches of all denominations and public forums and public celebrations from their heritage.

The local community could encourage racial and ethnic diversity in community positions of elected and appointed leadership.

This must intensify in our Catholic education.

We could have education sessions and celebrate other race/culture gatherings and holidays. We could have book discussions on anti-racist topics as a way of educating ourselves.

I think it's important that the white community learn how to speak up about racial and other injustices. It can't be left to the BIPOC community alone. They have been shouldering that burden too long. The church could take a lead in teaching us how to do that.

Find out what parish's they attend, invite them to speak to our congregation,

Our Congregation has an Anti-Racism Committee that offers educational workshops to parishes, etc.

Have sessions dealing with the principles articulated by Sr, Anita Baird.

Foster an environment of interacting with people from different neighborhoods. We have an ethically “mixed” congregation, but we don't mix with congregations from the traditionally Mexican or Black parishes. Finding ways to create community, getting to know people at a grass-roots level would be key.

Form more groups to bring together racially diverse groups to listen to each other and form plans we can implement to bring about more diversity in church committees.

In Phoenix we have many Hispanics and a small percentage of Blacks and Asians. We could have liturgies and socials with parishes of various races. Work on projects together.

They might embrace more of the families in the low-income housing into the community celebrations, although those sisters who live in the same building are working to build community with the other residents.

Invite others to social gatherings.

The community is trying to be more inclusive and encouraging comma its activities for all.

Put homilies to better use. Provide cross parish or cross denomination programs and events. Promote racial justice explicitly; use the bulletin better! we have over emphasized abortion issues to the neglect of racial issues. And we ignore the effect of prochoice as opposed to pro-life on poor and people of color.

In central Kansas, it would take research and would be starting from scratch, though we have a large Hispanic population, language is a barrier.

We need to be more inviting of people of color. Our parish activities should be 'open doors' attracting everyone, welcoming and encouraging a wide array of people in our Masses and parish activities -- in attendance/ participation. We need to evangelize -- be authentic and convincing when we talk about why you should want to join us. We need more than a HUGE welcome mat -- we need to go out and gather in everyone on the margins. More important than erecting a big tent is filling it with peoples of all kinds.

Be more welcoming to the stranger or to those who do not look like me.

Building the self-esteem of the aboriginal people and individual, and others who may through injustice suffer these issues, should be addressed.

In liturgies, to use their language, and other lifegiving symbols like their rich eco spirituality.

Go and be where they are, listen to them and engage them in parish activities.

Help provide basic services to them like the right to food, water, health, education. and housing.

Return the land - all indigenous lands taken from them.

Acknowledge that the diversity exists and celebrate it. Take time to get to know our neighbors who are different from us. Join groups which are integrated and learn more about others.

Establish a social justice ministry beyond the food collection.

Liturgy would be a way to sensitize the communities to the cultural diversity possible.

Encourage greater participation in what is already available. Busy people are not taking advantage of current opportunities.

I think it would be helpful to create public spaces and community events for people to get to know one another and celebrate the cultural diversity of the neighborhood.

We have taken some steps in that a number of Asian and a smaller number of black African attend our parish liturgies. Hopefully, this will continue when a new pastor is named. With leadership in limbo right now, much will depend on agenda and style the next pastor.

Partner with other churches who are engaged in working towards systemic racial equality.

Start a truth and reconciliation group. Do a blanket exercise (an aboriginal custom).

Education!

I think there would be push back for even raising the topic.

Address the issue in homilies - at the risk of offending some donors.

We can follow the Laudato Si' encyclical of Pope Francis to Care for Our Common home and be Laudato Si' Action Planners. Invite and go to Indigenous community events and work with them in the Truth & Reconciliation (UNDRIP) process by giving support.

Canadian dioceses are now paying reparation for damages of the Residential Schools. But money and goodwill are not enough. We must walk with, listen to write their stories of history into school books, even if we look bad. The truth is the beginning of Reconciliation; denial and ignorance leads to death, and if not our death, the death of someone at our expense. We need to wake up.

Find opportunities to engage with people of different ethnicities or BIPOC.

Housing. Education. Faith. I don't think People of Color feel welcomed in the Catholic Church. I don't either, or I'm white. I'll have to think some more about this one. The other thing that Sr. Anita said earlier was that the Church needs to take care of everyone from the womb to the tomb. They are all anti-abortion, but do they care about proper nutrition, education and health for the young children that are born and as they grow older into high school. Education! We need services, yet the government is in a cutting-back mode (from the previous administration). The Church needs to put its money where its mouth is and truly embrace all single Mom's, babies, children. Instead, they are marginalized now.

We are open to opportunities as they come... we are a community of mostly retired women religious, connected to a care facility.

Plan events that would include a diverse planning group and opportunities to get to know one another and to celebrate our racial and ethnic diversity.

Being more welcoming, preaching is to be more inclusive, inviting different ethnic groups to share potluck suppers with a focus.

We could invite diverse groups to parish events. A parish in our area has a racial justice program, we could ask to join it to learn about actions we can take locally.

They could have it be a part of the merging of parishes in the Beacon of Light program in the Cincinnati archdiocese to invite people of other cultures and color to join the new parishes as they come together.

We have a very diverse congregation, but I haven't noticed a lot of our leaders are diverse, except that we partner with a church in Haiti and the people are very generous and the pastor comes each year to thank us and is truly grateful for the help and prayers.

More social activities highlighting racial diversity. Broaden the music in liturgy.

I'm too old. 97.

Reach out to Mexican farm workers good preaching.

When I worked in a parish, I always made concerted efforts to invite and welcome all people to ministerial and liturgical roles, training and working with them until they reach a comfortable level.

Art and celebration are important. I think that my own church (parish) has made some improvements in how diversity is celebrated and images in communications and in art are not so white as they used to be. We participate more than we used to in inter-faith festivities and prayer services. I would have had a very different answer if you had said "justice" instead of "diversity." We need to be involved in the communities that we know are still victims of segregation and racial injustice. My church offers a scholarship to kids who have some connection with UNC Chapel Hill's history of slavery and racism.

Change the top-down model of church.

Share Liturgy with other parishes that are comprised of ethnically diverse populations.

We need to see and have diversity in our liturgical ministries, parish council and catholic school.

Education, conversations about this, sharing in small groups and taking action.

Arrange social get-togethers in a way that throws ethnic diversities together and provides for them talking together. Have potluck gatherings with ethnic foods and explanation of them. Provide entertainment at a gathering that stages ethnic dances and customs.

Have some socials and liturgies shared with black churches. Very few people of color in my parish because of geographical distances.

teach acceptance or at the least teach people to keep their mouth shut if they can't tolerate diversity.

We are a beach community. Have food festivals.

Task force to factually enlighten our neighborhood on areas of justice-blocking and work on improvement and needed changes. Communicate as it moves along constantly inviting (personally) more folks to join in.

We accept everybody.

Partner with a Hispanic faith community to pursue ethnic diversity in local community service.

By offering insights during the homily by priests and deacons that connect with Jesus' inclusivity with the current call for all parishes, regardless of ethnic make-up or demographic, to reflect our global church.

I'm not sure because the Afro Americans have the churches that the worship at. . . Although many years ago, we used to have a Thanksgiving service with all the Christian churches. . . This has not happened for the last 15 years. . Different pastors!?!?

Reach out to the African American churches in the community for joint initiatives.

Parish education re: racial justice and injustice; parish discussions and calls to action. Town halls in our city and civil parish to bring people together to address problems/concerns.

trying to address fair treatment by police, supporting non redlining housing practices and continuing multiethnic and racial city-wide celebrations.

Evangelii Nuntiandi speaks much of the Gospel meeting both our eternal, and our social needs and desires. It is as though priests have never read that document, for totally absent from homilies or priorities - at least in the parishes near me - is any advocacy of justice relative to black life.

Anti- racism training in all businesses.

Openly address the complex issues. Vocally. From the pulpit so to speak. Stop hiding behind "civility," afraid of reaction.

Begin with personal and group education; and invite opportunities to learn from racial and ethnic diverse people.

We need to get out of the parish more into the area.

I think the community should partner with faith communities to help address these issues and work together to address them.

There has been work to engage the Latino community.

Our county has been good about embracing racial and ethnic diversity in many areas, but other parts of our state have been less good and are now actively pushing against it. We need to stand firm and not let the negative voices break down our progress.

Preach against racial injustice. Stand in solidarity with our black, brown, and red brothers and sisters for social justice in our schools.

Interracial conversations.

Due to the varied ethnic communities in our diocese, I do believe they embrace racial and ethnic diversity.

Sing bi-lingual hymns.

Access to affordable housing, to health and medical services, as well as preparation for jobs that provide a sustainable future for a family need to be priorities.

We have a long way to go, because we are still several ethnic, culturally different communities sharing worship space. Social events are working better in this parish than in many others.

More education will help I am trying to learn more by following Dr. Henry Louis Gates' series on PBS.

Provide opportunities to discuss the notion of diversity and safeguarding our practice of protecting it.

Create a youth council to give a voice in solidarity with multiple partnerships. Be intentionally intersectional, especially with doing environmental climate justice.

I think my community is doing a pretty good job, with large Indian, Asian, Filipino as well as whites and African Americans. The High school was very diverse.

Strengthen Intercultural opportunities for conversation and bonding. Use the arts to encourage expression of faith from different perspectives: music, drama, painting.

Work for just voting rights, have more recognition of racial issues for police training.

We must also become aware of our racist attitudes and therefore do the necessary work in our mind and heart, which is needed so that we can become more Christlike.

We do not often talk on this issue in a local sense.

Scholarships for children of color in the parish catholic school.

The Unitarian Church flew a "Black Lives Matter" flag in front of their church. Ours never mentioned the movement.

The church that I attend is less vibrant than it was 40 years ago. Our priests have more conservative seminary training, and the clergy has not embraced Vatican II. When our bishops thought the Catholic nuns should be investigated and also said that they were too much into social justice, I decided that they had really "lost it". I don't go through the Catholic Church to do social justice because they are not helpful.

Have masses that are multilingual instead of segregating by language.

Host cultural evenings, so people learn about other cultures, with food, music, spiritual sharing

Have more native born African American priests (Some have said they were not welcomed at archdiocesan seminary, so left for religious orders).

Archdiocese should group parishes not just by proximity but by racial diversity.

Increase knowledge and outreach and welcoming to people of diverse cultures.

Set up a lay led committee to set up an educational program for parishioners and the community at large.

Embrace growing Hispanic community (we are on the edge of an area with rural farmworkers that are transitioning into the year-round community. Attend their liturgies and celebrations (which are held at times in other churches).

My parish could simply decide that “social justice” can be mentioned in many contexts in the parish.

More social justice education on the past as well as the realities of the present toward forming the people of God in unity and diversity.

Non-threatening Education is needed, BUT the political division will stand in the way.

Collaborate with other faith traditions that represent our BIPOC sisters and brothers.

It would help to have a pastor or administrator with a vision of community and a sense of justice.

One way to more enthusiastically embrace racial and ethnic diversity would be if the priests in the homilies at the weekend Masses could address the fears of white people in regard to black and ethnically diverse peoples and the fears of black and ethnically diverse peoples toward white Catholic congregations and the origins of the fears of both groups of people. Topics in a series could include homilies on: the history of racism perpetrated by the Catholic Church; a list of books on the issue of white racism; the ways white-run local governments and agencies have egregiously discriminated against African-Americans in where they could live, what government-run programs they could access, where blacks could work and where blacks could worship God. The GI Bill passed by Congress is an example of widespread government run discrimination by the Federal and state governments against black veterans.

Another possibility could be for a parish to offer a weekend retreat or a parish mission. The mission could start at the latest Mass on a Sunday with a homily on why racism is such a serious sin. Then for the next four evenings (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) a presentation could be given by a guest speaker or a panel of speakers on their own experiences with racism. A Lenten series could be provided one day a week for four or five weeks. The last session of a retreat, mission or Lenten series could be devoted to participants examining their consciences, repenting of sins of racism, and committing themselves to make reparation in some way for the communal sin of racism in the United States. To end the last session of whichever experience is chosen, refreshments could be served while participants mingle and share with the speakers.

Parishes could attend religious services at racially/ethnically diverse churches and invite those churches to attend Mass at their parishes. Parishes could provide dinner when they host an African American or other ethnically diverse population. Interactive sessions, such as role-playing, could be used to enable all racial and ethnic groups to hear what goes on in the heads of people of different races in racially charged encounters.

Encounters. Communication.

Arlington, VA has been on the path for a few years now with a program “Challenging Racism” that is educating, challenging all facets of public activities and training leaders to “challenge racism”. Many entities in the community and in the many non-profit social service organizations are emphasizing a D E I lens for all the work being done.

Educate seminarians and laypeople about the history and realities of racism in our country and our church. We can’t address and resolve issues we don’t admit exist.

Offer, take, teach about Critical race Theory (reality) to adults, explore 1619 project. Offer not only interfaith dialogue but gatherings of inclusion. I see gatherings of what I suggest in the health care world. Working in Behavioral health inpatient therapy sessions persons who NEVER thought they would be in the same room with persons of different color, religion, sexual orientation let alone process with each other, issues, emotions and lifestyles together for healing, do so. with amazing “connection. and support.”

Our SSND Community is in virtual sessions now with a black woman who is teaching us well and doing excellent process with us. Milwaukee today elected a black mayor for the first time...by a landslide! We need him badly. It is gratifying to me that he got nearly 70% of the vote.

Really need anti racist training and opportunities to work together. Stand up for affordable housing and justice issues.

Locally we are pretty diverse.

People’s hearts change when they actually meet others in person. The Church could better provide opportunities to get to know others from different backgrounds. Examples: service projects, worship opportunities.

It is important to celebrate the diversity of our community and if there is not a lot of diversity in our community invite members of other communities to educate us, for example on Black History Month, and Asian History Month. Will be great if we had events where people representing different communities share food or dances from their countries of origin. Partnerships with other communities are key because we have the risk of isolating ourselves in our own culture.

For one thing they could find out why the Indigenous people in this area were declared

extinct in 1956 and take steps to correct this injustice.

Antiracism education. Embrace and partner with local black churches.

Activities that would bring together all people of color.

I do not know at this time, as there is not much racial and ethnic diversity in our neighborhood. The young African American girl next door comes to our house as soon as she knows our grandson (her age) and his sister are here. She has become a new friend and participates in whatever activities our grandchildren are doing.....

Education about Black US candidates for Sainthood!

I believe you need to become more educated first as to what racial and ethnic diversity means and how we are all unconsciously bias. I think it is also a bigger issue than just race, it also inclusion - LGBTQ, developmentally challenged, physically challenge - we are very far from being a welcoming church. They say that the first step to overcoming an addiction is that you have an addiction. It’s the same with this issue, the first step is to acknowledge that we are all capable and have acted upon our own racial biases. No one can say they are “not racist.”

Our local Island community acknowledges we live on the unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation people and through the reconciliation process we are listening to the seventh generational pain experiences by the assimilation philosophy of and evangelism attempts that the Catholic Church played a major role in our country of Canada

The archbishop could embrace this cause.

Offer sessions on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Recommendations.

Welcome warmly all people.

We are a diverse parish but very Eurocentric. The white folks in all the committees need to get out of the way.

Inclusivity in culture.

Town Hall meetings or group discussions to share stories.

I travel to a parish that is in a majority Black part of the city. We are becoming more and more a Black parish.

I am currently not a part of a church community but am part of an on-line community which is diverse and inclusive, a model for all churches.

We could celebrate the many different cultures within our parish both in our liturgies and in our parish celebrations. At the moment - we assume that everyone wants to be white and celebrate in this manner.

Our social justice committee has recently reactivated. We are working on Laudato Si but have not yet identify any plans.

Our diocese has been instrumental in helping refugees but in general the parish has no real educational opportunities. This is something we are working on as a committee.

More POC in ministry, in leadership roles. More opportunities to listen to stories that need to be told.

Weed out racist police officers. Do a better job in recruiting. Not all police officers are bad but those mentioned are giving a bad name to all.

Be much freer within the liturgy of Eucharist and ready to welcome difference.

Invite ethically @ racially diverse individuals to community gatherings & create learning opportunities for the “white” community to engage in conversation.

I live in the “world” - a mixed community-various religions and races. It is important to be open, friendly, inclusive. When we go back to gatherings - I hope that residents of all races will be confident and welcomed enough to participate.

Improve on the music during mass. Sponsor education/training on non-white Catholicism. Outreach services to those in need (homebound, dealing with addiction, single parents, multiracial families). Go to the people, don't expect them to come to the church. Less formality and more human-like. Less money spent on the needless aspects of a church - e.g., marble floors are not needed. Simple is better. Have pictures/figures of Jesus and Mary showing them as their true ancestry which is not white or better yet make them look multiracial or even indistinguishable from any particular ethnic background - we are all God's children after all.

We could have Mass for people with English as a second language. We could actually embrace our ‘sister parish’ (in Central America) instead of just talking about it once a year.

Even in our diverse parish, racial injustice is not discussed!

Trainings I have facilitated in the past started with self-awareness. Powerful responses and surprises always occurred.

Our parish shares a pastor with an all-African American parish. Although our parish is somewhat diverse itself, I would like to have more interaction with our sister parish.

Q3. What could the Catholic Church do to help transform the hearts and minds of its members so that racial justice in our church and society would be a greater reality?

Take the lead in speaking out against racism of all kinds.

Not be silent on the topic.

The word belonging came up in my small group. Both preaching and social action around belonging.

Continue to teach ourselves and our children to be anti-racist.

Educate our seminarians! Expose them to the reality.
Remove clericalism.

The visual aspect of seeing racial diversity in the faces of the clergy.

We are searching for ways!

Integrate neighborhoods with housing for folks in need. Host regular interdenominational and interfaith events at a variety of church's, parishes, synagogues and mosques.

Through teaching and dialogue.

The same way we speak for the unborn, we should be just as vocal for racial injustice in our country.

Educate, educate, educate! We need to have dialogue, learning, accompanied by action.

Be more sensitive to other cultures as a whole and mindful that different cultures may have different traditions how they worship God. Together the differences would enrich our praise and worship.

Start to honestly educate.

Include racism as a required part of seminary training for priests, deacons and DRE's. Publicly honor those who stand up against racism. Encourage alternative Holy Week liturgies like anti-racism processions as Stations of the Cross.

I believe we need to do more to help all of us understand that "conversion" is an inside job with our own attitudes, dispositions and behaviors instead of outwardly focused. Helping to teach all of us how to do this better would be a good first step.

Speak and preach the truth.

Celebrate different ethnic groups on various occasions; feature the positive, contributing qualities of that group.

Provide educational opportunities and experiences so whites become aware of the gifts of blacks. Encourage black members to take leadership roles in parish and diocesan work...not just with the black community but across the board.

To preach at the Pulpit about racial justice - to engage the Community in opportunities for education in racial justice for all.

Identify local racist practices/issues and urge concrete action.

See above. Look at the Episcopalian program titled Sacred Ground. Incorporate a similar program into Catholic Churches.

I think that patriarchy is crumbling within society at all levels. I think we have to ordain women to give the church balance and integrity.

Be willing to address racial issues and openly work towards racial justice

Be more welcoming to people of color so all would feel welcome but also free to express their own experiences, preferences, and priorities.

We need to acknowledge our past sins but also talk more about God's inclusiveness and our responsibility as people of faith to accept that or stop calling ourselves Christian.

Encourage more participation by millennials and youth, inviting them to lead.

They need to put aside their fear and listen to black Catholics about what needs to be done

Have dialogues, bring in speakers instead of certain homilies. Have the speaker aware of the issue of racial justice. Tell real stories.

Sponsor educational sessions, liturgies, and events around the topic. Go slowly with people who don't understand basics like white privilege...but keep pushing. We have to hurt a little to learn.

Make vicariate or diocesan events that all are invited to on topics of racial justice or simply inclusion.

Decisive action should be taken, first by the bishops, who have never really taken responsibility for the topic, but, as has been said, have carefully constructed documents

addressing the issue of racism, but in a manner that is designed for the comfort of those of us who enjoy white privilege.

Own up to its role and theology in propagating and perpetuating racism, class differences and clericalism.

Much close-mindedness and superiority among white Catholics - along with political affiliation that fosters such- Needs to be addressed forthrightly, accepting the fact that financial contributions will lessen because of this.

Speak the Gospel message, not the message according to Father.

Talk from the pulpit.

Preach real stories illumined by the gospel model anti racist advocacy

Name it, proclaim it, show active ministry to all persons of color.

Preach the Gospel. Promote reading of resources such as A White's Catholic Guide to Racism by Daniel Horan, OFM.

Pope Francis acknowledges the evil done against Native Americans and all people of color by using the Doctrine of Discovery. The USA still uses this legally in treating the Native Americans today.

From the top down, it could self-examine, ask forgiveness, work on reparations...We could give People of color more authority, open dialogue and ed opportunities, invite people into our Churches to help teach us history and how to listen and respond....

Greater outreach to the marginalized, e.g., visiting prisons where ICE detains people after separating them from families. Services to immigrant families.

Introduce topic in homilies...not long, but consistent.

For the present, make a concerted effort to address these issues in all churches.

Educate priests on this issue, speak at a national level for racial justice, promote programs of racial justice at the diocesan and parish level. Canonize diverse saints. Promote diverse leaders.

Be more inclusive of ALL.

Have women be equal. Then I believe racial and LGBTQ people would be part of this group and would also invite all to the table.

Education is so important. Programs explaining Catholic Social Justice in the parishes and schools would be an eye opener for most.

It needs to be part of the training of religious which needs to include time either in the inner city, on the res, or with rural poor.

We have what we call “sharing parishes”. It is typically a white suburban parish helping a poor minority parish in the city. While this is a good start, I think we should do more than help them financially. This would be a wonderful way to get to know and understand other people with different life experiences than ours.

Speak out more publicly when injustices occur.

Seminaries have to have radically different training. Anti-racism is one thing that should be on the top of their curriculum.

Encourage the “awareness” that Sr Anita stressed this morning...it is not about guilt she said, but about awareness---one speaking out and one action at a time to dismantle this injustice.

It has to be more than just mission and vision statement in the bulletin. Parish outreach spends lots of times fundraising and building... Small parish communities would be so much more meaningful.

Education and social justice programs for all ages of parishioners. Catholic Social Teaching needs to be a priority. We are all God’s children, and all should be on a journey together.

Make Catholic Social teaching more front and center in homilies and teaching. More talk of Jesus Himself not being a white person, nor Mary and Joseph. Look for opportunities to show saints of color as people of color.

Clerical leadership on social justice would go a long way towards encouraging parishioners to bet involved in social justice issues.

1) Openly and honestly disclose, and then repent, of all of the ways they have participated in sustaining a white-supremacy culture within the Church and the communities in every diocese. 2) Speak openly and candidly of how parish communities can and MUST do their part to address racism and particularly segregation.

Educate us more fully in the reality of how racism hurts us all and prevents us from truly being the Body of Christ which isn’t only a white body! Many more programs and presentations related to issues of racism which would allow our black brothers and sisters to realize we do care and what to do something to stop this “sin” from destroying the true church imagined by Jesus!

Make an effort to speak the truth, to present classes throughout the diocese on the history of racism in our church. Parishes can invite black Catholics to address parishioners.

When I worked in telecommunication sales and marketing, we called the concept “Shadow of the Leader.” I envision leadership at every level

embracing racial justice and integrating it in messaging (preaching, letters, policies, action).

Offer opportunities to go out into the community to places like the YWCA, food pantries, shelters, etc. (or have representatives from those organizations come to speak at masses instead of a homily, NOT after mass when many people have already left) to learn what they do and how they can be involved.

We are the Church. Seek out the racism in our own hearts, speak out, say many prayers, act with justice, form book clubs, workshops on peace and understanding between all races.

Bishops taking a greater stand on the issues. Pro-life issues for all, not just unborn.

Collaborate with various groups and reach out.

We could have parish organizations that fostered racial justice and social justice. They could put on workshops for the whole parish. We could pray about it in church -- not just for no hurricanes as in our Diocese -- at every Mass.

The liturgies could be more free to cater to the styles and needs of various racial groups.

Hire more people of color & give them the opportunity for positions of decision making & power.

Bishops and priest need to lead such an effort yet because they are the privileged class most do not see the need, esp. if it upsets their wealthy donors!!!

Preach on it; hold circles; get the community involved in local racial issues and in real relationships with POC.

Leaders and community taking a stand and speak out and act.

We don't address race in Catholic schools

Rarely do leaders speak out for the oppressed i.e. George Floyd and so many others. Priest and Sister should be reported, and action taken when they are racist. There should be a commission or board to turn to address this issue.

Ordain women, as that injustice is worldwide blatant. Women would be more inclusive, more compassionate voices. Emphasize maturity involves broadening perspectives and acceptance. Close Catholic schools, send parent and students to other schools to become involved there like missionaries. Engage trained teachers to teach religion for everyone, not just a Sunday sermon.

Bishop Jenky just retired and Bishop Tylka the coadjutor was ordained. People say he is like Cardinal Cupich and Pope Francis. So, we are waiting to see what he does. Nothing was done with Jenky who brought a lot of priests who were trained in conservative seminaries. So, half of the priests are of this type, and they are the younger ones. The older Vatican II priests are aging and dying. It will be up to us laity to change things. These young priests want to go back to 1960.

I'd like to see them invite members of minority groups to regularly share their experiences. Many non-minorities are shocked when they hear the stories that have/are happening close to them without their being at all aware! Personal stories touch hearts and open conversations, build relationships - out of that we can begin to build trust!

Change our language especially in liturgy and prayers to be inclusive.

It must start with the leaders. Transform the cardinals, bishops, and priests. People will follow them!

Recognize it as a real problem and talk about it from the altar. I don't believe most priests see it as a problem because most parishes are white,

and the other doesn't matter. The US catholic church is a white church with a few Hispanic and black churches. Whiteness is superior and only White matters.

Speak to it openly and don't be afraid to ask for forgiveness for past hurts, sins and neglect. Have open dialogues and discussions so everyone has a "place at the table," As Sister Anita so eloquently expressed.

Actively practice Social Justice. Practice Catholic Social Teaching as a way of life in our Parish.

I'd like to see the Church move out beyond its doors to create these kinds of storytelling communities where we can meet each other and work with each other as people who simply want to be loved, accepted and respected.

Definitely speak out more and get involved in more social activities that bring people together.

Speak out on ALL levels about issues in society - racial justice means housing, education, jobs. Discrimination within our institution is rampant. Recognize the dignity of LGBTQ teachers rather than firing them.

Draw in leadership. Put forth people like Sister Anita, who can both tell their stories and witness to the great giftedness of people of color and what they offer.

Be honest with its own history - personal and institutional.

The Catholic Church needs to educate its priests and seminarians so that they are aware of the racism and not dismiss it.

Speak Up. At the time of the George Floyd's killing. Nothing was said in our church. There is a defensiveness about white privilege. We need to live our beliefs.

I don't know how to prompt this transformation, but I think groups such as Future Church can help fortify people willing to fight for social justice to have the courage to continue to claim the values of unity and anti-racism.

I believe clergy formation is crucial. Sunday Mass is when most Catholics learn about their faith. Not to include topics social justice which are essential to our faith is, I believe, a missed opportunity.

Vatican needs to disavow Doctrine of Discovery!

Seminaries need to be re-structured not just to include people with different skin color but include more progressive mindsets. New seminarians from South American countries are reminiscent of 1940s Irish priests who thought of Church as doing no wrong; just follow the rules.

On-going discussions and actions when unjust actions are taken/done to people of color, pay attention to the sufferings of all immigrants and to be careful not to show preference, for example pray for the Ukrainians while ignoring the plights of others in trouble.

Speak publicly and act courageously regarding racial justice- including financial support to "poor" parochial/catholic schools.

Parish liturgies and celebrations and homilies focused on black lives and their contributions to our church. Catholic School and religious education projects during Black History month.

Just as some governments have acknowledged their complicity in racial disparity, I would hope the hierarchical church would also do this.

OMG, I am very disappointed in our Catholic Church leadership. They are fearful of losing parishioners if they speak out against racism.

Or is it because they will lose donations?
Preach on the beauty of God's creation and all the varieties in the Human Race. All can teach us of the beauty of our God and Creator.

Better homilies that include these teachings and opportunities to become more acquainted. We live in a very rural white community.

Study groups, faith sharing, and social justice projects. Clergy better trained in these areas

Those in parish ministry could invite a number of parishioners from African American and white communities to take field trips to each other's churches with social afterwards for building bridges and getting to know other people of faith. I suspect white folks would be discontent with lily white liturgies after a full African American experience!

Church leaders need to start by actively engaging with black church leaders at the black parish. Go to them instead of always inviting them to go to the white parish.

Better preaching on real topics and related to the Gospel and the prophets. Provide opportunities to be one on one with those of different cultures and realities. Person to person experiences more than academics for starters.

The Catholic Church needs to apologize for the Doctrine of Discovery and the harm done to Native and African people. The Catholic Church must also instruct nations to dismantle policies and legal precedents that uphold the Doctrine.

Leadership could make a big difference; bishops, pastors could share more about it in homilies on a regular basis. Diocesan newspaper could print articles that promote diversity.

STOP those who are in power and authority now from opposing what they fear, because it will not benefit them - Their EGO, position,

and influence. I am ashamed of the Catholic Bishops who have NO LOVE in their hearts. The Catholic Church needs to step aside as a GOD to its members, realizing from its history, that the Institution has not acted according to God's Will but to its own. POWER and GLORY belong to God alone, and God is loving and merciful to ALL creation, not just Catholics, White and Male.

Encourage integration at Masses, instigate art projects that all parishioners can contribute to have more informational sessions, speak to these issues from the pulpit, encourage more black altar girls, go to shelters with activities, prayers, that reach out.

Allow BIPOC peoples more role in the church. Create role models. Tell lived experiences during homilies. Have movie nights showing pertinent documentaries. Teach. Discuss in safe spaces. Promote ideas that Jesus did.

A global, detailed apology for the racism affirmed, encouraged, and participated in by the Universal Church...especially in the western hemisphere would be a good start. White folks have no idea how pervasive the Catholic Church was in slave trade.

My parish is very predominantly white in composition. It would help if we had some interaction with more ethnic parishes or diverse parishes.

Continue talking and sharing among parishes.

This needs to be on the agenda of every meeting, every prayer group, every school curriculum, every homily. Not just on Martin Luther King Day. Racial and other justice issues are in scripture. We have to make those interpretations.

The Church needs to listen to our diverse faith leaders and share their messages on Sunday mornings with the local parishioners in addition to the larger events.

Have social events with all included. Invite the person who seems afraid to join in. Love them in your own heart first.

Small groups to develop awareness and understanding.

Continued formation of the laity... discussions...continue to inform and share with others. We a welcoming community to everyone. Including immigrants. Refugees...we are ALL the People of God.

More preaching on Sunday Mass on the subject at hand.

Take courses on racial justice, I took a course designed by the Jesuits on learning more about the Indigenous ex: Colonization, Taking the Indian out of the child, Dependency, Dispossession, and Oppression.

I feel it is vital that these issues are spoken about regularly at mass in our homilies to bring the loving message of God into focus for the whole community when gathered in prayer and in parish presentations and actions to reach out to help. We have had ecumenical Thanksgiving gatherings for decades, but not since the pandemic arrived. I feel our hearts are transformed by encounter as Pope Francis often says. Sometimes encounters happen on our own, but it helps tremendously when we are invited and afforded opportunities through our faith community activities and invitations. Many don't take it seriously and even struggle to hear things they feel are 'political' at mass, but justice and love is intrinsic to our Catholic faith, and it needs to be taught and expressed for people to fully grasp this.

Publicly address much more often the issue of racism, how it has affected the church through the centuries and especially today, examine how racism is affecting seminary living and teaching, write pastorals and give homilies on this topic that are really challenging, follow

the lead of Pope Francis on this, publicly recognize how even locally the Catholic Church has divested indigenous and Black peoples of land and property, recognize and speak out on systemic and structural racism and recognize that it is just as much a LIFE issue as abortion. Be visible on the streets and public gatherings when racism needs to be addressed.

Celebrate diversity, welcome those on the margins, understand their cultures, speak up for injustices inflicted upon them. Speak to Social justice issues that affect all of the people in the area.

At least in my parish it would help to reach out to non-Catholic Christian denominations. We could gather socially and spiritually with churches with majority Black congregations to discuss our shared values.

Prioritize Black Catholic history and experience and promote good liturgical experiences and solid adult education.

I would like to walk the streets with our bishop (without an entourage) and watch as he listens with his heart and absorbs the stories of people of color (like Anita's and those from my small group). Every bishop should do this and then talk with each other about what people have shared. We don't need Rome to make any more proclamations. We need local bishops to clear away barriers, legal and so-called religious, and make it clear to everyone that racial justice is how the Catholic faith should be practiced.

Priests should be encouraged to avoid euphemisms, speak about the real pain suffered and be able to make concrete suggestions that are do-able. They certainly should find a way to make this issue inviting to those in their parishes who would help. People of not-color (i.e., "whites") often are either oblivious or want to see change and don't know what to do.

Brian Massingale has to become the president of the USCCB and insist on writing a pastoral

letter. the three recent letters are so poorly done
- they keep whites so comfortable.

Help all white people to become more aware of
privilege.

Study Fratelli Tutti.

Lead by example with diverse leadership.

Solid preaching about social Justice followed
by action, involvement of parish leaders in the
local endeavors.

**Throw out all the bishops in the USCCB who
endorsed BUILD THE WALL TRUMP.**

Local Church leadership has the opportunity
to demonstrate the value of racial justice - it
doesn't have to wait for the bishop!

**Collaboration with churches or groups of other
races. Not just give handouts but do things
together.**

Act justly itself - on all levels. Acknowledge its
lack of justice over the years.

**Admit to all the wrongs the church has done to
people throughout history.**

The modelling and preaching by the leaders.
Blended activities. Education and celebration
of included cultures.

**More sermons about racial justice. Meetings
of black and white people sharing their
experiences and getting to know each other.**

Get over white privilege and white fragility!

**Speak from the pulpit. Include attitude towards
race as a criterion to enter religious life or the
seminary. SHARE the abundant resources
that many parishes have with the less affluent.
Ask people to consider if another ostentatious
church built to honor God is the best way to**

**honor God when others are in need or treated
unfairly.**

Perhaps if incidents of racial injustice
become known, then they could be lifted up as
teachable moments.

**Exchanges with racially diverse communities in
Guatemala.**

Not sure.

**Invitation to members of diverse communities
to join programs & social events.**

Form discussion groups around books like
Caste and See no Stranger.

Better teaching from the parish priest.

We need training on how to reach out to
persons at the margins on these issues. How
do we reach the hearts and minds of racist,
anti-immigrant, anti-indigenous elements
of the Church? This is not what the Gospel
teaches us. How can we better live out
the gospel message of love? Anti-racism
trainings, dialogues, parish commitments,
reviews of how practices of parishes are
impacting communities of color. Trainings on
unconscious bias.

**Acknowledge its failures, lapses, and sins of
the past. Most conspicuously, apologize for the
evil done against native and indigenous people,
especially children, at many Catholic boarding
schools in the US and Canada.**

I don't know.

**Pray, meditate! Realize the lack of compassion
we have shown to those who are not like us. We
must connect with all. We are social beings. We
need each other.**

Acknowledge that racism exists at all levels
of the church and society and be open to

education and change for more equity in opportunity for all

Preach that we are all the same inside our bodies and created in God's image must only mean the interior human!

Stop supporting white nationalism. The number of church leaders who looked the other way during the last administration colluded with the white supremacists. What do we stand for? Jesus disturbed people, but we don't want anyone - white - to be upset with us.

Education is the greatest way; also make sure that organizations and committees within the parish have a mixture of races.

Each diocese and each parish have a racism task force to facilitate dialogue and raise awareness.

The bishops have to face the fact that the church is as racist as the rest of the country. Re: racism, the church has been silent.

Be faithful to the teaching. Publicize efforts.

Again, I feel that education is key...also engaging in social activities that include various cultures, Vietnamese, Spanish, as well as Black.

Teach the implications of Catholic theology as it pertains to our day-to-day relationships with people who don't look like us. Teach how Jesus' words apply to racism. Priests/Bishops need to become MUCH more vocal about this issue and not worry about upsetting white congregants and not worry about how speaking out against racism will affect the collection plate.

Bring in speakers, lecturers and people who have been victims of injustice.

Include the issue of racism in homilies and liturgical rituals. Religious congregations of

women could be more welcoming of women of color than they have been.

Preach, talk, sponsor sharing. Make documents on racial justice better known.

Send Archbishop Gomez for diversity training.

Use the gospel and the concept of the Body of Christ. Pope Francis' recent encyclical about being community. We are all God's children and all part of one family.

Invite, invite and keep inviting "others" - Help us get to know each other personally one on one or smaller groups gathering to discuss our own experiences.

Put more Black and Hispanic Catholics in leadership roles. Acknowledgement by clergy, including bishops, of the sin of racism in the Catholic Church and efforts within every parish to learn through preaching and teaching of that sin and for us to work together to remediate and reconcile.

Have ministers of different races be seen and heard as inclusive not threatening.

More cross-cultural gatherings/services.

Speak out about racial injustice instead of sweeping it under the rug, ignoring it. Encourage racial justice events, book discussions, speakers, etc.

talk about it instead of ignoring the issue--raising awareness of the inadequacy of our response to people of color--promote thoughtful action to remediate situation.

More African Americans in leadership positions. Giving them voice to be heard.

Create opportunities for people to form relationships.

Become more ecumenical and invite common worship, pulpit swapping, and projects with predominantly black churches.

We could better live out the social teachings that have been proposed in the past 100 years.

Education would help. Social interaction.

Ongoing formation of bishops and clergy in understanding the roots and establishment of racism in our societal structures that perpetuate it, including how their silence contributes to perpetuating it. Once aware, they need to learn how to talk about it from the pulpit in connection to the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching. I think, too, many are afraid to challenge their congregations to address racism out of fear losing the rich white donors or coming under the attack of being too political in church. (Separation of Church and state argument). Yet, ironically, most clergy will talk from the pulpit about abortion, which has become a political issue.

I believe if we as Catholics truly lived social justice values as presented in the Gospels, we most likely would be a persecuted church in the U.S.

Peace circles are a good way to bring about discussion where we truly listen to each other.

Speak up and don't remain so silent. Include racial and ethnic issues in our prayer intentions at Mass.

The Church could point out injustice when it happens. It could listen to the voices of Black Catholics and get their input of what they envision the Church should be doing. And there should be anti-racist training for all leaders to recognize their biases and pass that experience along to their own parishes.

Challenge us to recognize the role white supremacy has played in our lives, our church, and our society. Recognize the many ways

the Church's position on so many issues are actually racist and seek to eradicate such practices.

Preach it. preach it. live it.

Educate the seminarians, priests, and lay people

The hierarchy needs a new formation - or needs to be abolished. I don't believe the Catholic Church in the United States is capable of the kind of change that is needed.

Making racial justice a priority in religious education and clergy formation in US. Preaching that embraces social justice themes and racial equity.

Invite members of the Black community to educate us and to share their experiences with us, to suggest to us how we can help them.

The leadership of the Catholic Church plays a role and should not set a bad example by allowing politics into the rhetoric especially in regard to racial justice.

Have the Pope officially rescind the 16th Century Bulls that justified the conquest and enslavement of non-Christians.

Preach and live the Gospel. Educate people to what being anti racist really means. Most people are not necessarily outwardly racist, but they are not actively anti racist. Sit down and communicate get to really know people of other races.

It is very important for the Church to make the needed changes for both men and women- to have optional celibacy and ordained women. This would then Open Up the Entire church to more Cultural Diversity and greater racial justice.

Again, show by example.... have informal gatherings making sure that those who don't

usually attend because they are in the minority are urged to attend (attend with another member?)

Be more inclusive and more forward thinking in terms of outreach, liturgy, a broader view of life challenges in 21st century.

Talk about it.

The Priests and Bishops of the Dioceses must act and not be wimps and do their duty and not be afraid of adverse publications of their heroic acts.

We have priests from India only outside of the big City. Younger white priests come out of seminaries as ultra-right conservatives. We need to ordain married men and women. Our church is stuck in reverse until we wise up and stop giving power only to single men.

Reeducate clergy to priorities for mindset and foster emotional personal bonding. In the next 100 years.

First, the church has to admit that it is an issue and find knowledgeable people with firsthand experience to explain why there is systemic racism in this country. Then this should be provided to a larger audience, the laity, and ministers in the parishes.

Have a service for repenting from racism in each diocese, archdiocese. Talk about the reality and truth in 'critical race theory'. Take POLITICS out of which Catholic teachings we speak about and which we don't.

The pastor should take opportunities in preaching homilies, as long as they relate to the readings for the Sunday liturgy, to stress how God wants all of us to be one and to love one another for who we are as God's children and the Body of Christ.

Bring in the stories of history, claim the first owners of our land and take care of the land

as the first owners did, have book clubs on colonialism, point out social privilege and economic disparity in homilies, sacramental formation etc., have Stations of the Cross that are based on real life issues, e.g. Ukraine, work with refugee office to adopt a refugee family .

The Catholic Church needs to bring the labors of Vatican II to fruition. The 1971 Synod on Justice states that action on behalf of justice is constitutive to the Church. I don't think this is a lived reality in the Church.

Formation of priests and deacons should include how to give a homily that names racism and acknowledges the harm/trauma it inflicts on their flock. Hearing it from the pulpit is powerful and demonstrates that all are included in the Body of Christ intentionally.

More education at the local level.

As Catholics, we believe that a recognition of wrongdoing is necessary for reconciliation to take place. The United States has never formally recognized our "original sin" of racism, and so we continue to wrestle with it today. If we are a people who truly believe in the grace of reconciliation (in ALL that word means), then there is NO excuse for our institutional church to not be speaking out more forcefully against systemic racism. Until we (both collectively, and as a nation) recognize the role we played in systemic racism and/or the ways in which we benefit from it; we will never be able to be reconciled and freed from the chains of racism.

Provide good theology that broadens people's minds. Have Liturgies that consciously engage visually, musically, and through the Word to promote inclusion.

Speak out! Too many Catholics are silent on race. I haven't heard a homily on race in 30 years. How many parishes have done anything with any of the pastoral letters by our Black bishops?

Have pastors more prepared about topics and have lay persons who are prepared to be able to lead the congregation along the paths of racial justice.

Future Church can continue to discuss with the participation of persons of color with the common denominator that we are all Catholic/Christian and what it means to be Church in union with God.

There has to be more discussion among the lay people and the clergy. It would be wonderful if the Church could raise the conscious of all through heartfelt discussion of racism. Even if only a few come, they will then invite their friends and discuss the topic with them. Ignorance is the only hindrance to discussing the topic of racism in the Church.

Start inter -church dialogue and invite speakers or suggest books to read. a book I'd recommend is -"I am a girl from Africa" a memoir Elizabeth Nyamayara.

Weed out the close-minded, prejudiced religious and laity who are not living like true Christians! Unfortunately, in the U.S. they would have to start with some Archbishops and Bishops.

Keep educating and having programs based on diversity, equality, and inclusion. Have a diverse group of educators.

Embrace (don't just "tolerate") racial justice and diversity. Envision inclusion as a gift, as a strength, rather than as something uncomfortable that our church can just avoid.

Diversify reading material, homilies should address it from a Catholic perspective and welcome diversity in our membership. Be more ecumenical.

Overtly preach about examples of how Jesus confronted discrimination towards all kinds

of groups. Jesus was all about inclusion, acceptance, non-judgement. The church leadership (those allowed to preach at the current time) need to use their voices. Many do not know enough about systemic racism. They don't recognize it in their own midst!

It all comes down to power and the abuse thereof. We need to pull down the barriers of color and prejudice and walk as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Teach the church's social justice message.

Encourage clergy to address the matter with their congregations, acknowledge its history and current existence and condemn its ugly results.

Go out! meet persons of disadvantage on their own ground. Join in the initiatives of others. Meet your neighbor type of apostolate.

Include the problems in the Sunday homily's Also have parish workshops on racial justice.

Address the injustice from the pulpit. Address racism in seminaries and in incorporation/formation programs in Religious Congregations.

Our US Catholic bishops need to take a public stance for racial justice and inclusion. They need to learn from the laity and religious communities who are doing the work and living the Gospel message.

Have the homilies include the topic of racial justice in our church and society.

Provide education and lead by example.

Preach racial justice from the pulpit, preach Laudato Si from the pulpit. Honor Hispanic saints and Our Lady of Guadalupe in a public way.

Perhaps embed the concepts of racial justice into all that we do. And to encourage all the faithful to pray and practice racial justice just as we would practice the corporal works of Mercy or how we practice the other tenants of our faith.

Find ways for powerful white men who live in a tower to become friends with the people their policies systemically victimize. REMOVE the distance.

Lead by example.

Each of us has to take responsibility to deepen one's own awareness- conversion of heart comes before any change can happen.

More preaching from the pulpit about it. Making books by or about black writers and other people available. Encourage parishioners to invite a black neighbor or parishioner to share a meal.

Groups with similar interests could meet at one parish and then the other, probably on the weekend, during daylight hours, to introduce themselves... and then plan for larger groups or conferences.

Exposure through preaching, classes on Catholic social justice teachings with follow through on implementation for racial justice in our society.

Recognize and welcome those people of color and have some webinar or presentation about racism.

We need to hear about racial justice in the homily. The Diocese needs to provide workshops on the Social Teaching of the Church, the history of racism, and steps toward dismantling racism.

Having testimony from individuals like Sr. Anita tell their story in the parishes and in the Archdiocese. The Native community is the

elephant in the living room so to speak. No one wants to hear their stories of abuse.

Talk about it. Recognize, reiterate that all of us are children of the same God. He did not create white people as superior to black people. Portray Jesus, Mary and Joseph as people of mid-eastern coloring, not the blonde hair and blue-eyed white people that appear in much of religious art.

I met older priests from a seminary who were under my guidance in Pastoral Care, they needed to have better education in the seminary, including on racial issues.

We need to see more and more people of color in places of authority and adapt our liturgies and sacraments to be more enculturated. The music, etc. needs to appeal to people with different backgrounds. We have translated the mass into different languages but that needs to be accompanied by translating it into different cultural expressions.

Our parish could be proactive in supporting education opportunities within the parish. From the pulpits of the Catholic Church, and from the bishops, this education should be a priority. How are we complicit? How are we ignorant?

Make friends with people who are in a minority, and listen to their experiences, then speak up for that friend when you are confronted by the racism or injustice done to your friend(s).

The Catholic Church has to admit that we have been prejudiced. Reaching out can begin with an apology.

Listen to the stories and experiences of people of color and immigrants! Find ways to have everyone in our parish hear stories like Sr. Anita's - it seems as if this is the way that eyes and hearts are opened. And expect clergy and bishops to speak up FOR those at the margins instead of condemning them - it's

appalling that an American bishop is publicly condemning Black Lives Matter.

Education about the history of African Americans in America. This past year I heard of American experiences that I had never learned about in American history. The church should offer programs to help us understand from history and from personal experiences of guest speakers.

Adult religious education focused on racial justice to override past racial injustice in the Catholic Church. Much more on how unchristian it is to discriminate on race, sex, religions, etc. (the Civil Rights categories). Also begin in children's religious education on the harm and unchristian prevalence of racism and any kind of discrimination as not at all being like Christ and the message of the Gospels.

Shed away its clericalism and discrimination.

It could have a stronger voice in connecting racial justice in our church and society to the theological and social teachings of the Catholic Church. The Church could take an honest look at why it stays so silent and conservative in calling out racial injustice.

Be a model in talking about the issues as events occur. or wondering how policies and beliefs of the past come to haunt us today. Perhaps forming groups such as they did for RENEW or Vatican II teaching--in order to focus on everyday racism in our community. Micro aggressions don't get much press-- so it's important to educate people about racist attitudes that get played out in relationships, employment, housing, schools, etc. Many years ago, there was an effort to teach people about Catholic social justice teaching---so maybe do that again with an emphasis on a deep dive into racism in our midst. As I recall that effort was very superficial.

The priests need to play a major role, preaching about Oneness and God's Love for each of us no matter our color or ethnicity.

Take a stand to the truth of the matter and speak, and to offer prayers to the Spirit to enter the hearts who fear speaking about racism and pray for unity among all.

Hold learning and listening sessions where the dream of a more integrated church is shared.

Talk about racial injustice!!! When the former president separated children from their families at the border, our diocese was SILENT. There was no discussion of how this was the product of racism. We can talk amongst ourselves, but people need to hear it from their pastors, from their bishops, and from the pope. Otherwise, it's too easy to brush off lay ministers as "radicals"--when it's really just Catholic social teaching.

With contrite hearts and commitment to change, the Church from the top to people in pews must start with lamentation and contrition. White Catholics must convert each other and must demand changes in the institutional Church.

Give the parishes some direction in starting the process of transforming hearts and minds.

Preach the Beatitudes in today's world. Our clergy needs to be more courageous in actions and preaching. Be more like Jesus. Not afraid to lose \$\$\$ because someone is offended.

The real history of racism and slavery MUST BE taught in all our schools, and not just left to college level. It is too late by then, and we need to be more involved to support the students who daily experience microaggressions.

Invite others to participate, and be seen, in parish liturgies and projects upon seeing my classroom bulletin board on Martin Luther

King, a maintenance man attempted to throw his wet mop at it.

Speak about it on Sunday and at other meetings, invite others to join active committees in the parish - rather than the same people, be open to bringing new people into whatever opportunities there may be for them to also be of service to the parish and community.

Teach social justice better in seminaries. Provide for more travel opportunities in the parish and in schools to expand awareness. The word “parochial” should not carry the negative connotation that it does.

I’m sure there are some “experts in the field” in the Church who could tell us what can be done, but not off the top of my head.

We need to listen to and really hear the stories of persons of color. We need to do things that attract folks of all races and ethnicities and celebrate them, their traditions, their music, their opinions. The face of our church universal is not white, and we should stop painting it that way.

Parishes in Philadelphia need to recognize changing neighborhoods in the city and the needs of the people in those cities- not move more resources to the more affluent “Catholic” suburban parishes. Make racial justice a priority in the church through prayer, through service and perhaps partnering with a church that racially different and have joint liturgies and events.

Perhaps try to join socially with a black parish or group to help break down our differences/sameness...One in Christ’s Body.

Raise some of the political issues regards aboriginal people for greater understanding, inspiring all to become involved where they can to work for justice.

Be informed about their past and present plights. Include and integrate liberational and indigenous spirituality to root out causes of inequality and racism which is colonialism/patriarchy and its impact to our mindsets.

Talk about racism and our white fragility and our white supremacy. Educate others and challenge our parishioners to learn themselves and their personal racism and begin to work against that - to become anti-racist. Until a problem is known and named, nothing will change. Too many priests and other parish leaders will not confront their own attitudes, so it is impossible for them to challenge the parishioners. We white folks do not like that kind of challenge and most often will say we aren’t racist because we work with people of color and get along fine - and don’t even realize when we say or do something that is hurtful to the other person. Or sometimes we are more overt because of our attitude that the other person is of less value than we are.

On the national level the USCCB has done regional trainings on multi-cultural competency. I attended one as a diocesan staff member and it was quite good. However, we did not have the sustained energy to keep it going when we got back.

Broaden the ministry of homilists and deacons.

Be less rigid. Cross parish celebrations with parishes of different cultural experiences.

First, they would have to have the will and mind to intentionally address the issue starting with the Pope. Anti-racism should be taught in the seminary, church, schools and catechism. Loving thy neighbor is a core teaching and pillar of our faith. Unfortunately, Christian supremacy has fed white supremacy and must be dismantled.

The Catholic Church, locally, on a diocesan level, and universally, needs to step up and address issues of race when they happen. Black

Lives Matter should have been proclaimed a Catholic mission from every pulpit in the country - not a year after it happened, but immediately. Violence against Asians should have been spoken of in every church in America. The abuse of Native American children in “homes” should have been spoken of.

As people of various ethnic backgrounds joined our family, I believe that racial bias has declined. I found participation in a parish founded by Black Catholics who hold leadership positions in the parish to be very helpful. The parish also had a number of multiracial families as well as adopted children who were integrated into my former parish.

We need a stronger presence of the bishops, and clergy in preaching about racism (from the pulpit) and to stand up against racial injustice in the public arena. We also need to examine our own systems and structures in the church in terms of white privilege and racism.

Education! Education! Education! (Excuse the accents, it's the machine!)

It might help if the bishop raised the issue in the diocese, especially after the Newsday expose. However, he rarely speaks on any topic. Long Island leans red politically, although there are pockets, so discussion of race would not be a popular topic. This situation HAS TO BE addressed,

Speak openly; confess failures; make amends.

Do educational programs like “Listening to Indigenous Voices” created by the Jesuit Forum in Toronto. Composed of available social media, a guidebook, live online sessions (11) with Small Group discussions and a Guest Elder. Knowing is the beginning of understanding.

Reinforce teaching about inclusion from Vatican II documents.

Be more present for events that seek to create awareness and commitment to racial justice.

Give scholarships to P.O.C (People of Color) to attend seminary. We need more priests, bishops, and cardinals with P.O.C. Parishes do social justice missions. P.O.C. as Catholic bishops and leadership. There are many more P.O.C. in the Episcopal Church leadership positions right now. Cardinal (Gregory?) in DC is one exception, and we're proud of him.

More homilies on racial justice. More workshops on racial justice.

We need to acknowledge past prejudices and teach openness to others, especially those of different races. I'm excited to see what will come as our new Archbishop moves into ministry here in our diocese.

I believe Pope Francis is a great model of welcoming all peoples. We need to continue to witness to that message in all levels of Church governance and parish life. We should be a beacon to all people calling for racial justice.

Be more welcoming, be more inclusive in Preaching and Teaching, take risks in reaching out on social issues, face the fact we have failed in taking action on issues in the past.

Our USCCB leaders seem to politicize racial justice organizations & movements. Bishop Gomez' letter condemning “Black Lives Matter” focused on their support for same sex marriage. He seemed to minimize the devastating results of deep anti-black and anti-brown prejudice in the USA. Our US Bishops should rescind that letter & replace it with a call for extensive anti-racism education & programs, including the acknowledgment of Catholic Church's role in the 15th c,p the Doctrine of Discovery and its lasting effects on Black, Brown, and Native Americans.

I think that we need to give greater leadership positions to our different ethnic groups and maybe they do. At 89 and soon to be 90, I am not as involved anymore and not as aware of what's going on.

Education on Catholic Social Teachings and more opportunities for social interaction in a non-threatening environment.

Seminary training & preaching the gospel.

Invite them to fully participate and be fully accepted.

Priests need to be willing to make people uncomfortable and speak out more often and more forcefully about racial issues - not just pray to end racism or have prayer services. They need to take time to get educated and to listen to people who are way ahead of them on the issues related to race in their parish, and in other local parishes, which may not be Catholic.

A start would be taking all the male language out of the liturgy. This would help to change people's image of God as a white male.

Same as with women.... make all positions available to everyone, regardless of gender or race.

Church art should reflect Jesus darker skinned ethnicity- and highlight the beautiful diversity of our saints.

Preaching, Invitation, Inclusion, Celebrations.

Everything! Serve the underprivileged and interact with them, honor their beliefs, and learn about them. Social action among those least respected in society.

Use the stories about and parables of Jesus that show his openness to all people and point out how that would apply to our situation.

Invite parishioners to tell of their own conversion to racial justice. Have children or adults of diverse colors or ethnic groups dramatize the scripture stories of Jesus' openness to all.

Have retreats that talk about racism and white supremacy. Also, information about black history and all the amazing things black people have done for our country and the world.

First - requires leaders who truly believe in racial justice; be sure that prejudiced men are not eligible for ordination. They need to take action, lead without fear of reprisal from Bishop or congregation.

Speak about the sun of racism from the pulpit.

The Church can ask the Black community how the Church can serve them better.

It needs to start with the clergy.

Share experiences of worship, community service, education, and entertainment with mixed race faith communities.

Include and require Catholic Social Teaching as a part of all curricula offered in Catholic schools, universities, and especially seminarians so the faithful are confident in what it truly means to live as a Catholic in today's world.

First, speaking from the pulpit is essential in addressing these issues. . .with what happened last year, it brought to the forefront how systematic racism was built into our white culture. . . I never saw it that way. . . But the riots, mass destruction of property and deaths blurred the truth. . . The violence didn't help clarify racial injustice, it made me angry and if justice for Afro-Americans is what they were seeking. . . All I saw was killing and destroying people's lives. . . Many were people of color who were affected. I'm also angry that

our elected officials let it go on as if it was a 'summer festival.'

Besides beginning to pray for social justice during the intentions at Mass, we need to open dialogues for discussion, understanding and joint initiatives in our community.

At the parish level, homilists could raise the social justice issue as it relates to the readings. Preachers could acknowledge the grave injustices in society in this area, rather than ignore them as if they didn't exist.

Recognizing by sainthood; inviting participation; introducing aspects of music, art, theater into liturgy and local events.

Let children open to these exchanges share their experience.

The Catholic Church has a distinct difference from Protestant, that is, our hierarchy. While the rigid hierarchy often holds the church back, refuses to listen and change; in this case, the hierarchy could be an advantage. If the US Bishops, in line with Fratelli Tutti or Populorum Progression or Evangelii Nuntiandi - upheld integral human development, solidarity, and justice relative to black rights - we could be a leader in racial justice. The bishops en masse - rather than a progressive few, must make racial justice a priority. In homilies, in Catholic school policies, in providing health care, in ongoing services and ministries. Imagine if the Church were known for racial justice in the manner of its pro-life stance? My view of the Church's pro-life stance is that it is restricted only to embryos - that after birth - the poor, the black, the incarcerated, the unemployed - are not lives that matter enough for us to make a priority. there are of course notable exceptions to this - but the church - by and large, is not engaged in racial justice as a priority. The fact that 60% of white Catholics voted for a president whose platform was white supremacy and anti-immigration is all the

evidence we need to show the bankruptcy of Catholicism relative to racial justice.

Each parish twin with a Black church sharing administrative resources, community buildings events, biblical education, and pray experiences.

Speak the truth.

Speak up more boldly to the injustice in our cities and churches. Model diversity within the church.

Same as above. There is little teaching of the Catholic teaching on social justice from the pulpit. I think that many church going Catholics don't even know there is such a thing. Homilies are based on individual salvation.

The Church needs to weave Catholic Social teaching into more of its public discourse and make this a recurring theme.

Face our responsibility for the place we stand.

Sincere commitment to Catholic Social Justice Principles -- preached often in homilies, taught in our schools, and lived out in our parish life, with the constant reminder that we are ALL members of the Body of Christ.

Support Braver Angels groups in our parishes. Support Black Lives Matter in our community.

Interracial conversations.

Better leadership among the clergy.

Create networking opportunities for people of multiple races, who share similar interests and responsibilities. Create ways in which mixed groups can work for a greater good and make a difference working together. that will go a long way to building mutual respect which has been sorely lacking.

Stop pointing out differences such as separate language Masses.

We need to become aware that there is a serious problem - this will be painful but necessary.

Preach about it, safeguard its practice in parishes, etc., celebrate its implementation by individuals and groups.

“Vow of obedience is the vow of listening. “ says Sister Maria Cimpermans. Way of listening, beneath the words, is her good advice. Church needs a conversion, metanoia. Circles and not linear thinking.

Stop USCB from wasting time with Joe Biden receiving the Eucharist and what words should be used at Mass and give every assistance to our border immigration and paths to citizenship.

Stop criticizing Black Lives Matter and stop supporting white supremacy politics.

Speak about the real, daily experiences of People of Color -- from the pulpit, in meetings, in conversations.

Homilies must directly address injustice, over and over, using Scripture to awaken us all. All times, all places are appropriate for modeling respect and openness.

Have more homilies regarding this issue, have people of color in more leadership places in the churches, have seminars for church parishes on this issue.

Changing people’s minds may be able to be achieved over a long period of time through education and more exposure to the culture but changing people’s hearts is something I have questioned and have not come to a satisfactory conclusion. Prayer.

Preach the word of God by example and examples of our everyday experiences

Really be welcoming and inclusive of all people without difference in how we act with people of different race, culture, political or income level. Also be welcoming and reach out to fallen away Catholic. This has to come from the leadership in sermons as well as action. Update the laws of the Church to current thinking and adapt to different cultures so as to be welcoming to all God’s children.

The Catholic Church needs to recognize the part that they play in the area of racial justice. Through awareness and acceptance, a change of heart will occur. Members will become more Christlike.

Include in the Prayers of the Faithful specific petitions for racial justice and for the transformation of hearts. Offer workshops at the parish level on racism, racial justice, white privilege, etc.

The church needs to be the example within itself. Promote more priests’ deacons and lay ministers of color. Invite people of color to participate more in all aspects of church life.

Statues, murals, etc., showing diversity of people; all positions of employment open to diversity of persons; address fears of loss of power.

Stress that one cannot call themselves a Christian and be racist. Many believe that they can.

Put more bishops into the hierarchy that are committed to something other than the alt-right conservative and have them teach their priest about social justice and Vatican II and then help the lay people to transition to this.

Foster events that bring people together to share their stories to see commonality.

Have bishops make a strong statement on racism.

Mandate bishops cannot participate in organizations that promote racism, such as Napa Institute that calls 1619 project woke and BLM “demonic.” Hear racism spoken about in homilies. Have “sister” parishes uniting parishes in different socio-economic groups. Integrate Catholic schools across parish boundaries. Bring together Catholic youth in events to talk about racism, bigotry.

Offer mentorship and outreach to communities and churches of color. Use the approach Pax Christi and others have offered for awareness and education.

Speak truth to power.

I think the current cultural ‘plan’ to rid ourselves of racism only makes white Catholics defensive. It would be more helpful to provide learning opportunities for people to experience the current influence of racism on our lives.

Constantly emphasize that we are all equal in the eyes of God. Place skilled radicalized individuals in leadership positions in the parish. Walk the Talk.

Regular discussion on race issues from George Floyd in prayers. Inclusion in parish bulletins.

Be able to say the words “racial justice” out loud.

Honestly confront our past in truth to move forward in justice.

Welcome immigrants more.

Informal gatherings of diverse members and friends might help.

Be courageous; stop making decisions based on the worry that you will lose the almighty dollar for speaking the truth--are we truly a faith that does justice or is it simply ‘talking the talk’ once again?

The hierarchy and authority structure of the church needs to change. We need opportunities of working and celebrating with diverse ethnicities.

Often people make decisions about how they will individually observe Lent each year. What if a parish were to have a communal Lenten observance in which people would gather weekly to fast from supper and offer that fast in reparation for sins of racism and discrimination? In preparation for Lent a congregation which has been the victim of discrimination could be contacted and invited to join in the series or a different congregation could be chosen for each week of the series. Instead of eating, the host church could lead praying, singing, and reading Scripture and, if possible, have a member of the guest congregation offer a witness on her or his experience with discrimination. If one guest congregation is chosen, then maybe a partnership could be explored between the two churches to work on a particular issue such as improving accessibility of voting which has been hampered by gerrymandering or fighting to improve laws which deliberately limit voting in certain districts because of the racial composition of the residents of a congressional or state house district.

Another type of Lenten practice could be to explore visiting inmates in a correction facility close to the parish church, choosing two or three inmates and dividing into groups to develop a relationship with one inmate per group. The parish could visit once a week for the weeks of Lent, with the idea that these relationships with inmates could continue after Lent. Incarcerated women, men and juveniles could be visited, depending on the number from the parish who are participating. Possibly an interdenominational group could be formed to make corrections facility visits. This activity could possibly lead to forming an interdenominational group to advocate for an end to the death penalty at the state and federal

levels, especially because the death penalty is used so unfairly against those of racial minorities.

Prayer. Education. Field to parishes with greater diversity.

Bishops and priests could speak the reality of systemic racism from the pulpit.

I would really like to see the institutional church do way more to promote programs such as JustFaith that offer adult formation programs for racial justice. A local parish also organized a program about racism and the Catholic Church featuring Bryan Massingale's book on that topic. The institutional church ought to promote the efforts and support clergy like Cardinal Gregory, Bryan Massingale, and lay leaders such as Bryan Stevenson.

Give church members more opportunities to engage (not just Mass attendance) with each other across racial and ethnic lines.

Welcome the participation of people of color as catechists, lectors, Eucharistic ministers, deacons. Encourage and give scholarships to people of color, noting the gifts they have, to share with the body of Christ. Encourage artists and persons who have "gifts outside the box" into community and ministry. Pray together and then pray some more for "everybody is recovering from something."

Include women!!! Include laity!!! for starters! Not be afraid to feel discomfort, like guilt, shame, ignorance, bias. Have intercultural experiences for priests and h.s. kids, and laity.

Must first begin with clergy many who are racist.

Many members are ready to work for this or would be if clergy and hierarchy were to be serious and knowledgeable about Justice and race.

Our parish offered us the opportunity to participate in the neighboring Episcopal Church's 10-part series, Sacred Ground.

Sponsor and support more organizations such as Detroit's Focus Hope used to be where people of diverse racial backgrounds meet to find their commonalities.

The first step is to listen to people in our communities that have felt mistreated. The second part gives everyone the treatment they deserve, I have noticed that more affluent (white parishes or communities) usually receive more funding. I remember that people that went to English mass had free missalettes on their pews while Hispanics needed to buy them for mass from the bookstore. In some parishes, they pay for the English choir director while the Hispanic music director is a volunteer and is paid nothing. It is important to have fair and decent living salaries for parish staff.

To tell the whole story of the Catholic Church's complicity in the slave trading and slave holding activities beginning in the 15th century - as presented by Sister Anita Baird. This should be done at the parish level using various media and venues and occasions - to get the word out about this aspect of church history that had been unaddressed and avoided up to the present. It should be done in a non-accusatory manner, avoiding a collective "self-shaming" approach. It should also be an ongoing process, not merely a one-time event. Catholics have previously been informed about such things as the dark side of the Crusades, or the scandalous lives of Renaissance popes and bishops that occasioned the Protestant Reformation. We've come to acknowledge and accept these paradoxical truths about church history. The same thing must happen concerning these racial issues involving the church.

Get rid of clericalism.

Education, education, education. I did this in my RCIA groups with regard to Indigenous people, but it wasn't that well received by some.

Encourage people of all races and ethnicities to join our churches. Make them feel loved and welcome.

Guest presentations.... speakers, artists, musicians; seminars, discussion groups... openly talk about racial tensions.... education for all of us about the role our Government and our Church have played through the centuries to promote racial inequality. Learn about the beautiful cultural differences. Dispel the belief in the Zero-Sum Game. ("The Sum of Us" by author Heather McGhee, an excellent book.) In addition to our many Bibles Study classes, books, materials on what racism is in our society and in our parishes.

Pray harder! keep black parishes and schools open!!

Teach Catholic social tradition. Have sessions to promote cross-racial group discussion. Have parishes study social justice issues and promote social justice action and outreach. The bishops need to become leaders in standing up for racial justice and bringing about changes to systems, institutions, and policies that negatively impact minority and marginalized groups.

Walk the talk. Actually, live the teachings of the gospel and follow Jesus as the teacher.

Anti-racism workshops.

Pope Francis has welcomed a delegation from the Indigenous people of Canada, listened to their stories, and promised to meet again with them this summer Their story must be heard by all, this will be the beginning of more racial justice and a new respect for the Indigenous people The stories must be told and listened to.

Education, information, joint services.

Keep Indigenous issues and teachings part of liturgy.

Look into opportunities to educate and broaden our perspectives.

Have opportunities to get to know more people outside of our regular social circles.

Teach CRT in schools.

Practice what it preaches.

We need to hear more from the pulpit on this topic.

Encourage groups, town halls, meetings, Open Wide Our Hearts discussion groups, join forces with non-Catholic organizations in community, develop reading or learning list.

The parishes staffed by diocesan priests could invite the Black priests to preside occasionally.

Local bishops and pastors need to be willing to do the hard thing and address the issue of racial justice.

We could honor the diversity that is among us. Music that incorporates other languages could be used. Prayers - especially prayers of the community - could be done in this manner as well.

The Bishops Council could more loudly support solutions to the problems of racial inequality.

It is so much the way of Jesus, the call of Jesus. That needs to be preached and taught.

Do a better job in their homilies. That is the platform that is most useful

More ongoing education needed and church leaders putting their effort and encouragement behind it.

More Social Justice formation for priest and other who may preach - and this to be woven through homilies and newsletters. Materials to be available and circulated in parishes.

Educate, educate, educate!

Build community - welcome people- ensure that it is an inclusive parish - this will take effort - we have to do it. Canada has indigenous communities - is an immigrant country - everyone benefits when we support one another.

The hierarchy needs to loosen up - we will only thrive when we encourage participation.

Explain what critical race theory truly is, not what conservative politicians make it out to be. Call out those who are racist. Do NOT use the bible to teach that much of today's current status was 'predicted' by the bible. We should not erase but the past but learn from it and do better now and in the future.

Frequent dialogue.

Start by treating the current congregation with spiritual equality. Set an example by calling attention to ways we can help. I live in a very non-diverse mostly affluent community. When the hurricanes devastated Haiti, I had a friend who worked for an airline company who was going to actually fly planes into Haiti. You may recall that many of the supplies were getting backlogged in the south of Florida and not reaching the Haitian peoples. I brought this up at a Pastoral Council meeting, hoping we could be a location where physical donations could be gathered and then sent to Haiti via my friend. I was told "Catholics give money" and the discussion was closed by the pastor.

USCCB could start by being public witnesses to correct racial injustices.

Right to this moment, my contemplative companion and I are often the only

recognizable Catholics at Black Lives Matter protests and marches, protests for the rights of Muslims etc. Our BLM posters present our views and hearts from different perspectives than most. Our 'Black Children's Dreams Matter' sign often nudges the hearts of drivers stopped at a main intersection every Wednesday in a semi-rural white community. Or 'This is not Charity - It's Justice!' quote is another that makes passengers and driver take another look. The stories abound and the question prevails - Where are the Catholics?

I think white priests, bishops, and lay leaders need to be outspoken about racial justice... but let BIPOC lead.

Promote more gatherings one-on-one to really get to know each other. The personal knowledge is the only way the church will progress through this issue.

Add any other comments you'd like regarding racial justice and the Catholic Church.

Let's keep working and praying

Share steps taken that seemed to work.

Educate the Catholic Bishops.

It needs to begin and be addressed and may people be aware so they can grow and we all can be united truly as one in Christ.

Drastically needed.

As my local mentor tells us often (Fr Stephen Thorne): Lay people need to LEAD on combatting racism. The hierarchy and clergy will not do it, sadly. It's our time as lay people to live up to the vows we made when we were confirmed!

As with the other issues that Future Church addresses - women's issues: ordination of women and restoring the diaconate to women - all of these areas seem to be in the hands of a few who seem to idolize their own position. Christ came for everyone, not only ordained males.

Let's stop playing and get serious about living what we profess as Christians.

If the Church is not showing the way, who will? Jesus was the most open, accepting person to walk this earth.

During Church Unity week each year have parishes of different ethnic concentrations hold

events together, as well as with non-Catholic denominations.

Thank you for this opportunity to listen to my opinions and experiences. It was wonderful sharing with others... all women in most of these gatherings. Interesting!

I have known such good people of color who were Catholics earlier but have, like many others of us, been so "turned off" by the narrowness of the current teaching and structures--and racism and homophobia--the local parish and the diocese as a whole that most have left to find more accepting, open and loving communities.

This issue needs a high priority along with women in the Church and all of the LGHBT issues in order to have any credibility.

I wonder if further support to parishes within my city and Catholic schools (fully integrated) might be a place to start.

We are quiet. We act oppressed. By what? Money/

These future church events are attended primarily by older white women. How do we reach out to more men and younger people?

The Catholic hierarchy continues to affirm and place highest value on maleness, whiteness, and Western culture as the norm. This is not truly catholic.

From the perspective of the faith community - We started racism, now we need to end it!

Our group was very well informed and based. I appreciated Sister Anita's presentation - not afraid to expose the real truth in American History. Thank you.

Stress awareness for inclusivity, not guilt.

Bishops, tell your priests to get going and preach from your pulpits about racism, women in the church, the environment.

The church remains too complacent and unwilling to confront its own complicity in racial discrimination.

Our bishops need to get off their butts and set the example. The Gospel impels us to act for more than the life in the womb. Stop being so racist in their statements. Listen to the hurts.

It starts at the top, through Cardinals and bishops to priests, etc. to declare Racism as a community sin we need to atone for-naming it and acknowledging systemic racism is real would be a start. Archbishop Gomez is not spiritually appropriate to lead!

Awareness is good, prayer is good. Action is needed.

As was said by Sr. Anita: "We're on this journey, together". Regardless of where we find ourselves, we have to be aware, that we are ALL, God's children and no one is greater than the other. This is where, I think, the problem begins "superiority" (race, color, jobs, intelligence, housing, etc.)

Need to keep up the constant needed work of making the dream of being a racially just church a reality. Continue to provide opportunities for conversation. Dreams come true when people act to make them happen.

Take a look at our portrayal of the white Jesus....as a middle Eastern man, do you think he was lily white? I doubt it.... encourage devotion and knowledge of other ethnic saints ...like the Black Madonna and Thea Bowman, etc.,

After coming from a racially segregated part of the United States to now residing in Seattle, my experience is for the most part inclusion of all races in the society of the city. My present

parish mirrors this model of the greater society. What a blessing!

Extremely lacking. How extensive is Catholic Social Justice taught in the seminaries? Or is it taught at all? In our schools? In adult formation? In RCIA? Is there an activity related to social justice in the parishes/diocese?

Persons of color have often been the maintenance workers in our institutions. I feel shame about that.

We need to flush out of our Church the historical structure that supports racism and take the "whiteface Jesus" down from the Cross and replace Him with what he really looked like in His human form.

There are so many things the Church does that is against our core teachings. We need to own those wrongs and then plan for a future that dedicates our lives to really living the Gospel message.

We need to be more consistent in public condemnation of racial - (our own especially) injustice whenever and wherever it occurs.

Because I feel strongly that this issue is NOT about making some people (white people namely) feel guilty about past and present injustice, I don't always support the practice of atonement. I believe much more is to be gained by working together and moving forward in that same direction TOGETHER!

Jesus was certainly not white being born into the Middle Eastern area of the world where people of color were dominant.

Thank you for this chance to discuss and reflect.

The first step in this struggle is for us (white folks) to learn the true destruction this attitude has had on our world and how deeply embedded this sin is in our country and how

our world has been set up to allow the growth of white folks to the detriment of people of color...only by working to correct such attitudes and discrimination can we ever hope to have the church that Jesus came to create for us.

I believe that priests do not preach or organize around the issue of racial injustice because they are fearful of alienating the white, wealthy, communities they serve. There is a great deal of fear.

We have a long way to go. I was encouraged to hear the other three people in my breakout group share their parishes in Evanston, IL, Seattle, WA, and Norfolk, VA, are welcoming and integrated. In two cases, the people had to search for and travel to find this.

WELCOMING PEOPLE IN is an easy thing that all of us can do when we see a new face. It is very unwelcoming to be ignored.

Too much clericalism and politics. Christ was not white!

It's a long time coming. I wonder if "missionary" priests of color are influencing our parishes. Can there be reactions to new immigrants of color as compared to people of color since the founding of our nation.

We as Catholics should reach out to other groups that are different from us., especially the Latino.

"White" parishes need to reach out to the Black, Latinx, and Asian communities whether they are Catholic or not. We need to hear about this frequently in homilies.

The bishops could take a more courageous stand for racial justice, and not word their documents "so as not to disturb the whites."

The parish is built on geography, the neighborhood & I think until neighborhoods become more integrated or that a parish is not

determined by geography, we might have more integration & diversity.

Put justice to all ahead of money!!!! Too many of the hierarchy enjoy the lap of luxury they live in!!!

Racial justice regarding POC and first peoples has been almost nonexistent. We need to acknowledge this, to atone, and possibly look to other churches for inspiration on how to do this.

Contact with others that do not look like us or are different in any way breaks down prejudices.

I have struggled with my place in the Church since my teens. When I truly reused what racism was. My dad always said, this experience will treat you to navigate a white world. It absolutely did. But left many unhealed scars!

The RCC is still blatantly anti-female inclusion, anti LGBT. That's a plain signal of judgment going on in other categories also.

The person at the bottom of the racial oppression pile is the woman with the darkest skin. We have a long way to go to respect every person and we need to start by listening to their story and not assuming we know their story by what we see with our eyes and therefore make assumptions that are not correct.

The Catholic Church has a set of great social justice principles which we only rarely hear about. It could be a great platform if we used it.

I am so disappointed in our Church as a whole. The Church could be a beacon for racial justice. Instead, it ignores the Catholic Social Teachings and caves into a political stance. Too sad.

As long as there are white people with money the church will remain white.

I pray our discussions around these injustices make a difference and it's not "placating" or appeasing this issue. It's already a "travesty" of injustice. . .let's not sweep it under the table. Being inviting to those who look different than the white privilege of our churches' history. We must change its profile to be more inclusive!! To NOT be afraid to speak the "unadulterated" truth of our past and present sins of exclusions. God is love and so much bigger than we make "Her!"

Overhaul the seminaries.

The Church needs to do the right thing and acknowledge her role in the sin of racism. Our leaders must dig deep into their hearts and ask for forgiveness and then "become the change." We also need education programs that teach the history of the Middle Passage, slavery, and people like MLK and John Lewis. PBS did some wonderful programming during Black History Month. One such program was about the blending of white and black churches in the South and the obstacles each had to overcome.

The institution of the Church MUST speak out on issues other than pro-life. Be brave and speak the words of Jesus. How can we practically live the words of Jesus in 2022? Be not afraid!

Working elbow to elbow with people on a common enterprise creates a climate for asking mutual questions and stories. When leadership can call forth people of diversity progress happens, even if little by little.

I would be so grateful if Future Church would/could continue ongoing gatherings well beyond the Synod process. Reactions to the Synod Documents?!

The church needs to acknowledge its support of slavery, beginning with the papal bulls of

the 16th and 17th centuries. So many diocese and religious orders benefitted from the selling of human beings. Hardly anyone has heard the stories!

What has helped me most is attending Spiritus Christi Church in Rochester NY, by ZOOM. Thank God for Zoom.

Spiritus Christi is an Inclusive, Catholic, Community.

Just by being who they are, has helped me to become anti racist, and a more loving person.

I affirm the actions taken by some congregations to admit addressing their participation in the racial injustice of slavery and to explore reparation. I believe it is important for us as a Church as a whole to do so.

Ordaining women (I know, men first) would do much to address all the isms of the Church-- mainly racism, clericalism.

The church needs to acknowledge its sins in promoting slavery and how it continues to discriminate against people of color. The church needs to talk about White privilege, White fragility, etc. and explore reparation and figure out how this can be done by including ALL at the table. Remember that we are ALL children of one GOD.

The U.S. Catholic Church has much to do to own and take action on our complicity historically and currently regarding racial injustice! We have had some courageous Bishops who have paid a price for speaking Truth.

Public admission and reparation for the sin of racism as well as sexism. Both sins share much common ground.

Stop the SILENCE! Don't wait for another day. Tonight, our very life may be taken from us.

Atonement needs to be made more strong and visible and put into action.

We need to truly appreciate and become the Body of Christ that we receive. Work on making amends for our transgressions as a Church. Allow ourselves to be uncomfortable and wrestle with the questions

Thank you, and please thank Sister Anita for bringing this to our attention.

I experienced a complete lack of understanding at my former white wealthy parish. The locally renowned black choir whose church was having major renovations, was invited to perform at the white church. After the festivities, a donation basket was passed. I presumed the money was going to the choir. It wasn't. The event was a fundraiser for the rich church.

Need wisdom and courage to name and to face the "original sin" of our country. It is another scandal that our church cannot focus on these kinds of moral issues beyond birth issues.

The Catholic Church in the United States needs to become a partnering organization with The Poor Peoples Campaign and act justly in relationship to the 5 interlocking injustices of our world.

Unfortunately, the Institution has made God very small. They have fashioned "Him" to have all the weaknesses of Human Beings, instead of being the Unlimited Source of Love and Mercy that goes way beyond our human understanding.

We need to encourage more ideas from our black community, such as Sister Anita's presentation to our parishes.

Thanks ever so much for this!

Thank you for having this session - it is so important. I applaud you for allowing this to

be aired out in this way. Sunlight is the best disinfectant.

Racism has just gone on too long in our church. What keeps people of color in our church is the Eucharist. The Roman Catholic church has resisted change and its liturgies and policies are too Euro-centric. Lots of teaching in our seminaries needs to open the eyes of our young men about racism...and the beauty of other cultures and other cultural liturgies (i.e., I visited in Tanzania, East Africa...what joyful loud and colorful celebrations their liturgies were!) Blacks in the Philadelphia Archdiocese are discouraged from these types of liturgies by many newly ordained clergy who should know better

I think that the Church has to own up to own racist history and try harder to educate its members about its errors and lead its members to a more Christ like path in dealing with racial issues.

We should continue to talk, share and be open. As the saying goes, "We're not what we want to be, but we're not what we were".

We have to publish in our parish and diocesan papers our history that includes the ways in which our church was complicit in White supremacy. Our Catholic schools have to teach this history. It is our history. I had to learn black history from sources other than my religious communities.

The Catholic Church must be more present in messaging justice issues in local communities and join other faith-based groups in presentations. Now is a time of turning point in progress toward racial justice if we take advantage of this time.

we need to increase all of our ability to educate ourselves however we do it, greater openness to recognize the need. there is not enough consideration given to this topic to arrive at greater and deeper understanding.

There is still a lot of work to be done... especially with the Indigenous Peoples, First Nations. We must LISTEN to their stories before reconciliation and healing will occur. 🙏🙏

here in Canada, we have a major issue to be resolved on treating our native people with justice, especially how in the past the native children were treated in residential schools run by Catholic Church people.

Thanks to FutureChurch for holding these synodal gatherings and discussions and opportunities to complete surveys and for sharing our responses and an overview of our concerns to share for the global synod and hopefully for all levels of synodality.

The papacy must retract the Doctrine of Discovery, apologize publicly or it and how it was applied, compensate the indigenous peoples in this and other countries for the land and natural resources the church took from them years ago. Admit and apologize for the harm done indigenous and Black peoples by Catholic schools.

These actions are not just for Sunday, they impact people's everyday lives. And one size, or response does not fit all the suffering of those on the margins.

Needs to be a top priority!

Based on experiences with the "Other" whom they haven't known before, some people will be willing to understand and adjust their mindset and behavior about people of color. Other people will need to be assured by the proper church authorities that this is what it means to be Catholic -- for them, the Church must speak clearly.

I wish everyone could attend programs like this one - and hear Sister Anita - I've heard her before - terrific. Thanks so much!

More prophetic preaching.

The Irish DON'T RULE THE CHURCH.

Sr. Anita Barid's witness reminds of that racism is a sin against the Creator and that we should be who we say we are - a universal church.

No. But thank you for these very useful sessions!!

Acknowledge systemic racism, sexism, and classism. CRT in all schools in the South, especially Texas!

Guatemala is a very racially and culturally diverse country. The Church does not operate as an inclusive body. Each group seems to have its own separate parish or community.

Invite lay members to speak & share.

The clericalism is a huge factor in moving forward in this area.

Our world is racially biased! Church is no different but could be leaders in love and dignity of the human person no matter what outer differences we have,

Besides racial justice, we also need to be attentive to the poor in the areas where we minister. They are sometimes ignored and are not invited to active participation.

The Church has done harm by eliminating specific groups from its community... eliminating in ways we don't even recognize... by raising up/praising the white community, by choosing white folks to take positions of authority and by a lack of training in seminaries in this ever-pervasive issue.

The example Sister Anita gave about the woman who made her daughter leave the side of an African American and stand/kneel a white person would likely never have happened

if the pastor/priests has very directly taught the parishioners how Catholic theology implies that racism is a sin and unacceptable.

Until our people including our leaders are transformed and made aware of their own prejudices and how it has made a difference in how we view people of color things will not change.

The importance of realizing that the European immigrants who came to America often transferred the violence and trauma they had experienced back home onto people of color in America. So, the importance of the Church helping to heal the trauma suffered by all of its members.

Could be a much more welcoming church... actively seek connections in local parishes using the power of the clergy and the connections of the laity to other more diverse religions.

Thank you Future church.

Basically, the church is pretty much white. So white people think like white people like Bishops. Having more diversity at that level and in Catholic institutions is crucial so we can learn to think outside the box.

Where I am the racial divide is between White and Hispanic (very few Black people in Sonoma County). 80% of my local church is Hispanic and our priest does not speak English comfortably.

The bishops need to speak out against voter suppression. They are silent about this.

Moral issues seem to be concentrated on a few issues which are not impacting most people in a significant manner--deal with the silent problems--systemic abuse, for example, and of course, racism as a cultural sin which has been embraced by the church for centuries without much soul-searching.

We have a FAR way to go. Most of our Catholic Churches are segregated, if not by conscious choice, by neighborhood makeups. Maybe we have to be the ones who go out to visit Black parishes and feel how it is to be one or few among the majority. That May move more to then make racial justice choices.

We have a number of Catholics advancing white elitism.

Here's a new book that might help to become aware of our unrecognized racism: The Spiritual Work of Racial Justice. A month of meditations with Ignatius of Loyola by Patrick Saint-Jean, S.J.

Very sobering to read and ponder these reflections.

The bishops need to do more than talk about racial integration. Also, the intra racial conflicts in different groups needs to be addressed.

Recommendation for discussion at various churches is: The Spiritual Work of Racial Justice by Patrick Saint-Jean, S.J.

We need to welcome everyone and work towards being one as Jesus has told us to do.

The Church definitely does not do enough to call out racial injustice when it happens. It does not celebrate Black Catholics enough. The one big major thing the Church should to do is promote more Black saints so there is representation in the sainthood of the Church.

I really don't know where to begin. We plan to spend \$28M on a Eucharistic Congress?? It's the last thing we need. Evangelize by being Christlike. Not by emphasizing the many ways we are "different" and therefore "better" than everyone else. May God forgive us.

All you have to do is look at the bishops, cardinals etc. and popes elected.

More articles about racism in the Clarion Herald.

I pray to the Holy Spirit to move the USCCB to a new life for their flocks, but I remain pessimistic.

We have ignored the issue for far too long and we have not admitted our complicity in it. Now is the time. None of us can claim we don't know enough about it.

Let's not be so narrow in regard to racial justice; many races are affected by racism.

This is not just a "Whites suppressing Blacks" issue. Although that is obviously very important, there is also much discrimination and violence in the world from any dominant group against minority groups (Chinese vs. Uighurs; Hindus vs. Muslims; Protestants vs. Catholics in Northern Ireland; Islam vs. Christians in much of the Middle East and Africa; etc.). In the USA, we also have a sad history of violent discrimination against Native Americans, Asians, etc. (not to mention WASPS against Jews and Catholics!) The "CATHOLIC" Church should be at the forefront of any efforts at racial reconciliation: ALL should be welcome, and valued, within the ONE Body of Christ (see 1 Cor 12).

Leaders especially priests and catechisms parish councils etc. need to become more knowledgeable about racism and anti-racism and promote activities to form relationships with other and challenge people to really live the Gospel message.

Everything will open up with the necessary and needed structural changes for both men and women in our worldwide Catholic Church.

The church should be setting the example of racial and ethnic equality--in the faces of the priests, sisters, eucharistic ministers, lectors, etc.--those faces that are scene week after week at mass should be examples of the entire

community. Good leadership in the parish is absolutely essential!!!

Thank you for addressing this topic.

In the beginning of slavery and Jim Crow, if the bishops had acted like Christians the situation would not be as bad as it is now. They condoned slavery, Blacks sitting in the back of the church, receiving communion last and not treating Black people like the human beings and Gods' children that they are.

Pope Francis is having a good influence, but his words have had little effect in our diocese. Until we get a Pope Francis Bishop thing will remain rather hopeless.

Ignorance must be confronted in order to go forward to harmonizing and bonding people together.

Have book discussion/book study groups on; Fr. Massingale, Book, 'Caste' by Wilkerson and Sixteen Nineteen - don't know author.

I just want to relate one positive experience I had when I visited one of our sisters in New Orleans. I attended the parish where she belonged. The pastor was white, but the majority of the congregation was African American. I was welcomed as one of them with no feeling of being different from them. I enjoyed the liturgy because it was uplifting, and I could really "get into" the music. At the sign of peace, I got hugs from the people next to me, as well as after Mass. It was an experience I will never forget and a reminder of how we as white people should be welcoming others.

Train foreign priests who come to work in our countries our culture; give them an orientation that provides for their success, training in language skills.

Dialogue with those who are not like you--learn their story, give dignity to all, walk in solidarity, laugh, and love together.

It is a soul sickness as Fr. Bryan Massingale states. White folks need to embrace the discomfort of not always being the default culture that is 'correct' and should be followed lest we be 'othered' and ostracized. Undoing the wrong of persistent misinformation in our education system and media representations will be key to proving that we are all made in God's image and white folks need to do MUCH MORE WORK in becoming informed. It's not about shaming or blaming, it's about a reckoning with the truth that were deprived of without knowing it.

our Pope Francis is a wonderful example of openness, listening and showing empathy. His willingness to come to Canada and hopefully to apologize would be a big step towards reconciliation and healing in our country and church.

We have a way to go. Fear needs to be address. Black is not evil but is mystery. White is not necessarily pure, but frigid.

We have so much to learn from Black/brown peoples, instead of continuing to see ourselves (white) as the norm. We expect them to adapt to be "like us" instead of learning from them and welcoming both our differences and our commonalities.

The church-clerics and lay persons- has to witness and speak out more to issues (black lives matter, Voting rights law, gerrymandering...) These are not political issues; they are issues of human justice.

Future Church can do something in inviting persons of color to be one not separating us by our differences but uniting us by our common call to walk with God in Faith, Hope and Love.

We have long way to go and must continue in any way we can to grown as an antiracist church.

I'm afraid that, if we don't do a better job, we will continue to lose the younger generations. I do not reuse my grown children for dropping out of dioceses that are not well led.

We need more people of color in leadership roles at all levels in our faith communities.

I was stunned when I discovered a few years back the Black religious need their own organization within the church. The history of the church and religious orders have much to reconcile with as it relates to the treatment of minorities. Also, the Discovery Document of long ago issued by the Pope needs public apologies!

We need to listen to the stories, the experiences of all kinds of injustice (exclusion) in the Catholic Church. If we know the persons, we have to do something about it because of LOVE!

I am interested to learn examples of the Universal Church's racist practices to which Sr. Baird referred.

There are many opportunities in the lectionary readings to talk about race (jews and gentiles after all) and to emphasize we are One in Christ, in Baptism, in the Spirit of Christ.

We need to take the important role of teaching parishioners about systemic racial justice in all strata of society.

The leaders aren't leading. It is the people who are the church. People of color are not being fed by our church.

The American Bishops and Cardinals, in large part, are shirking their pastoral duties. The seminaries are not training the future young men, and hopefully women, to be leaders in this effort. The preservation of the status quo is deadly.

I think the Catholic Church [as all churches actually] has a LOT of work to do in this regard. How can a person be a person of faith and be prejudiced against their fellow human beings because of the color of their skin? We have to be out loud about this!

Ignorance is evil. Eradicate ignorance.

Teach people that all human beings are created by God equally and deserving of the benefits of this planet.

Thank you so much for this opportunity to interact with others in such meaning ways.

The Church and its members need to be open to ask for forgiveness for the actions and pain we have caused to black people.

I don't know where to begin. Inter-racial communities don't exist.

One comment I've heard is that Sunday morning is when the most segregation occurs in America. Our parishes in many cases lack racial diversity.

Our Church needs to acknowledge racism as it has existed in our past history and speak more directly about the effects of racism.

Racial injustice is tied to sexual abuse in this state. It has not been dealt with. Sexual abuse to the white male has been openly discussed and worked on, but not the abuse to the indigenous peoples. They are afraid to tell their stories because of shame and age-old domination by the white culture from the Russian trappers to the gold miners to the oil industry that still exists. The sexual trafficking of native girls goes unspoken in the Archdiocese. These should be talked about and brought out into the open the white congregations are uncomfortable with it and so it is unspoken.

We need to see more people of color in leadership roles. Trust that "all will be well". Recognize that racism counts on white people wanting to stay in positions of power and control.

Why have the bishops not supported Black Lives Matter?

So important to become aware by listening to the experiences of day to day of those suffering the injustice...then speak up!

We hear in homilies about how Christ embraced the marginalized. But rare that there is discussion on who is marginalized in our community and what is our responsibility as catholic action re racism.

Thank you for this input.... our/my work to promote actions to acknowledge truth to all.

When there is clericalism prevalent in the Catholic Church leadership, and those clerics are overwhelmingly white males, then the likelihood of confronting racial and sex equity are not likely to happen easily, so we have to confront the reality of white male leadership which mostly excludes Blacks or Hispanics from rising in leadership roles, and all but excludes women from having equity in the Church.

Let's work together to end this.

The Holy Spirit used the George Floyd murder to awaken my heart to my ignorance and complacency around racial issues. I believe in my heart that God is calling all of us to be one and to open the eyes and ears of our heart to the systemic racial issues we still have in our society.

I think we need to have the conviction and bravery that it will take to have some difficult conversations. Conversations about reparations and how to seek forgiveness for horrible atrocities that were committed against

indigenous people. We could start by giving them back their land where possible.

We have a lot of work to do on a one-on-one level.

We have a long way to go!!! especially the clergy!

All parishes need to take Social Justice seriously! We need to make this a priority. This vision and strategy are essential to the mission of the church!

The silence of the church is so unbelievably painful. So many of my friends have left the Church because all they tend to discuss is abortion. Part of the cause of abortions (at least in San Antonio) is because of poverty, which is directly tied to racism. Maybe we could get the same energy about racial justice if we could get people to talk about how it permeates all major issues we see.

There is so much to do and the time to start is now. Lay leaders and other lay white Catholics must lead the way and move past clergy who do not want to change. The Church, after all, is the People of God and the People of God must begin to be, as Sr. Anita said, the manifestation of the One we proclaim as Lord and Savior, the living embodiment of the Spirit of God in the world in this time and in this place.

This topic needs to be addressed from every pulpit in every diocese.

I would love to see a Church who is a LEADER in racial equity and social justice. Be out there and speak the truth. We are burning with shame over the clerical pedophilia crisis, but we need to stand up for what's right and just in God's eyes.

Racial Justice is only ONE of the many injustices that need to be addressed in the church. Homosexuality and discrimination against it is terrible and teaches the children

that being different is NOT OK. Catholic institutions that do not include birth control in their health care programs is an injustice that affects mostly the poor and the black community and is responsible for many of the abortions that happen in the Catholic community, which would not be necessary if birth control were available to every woman.

I do not see the Church being actively involved in this at this time. Prior to returning here, I lived in the Los Angeles area for 52 years and the parishes there are much more open, but people of all races live in the same neighborhoods and work together so they get to know each other. Too often we are very isolated and don't reach out to others not of our own race or religion or political affiliations.

During the BLM movement there was little or no directive that came directly from the parish although parishioners often banded together to protest racial injustice. But where was the priest? The deacon? It is so disheartening to go to church and have no acknowledgement of brutality. And I say this as war rages in Ukraine.

Learning to value people of different colors is much like learning to value people of different opinions. It should not be that differences divide us but that our difference is what make us unique.

USCCB must do more than produce a few papers that decry racism. Bishops must take the lead in promoting anti-racist social actions in our parishes. So much attention is spent fighting political battles in the United States around issues like abortion, divorce, sexuality. Come on -- get out front and lead the fight against racism. If you want pro-life, embrace all life and racial justice.

I wish that racism would include also the plight of indigenous peoples.

We as Church have to be willing to admit to the racism within the Church and then be willing

to do something about bringing about justice to those who suffer from racism. One of the best Church experiences I have had in many years was the three years in New Orleans when I worshipped at Blessed Sacrament-St. Joan of Arc parish - if we white folk could be as welcoming and inclusive as that Black parish was, we would be well on our way to finding justice for all of us.

I worked for 13 years in a diocesan position in catechetics. During that time, I also accepted some part-time work as a consultant in a parish reorganization project in the same diocese. I was assigned to work over a number of years with a traditionally African American parish. They had been formed in the 1930's because black people were not welcomed in the other parishes of that city. In the 60's - 70's the parish flourished under a white diocesan priest with a strong social justice commitment. In the 80's-90's it was pastored by a mild mannered SMA priest of Irish heritage who learned how to preach with the gusto of a black Baptist minister and built up the community. They had beautiful gospel music. As this last pastor aged in place, no one was available to take over his ministry, so he just stayed, but the finances went poorly, and the building was falling down around them. As their consultant I had to lead them in a process of leaving their church behind and merging with another congregation. I asked why their children were not coming to this very robust liturgy. They said that their children had all moved out to suburban towns and went to church there. So, in a sense the church had fulfilled its mission because their children were now able to worship in places where their grandparents would not have been welcome. I tried, and I think had some success, in seeing that the congregation was treated with respect and had the opportunity to have a say in their future merger. However, they did have to abandon their building and see it torn down. In the years since I realize that our few African American parishes often fare poorly in parish reorganization plans. This too is a

relic of the institutional racism of our society and our church.

We are caught up in the ties of history and comfort with what we know.

Fr. Bryan Massingale acceptance speech for his award at the Pax Christi conference last year says it all. I encourage all Catholics to start with that as a primary on the issue of race in the Catholic Church.

We really need to do penance for our neglect of or coming-late-to the support of minorities.

Catholic leaders need to be heard in opposing racist speech and actions. This includes all levels of clergy and the many women who serve the church without status. If parishes are merged, strong consideration should be given to closing a white church rather than a nearby black one.

Long Island, NY is segregated geographically as was noted in a major story by Newsday, a Long Island newspaper, when real estate patterns were studied. As a result, many parishes, but not all, appear to be heavily white. The Latino populations gravitate toward particular parishes where Mass is celebrated in Spanish. The same is true for the Haitian population.

The Catholic Church, though ancient and majestic, is also an institution which comes with those inherent problems of politics, divisions, hierarchical structure, problematic governance, exclusion. Too few have too much power and growth is being stunted. There needs to be fuller representation at the Synod Table, and this includes all races.

Leadership in the church should reflect the population of the faithful: we need to see greater ethnic and gender diversity in leadership and ministry.

We need more examples of acknowledging our injustices in relation to race and finding ways to help promote understanding and reconciliation between races.

Catholic Social Teaching was dropped within the last couple years from the curriculum of the seminary of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati (AOC). This needs to be brought back! The lay ministry program needs to be brought back! It was dropped too.

We, as a Church, must go beyond staffing soup kitchens into what the systemic causes of racism are and get to the systems and fight injustice! The Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center of Cincinnati (IJPC) in Cincinnati is trying to do that. Sisters of various local religious orders are active.

The local archbishop is putting up roadblocks, and also merging parishes into “Families” of 5”... which will obliterate any ethnic identity of the parishes where P.O.C. are. I would like to join one of those parishes, but I fear that they will be gone by July 2022, when this “Beacons of Light” takes effect. Mine will also. All of them will. Priests who will not let women be lectors or Communion ministers are now in charge of these groups of 5, some of whom have been laity-led.

How from there can we address racism? There is a local parish in Cincinnati - Bellarmine Chapel of Xavier University - where they actually have a “Dismantling Racism Team.” They are planning a trip to Selma, AL to see the Edmund Pettus Bridge. They reach out to a neighboring church that is more diverse and have homeless people coming to sell newspapers.

Also, when these “Families of 5” merge, there are churches with inner-city parish schools that are merging with parishes in white parts of the city. Will the inner-city schools be obliterated? What is to happen to the inner-city children who are getting a Catholic education? Is the

Diocese going to abandon them (after asking us for money for the program from the pews).

I dearly hope that the idea of Catholic Social Teaching and anti-racism can become first and foremost in everyone’s minds and in taking action. I fear, however, that we are going backwards in this country.

Voting laws are now requiring I.D.’s that discriminate against poor people. Kentucky has just eliminated all but one D.M.V. in several counties. Either you must “go online” or go miles away out of county to get a driver’s license (and have a working car), but these I.D.’s are required for voting. It’s just another Poll Tax. How many poor people have computers, tablets, phones or broadband to be able to “go online” to get a driver’s license or have cars to be able to drive a 60-mile round trip to the D.M.V. and a day off work to wait in a long line?

The other scary thing is that no one seems to know what Critical Race Theory is, but there are many politicians and angry parent groups trying to make it outlawed. I’m frankly scared about where we are going right now. I fear we are going backwards as a Country as a Church, and as a Society, in terms of racism, gender equality, inclusiveness of LGBTQ, and so many issues. I don’t even know how long I’ll remain a Catholic. I converted almost 31 years ago and have loved many aspects of the faith. However, now I question whether to even remain.

Since 2020, I have mainly been watching livestreams of Masses due to COVID. The Archdiocese of Cincinnati never required masks, even during the worst of the pandemic this January 2022. If they don’t care about the health of the parishioners, why should I trust them at all? They covered up a lot of abuse too and are making a lot of changes with only token input from the laity. I guess I’m alienated by The Church right now, and reaching out to Future Church in hopes of finding others with similar concerns and the ability to be

able to express ideas in a synod, where the information will go straight to Rome and to the USCCB, without being censored by the local Archbishop, because I'm sure he would censor anything that was said at the synodality sessions that occurred in late January to early February.

One area the Church needs to acknowledge and atone for and offer reparations for would be the boarding schools where First Peoples and People of Color went and were abused, and often died of starvation or other punishment. It is an atrocity to find so many graves. We as a Church need to own up to this. We also need to own up to any role the Church played in condoning the Holocaust or turning a blind eye in World War II. There have been genocides in many situations, and the Church often had a hand in them. The Church's M.O. has been mainly to gloss-over or to cover up the abuse or to being an accomplice in atrocities. We need to atone and offer reparations.

Some local religious orders now are acknowledging having had slaves or that slaves facilitated their growth. The Sisters are taking it seriously. This is an important first step. The Church as a whole also needs to examine what their role was to facilitate slavery or institutional racism, as well as the other things mentioned in above paragraphs. At this time, I have my doubts that the Church is taking any of this seriously or will care to do anything about it. If anything, they seem to be encouraging people who disagree to leave. They seem to be going back to Vatican I, at least around here anyway. Lots of prayers and action needed!

I go to two different parishes that although there isn't a big Black population, both have Gospel Masses. Both also have Hispanic Masses.

Another issue (But related): we are so accustomed to "religious art" (Stained glass windows, statues, paintings, etc.) depicting Jesus, the Holy Family, as bleach white. They

lived in Israel... in the Mediterranean area. They weren't black, but neither were they white. They were most likely brown! This is yet another way we reinforce the racial divide! I know we cannot replace all stained-glass windows, etc., but we can begin to use more appropriate artistic depictions as we move forward.

From various forums, including the sharing from Sr. Anita tonight, we learn that former Catholics coming from other areas, especially from Central America, are finding greater welcome from Evangelical communities than Catholic Communities. There are Catholic witnesses at the Border but as people move into the general population of our country, they don't always find the Catholic Church reaching out in welcome.

This issue is so divisive in our country - the USA - and the Church needs to continue to find ways to call out the injustices that so many black, brown, ethnic sisters and brothers suffer.

Thank you for these opportunities to share faith and concerns on a more varied platform. Each week I have found the sessions so informative, life-giving, and hopeful as we share from various places around the country. Blessings, peace.

We need good healthy Church Leadership e.g., Bishop's Conference, American Bishops to educate and preach on racial justice. Be prophetic!

Racism is a grave sin because it robs people of their dignity and causes grave inequities - social, financial, health care, educational. I'd love to hear priests, bishops, lay ministers, & everyday Catholics acknowledge that sin & commit to reconciliation. We can start by advocating for fair treatment of minorities in our criminal justice system, especially, in our horrific death penalty cases. Most people condemned to death in the USA are poor & Black or Brown. It's anti-life.

The Catholic Church, especially in the United States, needs to get rid of the “Old Boys Club” and follow Jesus of the Gospels. Jesus sat and dined with the sinners and minorities, not with the white elite millionaire and billionaire donors. Our new Cardinal is wonderful and is doing a great job, so perhaps we will overcome the thinking of the white majority or Ku Klux Klan mentality.

This should be a priority.

I was horrified to discover many years ago that the churches were segregated - or rites like Holy Communion were segregated. that was the tip of the iceberg, it seems. However, I am somewhat proud of the fact that Black children in the South were able to get a better education through Catholic schools than the segregated public schools offered them. Thank you for this opportunity!

In the late 1990s a parish meeting was held and St Matthew school in Champaign. A man stood up and told the community that we needed to have a voucher. He said, we pay for our children’s education why should we also have to pay for other children’s education (White Privilege). I was shocked!! As a Catholic I thought it was my choice to send my child to a Catholic school and I was obligated to pay taxes for other children to get an education. The man who helped start St Thomas More High school personally told me we need to have the high school to keep our kids away from “them”. At an Interfaith Alliance meeting the young man who was head of Habitat for Humanity took some time off to learn about C-U. He learned from his research that Central Illinois is as racist as West Virginia.

Thanks.

I wonder how a black pope would be accepted.... An indigenous one?

Less preaching about it and more acting showing it.

The minorities I know who are RC are exemplary people. Deep in faith, willing to help, although some harbor racial resentment - as do some non-minorities. Breaking the tribal mindset in everyone’s DNA is hard, but well worth the effort.

Bishop has to speak up. Stop closing churches that aren’t moneymakers—which are always parishes comprised of lower income POC.

The Catholic Church in our diocese does not attract Black people, nor young people. Ask Blacks why? What needs to change?

We have a long road ahead.

This must start at the top. . . The Vatican must open high offices to qualified people of color. . . As with women, to hear their voices will affect change because they have lived the injustices.

We need to do so much better in every way.

racial justice has a long history of stretching us. This includes our shunning of native Americans, migrants only in camps not local churches restrictive use of the music and customs being recognized. Our actions speak so loudly another cannot hear what we are saying. All are equal members of the body of Christ

Here’s my final thought. We make so much of the Eucharist, that the elements become the Body and Blood. We make far less of the reality that we, the Church, the gathered, are also transformed into the one Body. And Jesus prayed we be one as he and the Creator are one. Oneness does not happen without solidarity, justice, mercy and full engagement with the lives, hopes, pains and dreams of all involved, of every race, nationality, etc. Sadly, our Eucharist becomes what Amos and other prophets wrote of the offerings and traditions,

empty and devoid of justice, and useless in the eyes of God. The Eucharist could and should be the sacrament of transubstantiation and, unity and justice. I firmly believe we are squandering the gifts of the sacraments, of Catholic Social Teaching, and the legacies of many Catholic activists who showed us a way we refuse to follow - Sister Thea Bowman and many others.

The hierarchy by inaction supports racism.

The teachings of the Catholic Church are presented in the context of multiethnic participants thus assuming equality of all people. It has always been so.

I see the current racial justice propaganda as an attempt to subdue one group for the benefit of another. Something antithetical to any religion. We are individuals who, if we are living lives in the image of Christ, will support each other one person at a time without undermining each other.

The Church needs to publicly apologize for its history in promoting racism.

Racial Justice/Ethnic Diversity programs offered online from the beginning of the pandemic by many Catholic groups (including Future Church), as well as many books and articles on the subjects have been immensely valuable to me.

In situations where representatives of the Catholic Church and/or its members have acted in ways that denied the value, the potential, and the opportunities of their brothers and sisters; then these failings need to be acknowledged and actions taken to move forward specifically in ways that would heal the injustice. We cannot take on the shame of the past, but we do have and must act differently to create a better future.

Continue to be Christlike but stay out of the political scene. Remember the coin.

When a priest, born in Haiti, started pastoring his new, first church, he had the faces of the statues of the baby Jesus darkened, just a little, still not reflecting the faces of the babies of the mostly Haitian congregants. White, European folks shared with me their anger. I did not know what to say. I just listened, also trying to keep employment as teacher and those angry were my bosses. I was wrong not to say something, but my face was expressing appall since they stopped complaining right away. These are feeling expressed in the year 2016. I name my extreme short comings. It is what I have experienced and not done. There is so much work to do. I attended a class on reparations and learned so much, mostly, so much I need to unlearn.

Teach how the RCC has led in racism and ask forgiveness. Stop stealing priests from Africa and poor countries. Involve community in missionary work outside of the US.

The Church needs to apologize and make reparations for the horrific suffering caused by the Doctrine of Discovery, residential schools for indigenous children, and racial discrimination in the formation of priests and nuns. The Church also should apologize for the closures of poor parishes in favor of wealthy parishes.

Teaching contemplative prayer would open many to the deep experience of being loved infinitely by our Creator — this is where awakening begins and takes root; there is a shift from private devotion to a deep knowing that All are embraced by the Divine Love at the heart of the Universe. There is no stopping the flow of Love when it is enkindled in the soul the soul. This is why the Church exists: to set the world on fire with Christ's love; not coercion, not doctrine, not recitation of right words — these are dead without the life of the Savior awakened in the faithful.

Have visiting priests that are of color lead mass at all white parishes.

Our parishes have very recently started offering masses in Spanish and tagalong. This is a very important start. However, it would be nice to also incorporate these languages and people in regular masses and events as well.

Romans 8:16 God's Spirit and our spirit bear common witness that we are indeed children of God.

A local Black leader stated that everyone knows the Church's position on abortion. How many know the Church's position on racism?

Continue to highlight the importance of race education in our parishes.

I loved that Pope Francis had an audience with the indigenous people that had been abused by the Church.

Ask for and follow up on ideas from members of black/POC churches.

Disrespect to Cardinal William Gregory by his fellow bishops is discouraging.

Need of at least ONE black saint from US might be welcome...do we county Augustine?

Need to hear from the pulpit and need to study the history and social justice documents. Also, the influence of dark money to our dioceses and Catholic universities and institutions to advance white privilege ideologies and economic views is a distortion of our duty to inform consciences in truth and justice.

Moving toward racial justice will unfortunately drive more people away - at least initially. However, it may draw some younger folks in.

We can no longer be timid and look the other way and ask those that are 'woke' is it really this bad. I thought things were better!???

I think that to really eradicate racism it is important to realize that slavery, racism, subjugation, and the dividing of the peoples of the world into the civilized and the uncivilized by the imperialistic countries of the world must end completely and forever. The world has yet to come to grips with the evil of one human being owning another, and one nation conquering another nation to increase the empire of the first nation, its monetary wealth, its land mass, treasures, and ancient artifacts belonging to other countries and its power over other countries. Colonization against the will of the country in question is evil. The idea of conquering a native population by stealing its land, exploiting its people for slave labor, and treating the people as inferior or second-class inhabitants with no voting, civil or human rights surely is an offense against the laws of God, since all human beings are created in God's image, male and female! (See Genesis 1:27.) Defining a country or population as civilized by the niceties of wealth, possessions, power, education, moral codes, and laws which elevate the rich, knowledge and experience based on opportunities of traveling, holding birth rights and important social ranks in society are not what the kingdom of heaven is about. Jesus said, "...it is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Matt. 19:24, The New American Bible).

Great sessions. Depth of questions on which to discern was inspired!

The failure of the institutional church in the US to speak clearly and loudly for anti-racism is very unfortunate for the future of the Church and is an embarrassment for faithful Catholics.

I am just deeply grateful to have found a vibrant parish that is far from "perfect" but demonstrates that it is trying to walk in the footsteps of Jesus calling on the Gospels as our teacher and exemplar.

I wish church leaders (USCCB) would use their unique position of influence to address publicly and often that social Catholic teachings apply across society. For example, being prolife means to recognize and advocate for the dignity and equality of ALL human beings, and especially those excluded by society or living on the margins. These include our neighbors of color, as well our incarcerated, poor, uninsured, homeless, disabled and LGBTQ neighbors (in addition to the unborn).

A process for reform needs elements that help persons feel safe. Persons become defensive when feel hurt, angry threatened and unsafe. As Catholics even today, we are so divided on how we “SEE” a situation, the perspective, the life experience each has, it takes a huge commitment to enter into such a process for healing and justice. Should everyone be in therapy? Yes, or maybe some similar kind of process because that is a place where hard questions get asked in a safe space and move toward resolution. Groups like AA? yes helpful. How do we address the feedback say about CRT statement” you are just trying to make white people feel guilty or bad? We want none of that.” Where did that response come from?? Investigating these areas, the areas of the heart take skill compassion and lots of love. Love forms safe spaces. This is a big task that people “OUTSIDE” our Catholic Church are addressing. It seems like Jesus is spending a lot more time with them these days than the “church folk” who support racism in his name!

Liturgy and preaching may open the assembly to new and acceptable possibilities or trigger others negatively. Where are those ideas, thoughts, beliefs addressed? social media? Or small group processes? The program you have set up here for the Synod presents to me one of these good” therapy/ healing/ processes” Thank you.

We are so biased against anyone not white, or male, we have to start at ground zero. There exist two churches, the “Church,” and our

social justice laws. There is our archbishop who literally would not physically touch Rembert Weakland, and there is Greg Boyle, and Nasir the Twain shall meet. I could despair or do what I must...trust God is infinitely in and beyond all the bias, and never, ever, give up. I want to learn at the feet of Jesus the Christ who is in everyone, and Zelensky the transcendent president of Ukraine.

The Catholic parishes are good about giving but not about changing policy and hard issues.

I have observed racial bias at seminaries. It is unfair that seminarians coming from a different background need to be proficient and master English while they speak their own language, sometimes foreign-born priests manage like 2 or 3 languages, and White priests are not asked to learn another language or just manage to learn the basic of another language.

We do have colored people in Canada to be sure, but not where I live; however, our pastor is from Nigeria and seems well accepted. We also have many dark-skinned East Indians because of the local international college who come to our parish. At first, they were rejected but I worked hard to get them accepted and it has turned out that they are. Although each group still sits with its own kind.

Bishop Gomez’s letter was unbelievable evidence of ignorance and intellectual lack and great naïveté. We had better begin with our culture-wars bishops.... their insensitivity.

The hierarchy is generally too silent about systemic /societal policies and laws that create racial disparities. Many have a very limited concept of justice and what it really means to be pro-life. Some are more connected to the right-wing wealthy than the marginalized, and support policies that benefit the well-to-do and hurt the poor and marginalized.

I don’t see racial justice being of interest to the conservative Catholic hierarchy.

I think this should be evenly distributed -- in my diocese we have Spanish/Mexican departments -- in our neighbor Wisconsin (superior) we have Indian departments neither have both nor are Asians or people from other ethnic areas included.

It's got a long way to go.

It needs work to become integrated into the hearts of the faithful. Individuals may be doing quite a lot because it is a core of our faith, but it is not spoken out loud as the vitally important aspect of the teachings of Jesus that it really is.

Time to ensure everyone believes they are welcome and can contribute.

I recently attended my co-worker's mother's funeral at a black Catholic church. It is a simple building, not much fanfare, not ornate. Few days later I was at my parish church (approx. 25 years old, so basically new) and looked around and saw the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on it - marble floor/altar area, ornate marble sanctuary. I was sick to my stomach. the black church had some beautiful stained-glass windows, but it stopped there with the ornateness. The 2 churches are 20-25 minutes from each other and the difference in the money spent on building, etc., was very extreme, IMHO. ADW supposedly required the rectory at my parish (recently built 3 years) to have 2 kitchens, several bedrooms, etc. There is one pastor and one deacon, with a weekend priest. Why such an expansive building? Why not give money to the other church to replace worn carpet?

I would also like to call attention to the general lack of ministering to persons in the special needs community. My friend with multiple physical and intellectual disabilities is unchurched. My family member with behavioral and emotional challenges was unwelcome at many services - when I talked to the diocese about options to education

him in our Faith tradition the only response the diocese could give was handouts. When a parent of a special needs child approached the Pastoral Council with a request for help, the pastor commented to the family that if they wanted special services, etc. they could start them. In other words, it would be ok to have these things as long as they were implemented by the already overwhelmed parents instead of getting any help from the parish.

Too many Catholics are bound up in the so called 'pro-life/anti-abortion' thinking and voting practices.

They dismiss concerns about lack of pre-natal care and post-natal and infant care concerns. After all, they 'reason', those are just Black Moms and Babies. Their lives have less value! No! Black Moms and Black Babies lives do Matter. Their lives and blood cry out from the earth and ethers.

The Catholic Church is lacking in social and racial justice leadership and action! Shame! Do they know Jesus? Do they model their lives after Jesus'?

At ages 82 and 78, we will keep standing up for racial justice each time we can in public action and daily interactions. Gods got us!

I'm so grateful to participate in the Future Church synodal opportunity. I'm caregiving two family members and my time has been limited for completing the survey but hope that my prayer and words help tell the stories that need to be heard. God's blessing upon all.

To me, racial justice is not just about African Americans. It includes all people of other nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. More needs to be done to gather all people together in a common cause.

OUR STORIES

SESSION VI

FAITH & PUBLIC LIFE

- Q1. Share the way(s) your Catholic faith has shaped and guided your view(s) of the most pressing issues in our world, our country, and our communities. 1
- Q2. Share a time when you were heartened by the response of the bishops to a troubling event in the country or world. 27
- Q3. Share a time when you felt disappointed by the response of the bishops to a troubling event in the country or world. 40
- Q4. Name one or two people who offer you inspiration when it comes to engaging our world and communities through the lens of faith. Share some examples. 63
- Q5. As the People of God, what is God calling us to do at this moment in the political and public life of our communities and country? 84

Q1. Share the way(s) your Catholic faith has shaped and guided your view(s) of the most pressing issues in our world, our country, and our communities.

Catholic Teaching on social justice, which some Catholics call “the Church’s best kept secret”.

The practice of the Works of Mercy is central to my life.

Catholic social teaching and the Gospel message has always been the foundation for the work that I do, for the volunteer efforts I do, and for the causes I support. The institutional church has not. I consider myself a Vatican II Catholic believer and not a soldier/enforcer for Holy Mother Church. I am saddened that the Catholic faith practice has become politicized in the USA.

Basically, Catholic social teaching has informed my view of the world, our country, and our communities. Unfortunately, I don’t think the Church preaches those teachings enough. the church is too focused on rules rather than the needs of the world communities.

To this day, I am Catholic because of Catholic Social Justice teachings. These teachings, rooted in the Gospel, have shaped my worldview and animated my faith life. I have often said, “The Catholic Church made me, now they have to deal with me.” These counter cultural teachings that have led me to work for a just and loving world, while leading me to see how Church leaders have often failed to live

up to and teach the Gospel by their lives and words.

Scripture through the example of Jesus and then the great challenges of Pope Francis.

Study of Laudato Si and Ecofeminism has helped to put the issues in another perspective.

I taught the documents of VII and helped develop VII parishes in the growing Atlanta Archdiocese from 1970-2001, until I was told the goals of the bishop differed from those, I believed the USCCB supported.

Social justice issues shape my response to the politics in our country. It is not optional but essential to our belief that we take care of all God’s people and the earth.

All of my formation in Catholic Social Teaching, JustFaith, Salt and Light, Vatican II and Laudato Si have moved me to Living My Faith.

30-40 years ago, an interconnectedness with scriptures and the time we were living was shared in homilies, in programs within the parish, formation of committees with a conscience and a voice.

I believed in the Social Justice teachings of the Post Vatican II Church.

The message of scripture and Catholic social justice teaching that everyone is of infinite worth, that economic systems should be fair and that the earth must be protected...this helps me know I’m not alone, that it makes sense to have concern about what’s happening now.

Catholic Social Teaching is my guide. Richard Rohr and his CAC community keeps me grounded.

I believe in the preferential option of the poor, so I work for the Democratic Party, which I

believe helps the poor more than other Parties. The Catholic faith teaches the preferential option for the poor.

The Church's social justice teachings have informed my views on world, country, & community pressing issues. Pope Francis's emphasis on the poor & marginalized has been inspirational. Finally, my reading of Matthew 25: 31-46 has been foundational for me in establishing my views on humanity's pressing issues.

Jesus is where the Beatitudes are. He is where the vulnerable people are, feeding them, eating with them, curing their illnesses, teaching them, consoling them. And teaching us to do the same. "Follow me."

Catholic social teaching is the core of my Catholic faith.

Catholic social Teaching, especially the recent encyclicals of Pope Francis have shaped my views along with the work I have been doing for the last ten years with the Peace & Justice Committee of our local parish.

Social Justice is key. Preferential option for the poor and marginalized. Matthew 25. Love yourself. Love your neighbor as yourself. Love your enemies. Forgive.

The Church's social justice platform has been central in shaping the practice of my faith and my response to the issues of our world, i.e., how I cast my vote. However, I find our parish and our diocese does NOT prioritize social justice issues: poverty, immigration, racial disparities, women's issues, LGBTQ rights, war, criminal justice reform, etc.! The abortion issue is the sole concern.

My sense of commitment to justice and peace comes from by understanding of being a Christian and what it means to follow Jesus.

That Catholic social justice guides us on racism, sexism, homophobia, anti-Semitism, war, ableism, Islamophobia. It guides us to be inclusive and welcoming to all. It teaches us that there is a preference for the poor, the refugee, those who are alienated, those with disabilities, those who are aged. We are taught as Catholics that it is our collective responsibility to care for the earth and all who dwell in it.

Pope Francis 1 letters as JOY OF THE GOSPELS, OUR COMMON HOME, etc. His book: LET US DREAM, his daily reflections, his homilies, and many writings have helped me continue to develop my faith.

Our rich and hidden library of Catholic Social Teaching documents AND our growing list of resources (Laudato Si being the most obvious) on demands for changes in our lifestyles and how we interact with creation (we continue to live in the Garden) have been most influential for me.

Following the scriptures and Catholic Social Teaching. Following the teachings of true believers--those that walk the talk not simply speak and write about it and do not practice what they profess to believe and sit in their 'ivory towers'.

I always cite the Social Teachings of Catholicism as the foundation to advocating on issues in our global community as well as locally and nationally. High school education at Catholic School was probably the foundation. But reading Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton in college and beyond affirmed this.

Catholic social teaching has informed me and guides me.

It is a matter of my faith that I am involved in various justice causes. Catholic Social Teaching most informs my Catholicism. I have been involved in issues of housing, food security,

justice reform, international peace, and federal budgeting over the years.

I know the principles of the encyclicals on justice.

I lean on my faith to live the Gospel as best I can... To work for justice for the poor, the marginalized, and for our blessed Earth.

Gospel readings, sermons and sacraments.

Basically, the Gospels, the model of Jesus. It's always my benchmark.

The Catholic Social Teachings have been very influential in my looking out into the world and all the pressing issues.

True Social Justice / Application ... didn't learn until late in life. Thankful for RCIA, and for the many churches that teach & practice the Beatitudes.

In hearing some Gospels, we hear of the importance of helping the poor, loving our neighbor, being respectful of nature, and being mindful of planks in our eyes, only sinless throwing first stones, etc. While I hear and know these messages, it is difficult to see them being enacted in society writ large. Many Catholics have been groomed to believe that attending mass on Sunday is their only obligation - and it is so very much more than that.

Social justice activities put our faith in action.

Jesus' words and teachings shaped and guide me still.

Through Vatican II. Not the institutional Church.

Catholic social doctrine has shaped my view of humanitarian issues.

My faith has guided my views to feel empathy toward others - the oppressed, addicted, the "different" and the unloved. It is not through my church per se but in my reading Scripture, and books on social issues.

Actions based in Beatitudes, common good, (Thomas Aquinas) social teaching of the Church, leadership and convictions of prophetic voices in many friends.

Catholic social teaching which values the dignity of each individual.

The gospel and social justice documents.

My love for Jesus and His Church has definitely formed my views. The Church has provided Catholic social teachings as a magnificent guide and it hurts to see so few bishops embrace efforts to further the respect for all peoples not just the womb, respect for God's creation and economic justice. Catholic teaching on conscience is not promoted rather a do this or you are evil is. Racism is a concern, and the bishops are slow and weak in their response. Charlottesville is an example where the response was slow in coming and almost echoed the Trump there were good people on all sides.

The Sermon on the Mount; corporal works of mercy; preferential option for the poor. Jesus.

Since Vatican II, the power of relationship, the power of love, service, option for the poor and mistreated has been a strong focus of my faith. So often in my small parish, the focus seems monetary.

The Bible (especially the Beatitudes and Matthew 25) is very instructive in terms of how to behave in our world.

Traditional church doctrine is often at odds with my beliefs regarding pressing issues in personal, social, and political life.

Catholic Social Teachings have informed and inspired my leadership within our religious congregation, our educational and health care sponsorship. Always the liturgical and sacramental celebrations feed my spirit.

Catholic Social Teaching.

Catholic Social Teaching and the concept that Catholic means UNVIERSAL are the principles that guide my thoughts, my faith and my social justice lens as someone who practices serving as “persons for others” and living out my “Faith that does justice” in solidarity with the poor.

I honestly don’t know that my Catholic faith has shaped me as much as my looking at the teachings of Jesus. A number of Catholic individuals and groups, however, have been inspirational. The Church... not so much.

The development of conscience.

I was raised post Vatican II as a social justice Catholic and social justice has always played a big part of my faith. I believe our God is a God of love and that Jesus was inclusive in his love reaching out to all, even those that are usually not considered part of the “in” crowd. We should be taking care of the sick, the homeless, the poor. We should be fighting for policies that uplift people like universal healthcare and fair wages.

It has helped provide evidence for my passion for social justice.

Preferential option for the poor.

I feel along with a loving family, caring and kind my moral base has evolved to be solid reflective of the way Jesus asks us to live. Vatican II was an eye opener for me as growing up and with 12 years of Catholic Education pretty conservatives. I embraced the “fresh air” that were replacing many ideas and ways, also thoughts about what church was, and what it

could be now. Then things began to slip back to pre-Vatican II and this did not mesh with my changing ideas and thoughts about church. I have had the opportunity though the small faith group we are committed to, and venturing down the paths of new information sources like Future Church, NCR, Sister Joan Chittister, Network, CTA and finding these to help me evolve from my “baby stage of being told what to believe” to a maturing and growing , progressive leaning person looking for others to help me learn and define a church that reflects what Jesus showed us how to live. Kindness and love for each other.

As an educated pre and post Vatican Catholic, I think I have a pretty good view of how things should work. There is a conflict between what our teachings are and how we are no longer led to live out these teachings and address these issues.

Matthew 25:40-45.

Wow - I suppose through reading the scriptures, hearing good talks, meeting people who were involved, hearing the stories of people, and in many other ways - belonging to a Catholic Organization for Development and Peace www.devp.org, and getting involved with other groups.

Catholic social teachings and Gospel values.

The social justice encyclicals have been a strong guidance for us. The example of Jesus and guidance of the Holy Spirit have directed us.

I am guided by Jesus’ example and Jesus’ teachings. I admire Pope Francis in the way he lives his faith and believe in his leadership.

My time as R.C. penitentiary chaplain has made me study possible programs for incarcerated men and women. I see the need for Restorative Justice in the church, especially in the outreach to offenders.

The wisdom Jesus gives us in the scriptures, living out the beatitudes.

Jesus invites us to care/love each other. We are responsible to live Jesus's message in our world by our prayer and ACTIONS.

Following Jesus in the Scriptures, the documents of Vatican II, Pope Francis's leadership, the Berrigans, Walter Brueggeman, Dorothy Day, John Lewis, theologians, especially women theologians are my guides.

Being the arms and ears of Christ to listen to and be of service to people we encounter each day. Trying to live out the corporal works of mercy.

The life of Jesus has shaped my views.

The Social Justice issues that Pope Leo XIII brought to the attention of the Catholic Church and that I became aware of as a student and then a Sister of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary resonated with my sense of injustice as I grew up in segregated Florida and saw the differences in how the African American people were forced to live and how they were treated. I didn't know one of them personally, but as a child, felt how wrong it was.

The Gospel message, the mystical/action oriented historical and current Catholics of faith, those learning and teaching about cosmology, eco/creation spirituality.

The 7 Catholic Social Teachings have been a guide to me in the past 25 years to help shape my attitudes from reaching out to the poor to defending the dignity of each person.

Catholic social teaching is the foundation of my faith. Helping the marginalized have a voice is very important to me. I'm a retired licensed social worker, so all my professional life has been devoted to helping people have agency for themselves and advocating for that

agency. My social justice foundation promotes the idea that I have to be involved and pay attention to ways in which people don't have access to the basic things they need.

My background studies in Catholic Social Thought (CST) have had a definite influence on politics and economics, and how I interpret social/secular events.

Jesus tended to the marginalized. Jesus, the Rabbi, formed through the Jewish tradition, taught us that justice was paramount.

Catholic social justice teachings, Pope Francis, Laudato Si document.

Our Catholic Social Justice Doctrine/Teaching: equality, love for every person, belief in the dignity of each person; emphasis on our creation in the image and likeness of God.

Experiences after Vatican II helped as well as the community in which I have spent many years.

Scripture and the Gospels give the guidance.

My faith has taught me Matt 25: feed the hungry etc. and John 13 - wash feet. Those two gospels are the basis of my faith and what I do - however not so perfect. I love the rituals of our Church because they ground me, and I don't have to find words sometimes but can pray the rote prayers that have been a part of my whole life. Because I am a Vincentian, I have learned the pressing issues and am challenged to do what I am able to make life better for others. It is a grace and a true blessing to be part of the Body of Christ even though some of the parishes I've been in have no idea of the call to justice and peace.

Mostly throughout the scriptures and trying to follow the example of Jesus.

The Gospels have guided my growth into an inclusive and equal community; however, that is not the usual message we hear during homilies.

Incarnation Theology. Our part in the process of the coming of the Reign of God the crying needs of our world today.

I read and listen to the Scripture every day. I try to use Gospel values to examine and respond to the issues of the day.

I am shaped and guided by the social justice issues that are the heart of the Catholic church and its “preferential treatment of the poor.” This includes environmental justice for people and our mother earth, healthcare justice, restorative justice vs. our unjust criminal justice system, educational justice for all--especially those in remote and underfunded areas of our cities, towns, and rural areas, food security justice is another issue, equal justice for gender and non-binary leadership positions in our church is another.

Catholic Social Teaching has made me realize that my country has done many unfair things in its history and still is doing so.

My faith has become stronger as I have allowed the Gospel to become a stronger influence in my life. I have listened to the suffering in our world and see the plight of those caught in the ravages of war and my faith calls me to speak out, to sign petitions, to use social media to reach a wider audience who can also join their voices for change and justice.

The gospel of Jesus and his followers have shaped and guided me.

This is a big question, but I'd say scripture, the beatitudes, and the seven principles of Catholic Social Justice have shaped my views and interactions in the world.

It is a matter of my faith that I am involved in various justice causes. Catholic Social Teaching

most informs my Catholicism. I have been involved in issues of housing, food security, justice reform, international peace, and federal budgeting over the years.

I know the principles of the encyclicals on justice.

My faith has guided my views through my experiences living in Colombia during my early years. Even though I knew what was right & wrong, I really learned about social justice in my own home when I felt Mother mistreated our help there & caused the woman to suffer because her children were accused of stealing candies! I spoke to Mother about being just & she cried. As a chaplain I experienced how someone from a Native American background was categorized as less intelligent & many times her young son with a hearing disorder was separated from her. She had no one speaking on her behalf. Also, the pain that many of our refugee patients felt from neglect lack of tolerance & neglect by someone who was not compassionate in their care.

Social Justice Teachings have and are the crux of my faith.

The second Vatican Council and Pope John 23rd were terrific in opening my mind and heart to focus more on these issues. And being involved in ministering in low-income communities and BIPOC peoples all over the world has propelled me even more to apply Jesus' message of love and justice. Sadly, not many of my pastors have related this message very well to the pressing issues of the world, etc.

Twelve years of Catholic Education plus graduate school in my 60s. I disagree with an awful lot of the situations and regulations that Catholics cite to make sure everyone knows that God is Roman Catholic. I find holy people of every Faith who provide examples of “Jesus in Disguise”. I focus less on the Ten Commandments and more on the Beatitudes!

My Catholic faith plus my Franciscan roots, nurtured through experience and my religious congregation has opened my eyes to pressing issues in our world, country and community. Being involved with people that are oppressed has helped open my eyes and heart.

“Love your neighbor as yourself” is the inspiration for social justice and environmental work I do. My work requires no other aspect of Catholic faith.

The Gospels, especially John, Jesus words ...that all may be one...”

Cardinal Bernardine’s philosophy of the Seamless Garment is a priority for me. Respect for human rights. Everyone is a gift from God and is equal in God’s sight. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. I belong to PeaceWorks which is against Nuclear arms. I support ending the Death Penalty in Kansas.

Catholic teaching has been pivotal in shaping my world view - since the time I was in high school. I was lucky to be at a Catholic HS with nuns teaching me who were fully inspired by Vatican 2 and Catholic social teaching. For 30 years, I attended a parish staffed by Franciscans - they regarded service to the poor and marginalized as the core activity in our communal Catholic life. Even more than their teaching and preaching, I was shaped by their example, the way that they went about living their lives. And I was lucky to have my kids educated in the parish, and to see them now as adults still firmly committed to service and to fighting for the rights of others. They have both left the Catholic Church in frustration, but they are deeply committed to the social justice teachings they learned, and I’m very proud of that.

Mathew 25 is my guide as well as the scriptures.

I think more about social justice issues because of readings from literature obtained through church.

The words, “Do on to others as you would have them do on to you”, are words that guide my actions and decisions.

The documents and writings, Laudato Si, Fratelli Tutti, Joy of the Gospels, Documents of Vatican II do support and guide my views but not shared at the local level.

Catholic Social Teachings make the Scriptures relevant to daily life. Groups like Maryknoll, Catholic Worker, Pax Christi have given me ways to live my faith more faithfully.

Catholic Social Teaching has informed my life and the Gospel witness to Jesus on the side of the poor with mercy and compassion has been a benchmark for me.

I try to follow Jesus, and his sermon on Matt 25.

The Catholic social justice theology has been the structure through which I view contemporary issues. This teaching is also a way in which I can connect my actions to those of all Christians as we work to better our world.

I have long viewed the world, our country, and my communities through the lens of my Catholic heritage and faith, even as my own appropriation of that Faith as evolved over the years. The Catholic view, shared by many other faith traditions, that the human person is both body and spirit, that human life involves so much more than only the physical, that God, by whatever name we call Her, created and sustains all existence out Her unbounded Life/Love, that all creation is holy and has meaning and an eternal destiny, and that...to be more specifically Catholic-Christian now...that Jesus Christ is Lord and truly fully human and fully God: these beliefs have formed the bedrock of my personal Catholic faith and life.

Jesus, the Gospel, open me to everyday life, needs, calls whether they be of the Church or the country or the world.

It has totally shaped my views on pressing issues especially concerning social justice. The Church to me stands with the poor or should!

Reading and reflecting on the Beatitudes as well as Micah 6:6-8. The precepts of Catholic Social Teaching.

The church's stated 'preferential option for the poor' shines like a beacon in a greedy world.

The Church's Social Teachings are the bedrock that calls us to be merciful and compassionate.

Catholic social teaching and the Gospel message has always been the foundation for the work that I do, for the volunteer efforts I do, and for the causes I support. The institutional church has not. I consider myself a Vatican II Catholic believer and not a soldier/enforcer for Holy Mother Church. I am saddened that the Catholic faith practice has become politicized in the USA.

Vatican II teaching on "We are the People of God." The call to full participation in the Liturgy and public life.

The body of Catholic Social Teachings has been the primary source shaping my views and responses. Also, the varied ministries and formation programs in "Vatican 2 parishes" I was blessed to be part of.

The Gospel leads us to the awareness of issues of injustice. My Jesuit spiritual Director. The tenets of social justice proclaimed by the church. I was the Diocesan Director for Renew. Working with the people from Renew gave me to courage to enter into the work of justice and to tackle pressing issues.

It is the gospel values learned in my Catholic education that influenced me first. My prayer

life and awareness of God's call to me has urged me forward as has the communal participation in my religious congregation.

In the gospel, Jesus said, "Go . . .!" My faith helps me to see God's people and urges me to reach out wherever there is inequity, injustice, violence. Catholic Social Teaching, added to the gospel imperative, gives all of us a clear mandate.

Prior to joining the church in 1953 I was leaning toward a conservative philosophy and political view. My contact with OK sisters and priests opened me up to a more progressive view of race relations, ecumenical contacts, and other social justice applications. But in later years those priests and sisters left their ministries and most of the priests now are a bit right wing and not to helpful of social justice matters.

My parents and grandparents guided me to be caring not only to our family but also to our neighbors. I am a religious missionary and have been involved in various ministries and diverse faith traditions.

In my youth are social life revolved around the church. As a religious woman, my congregation encourages and supports involvement in issues of social justice.

My family guided me as they were active in the Church and in community. I am from Minneapolis, and we knew everyone in the community and church and churches worked together plus the priests and sisters knew all of us and we all did things together.

I have been greatly influenced by Father Thomas Judge who called us all to respond to our call of discipleship. I have worked to be sensitive to Jesus's call to know and feel the poor, the marginalized.

The church speaks often about the poor and my diocese supports Catholic Charities, St.

Vincent, and Corpus Christi house (a day-time homeless facility).

The words, "Do on to others as you would have them do on to you", are words that guide my actions and decisions.

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Beginning with classes in high school and then in college, I was opened to Catholic Social Teaching and felt compelled to live in such a way that I would support Social Justice. I've had many opportunities to learn more, and, at

the present, my main commitment is to racial justice.

My views of local and global issues have been shaped by the media I watch and read at home, and by (rare) observations of clergy in their homilies. I subscribe to America Magazine published by the Jesuits and read many of their works on Twitter and listen to their Podcasts. Diocesan influence is poor and infrequent.

My Faith has given me the love of social justice for men and women. Coming from a Jewish-Catholic background, I believe very strongly in Social Justice.

My education in catholic schools has helped me to always seek the common good and not my own benefit. It has shaped my moral conscience and helped me to see my wounded neighbor. It has taught the value of the virtues of Justice and Hope that are necessary for a better world. I believe in nonviolence and the dignity of human life at all stages. It is important to value the life of the migrant, the prisoner, and the unborn, all life has the same value in the eyes of God.

During 18 years of Catholic education including a post graduate degree at Creighton U, I always had teachers who taught us to love our neighbor because that is what Jesus was about. They taught me to read a variety of authors and to think for myself, not to feel bad or rebellious if I disagreed with something I read or heard. I continue to read and listen to a wide range of webinars to challenge myself to understand the intersections of the issues facing us today and do what I can about these issues and not to be afraid of being put down or made fun of.

The theology I have been formed by in a variety of settings keeps me tuned in today to the many faces of Church and church. I struggle to make the connections with the realities of our world and leadership and church and a radically changing society.

As a graduate student at Boston College 35 years ago, I had the opportunity to interact with great theological minds which broadened my vision of life and the way I perceived and lived Church.

I went to Catholic grade and high school. I was a Sister of St. Joseph for 5 years and attended a Catholic College.

I have learned social justice through my family who were formed by the Christian Family Movement (CFM). In school I was taught the basic principles of social justice as taught by our church. I have tried to live these principles each day of my life.

16 years of Catholic education. Parishes led by Paulist Fathers and Franciscans. JustFaith groups, Reading diverse books and publications. Small group conversations around the gospel.

Cradle Catholic, educated in Catholic Schools elementary, high school and college. Worked as teacher for 20 years in Catholic Schools, worked 20 more years as principal in Catholic school. I love the Gospel and mission that Christ gave to us.

Being educated in my Dominican community, attending Fordham University, continual updating while being a Pastoral Minister in many parishes.

Sixteen years of Catholic education was the foundation of my formal education therefore my early years were totally shaped by the Catholic teachings of the time. However, after Vatican II I was much more guided and informed by no clerical persons.

I got the message of service from my parents I have been guided by Richard Rohr since then. Nothing from my current parish.

I am a cradle Catholic and went to Catholic school in Grade School and College. Working

within the church and my community I have come to see that my faith and God encompass all these places.

My background was evangelical Black Baptist, moved to Unitarian, left all churches for a while - then - became Catholic 24 years ago. Since that time, I am continually inspired, moved, motivated, by Catholic Social teaching documents, and more so, the witness of service by catholic community services, women religious, ministries such as HomeBoy and thousands of others. Work for human dignity, common good, and justice - when rooted in spirituality and the Good News - is a powerful force.

Catholic missions, my relatives who were religious ministries, advocates for Tent City which our parish hosts, Communityloaves.org, an organization in which members bake bread for the poor in our community, Catholic Schools and Churches we have been members of.

Experiencing the ways so many of the religious orders in our Church focused on Education and Health care as a major contribution. The work of Network Lobby, seeking to influence the leadership in our country to social justice concerns does a lot to influence my views.

I am a secular Franciscan and the guiding concept of "from Gospel to life and life to Gospel" shapes and guides my views.

I was influenced, in the HS seminary in fact, by a number of priests who were influenced by Dorothy Day. So, I actually imbibed a much richer social justice education than one would have expected. This was in the 1960s during and after the Council and before Roe v. Wade, so the Church hierarchy had not developed its allergy to the Democratic Party in the US. John Paul II set off in a different direction and was in office a very long time. The US Bishops allowed themselves to be co-opted by the Republican Party by making abortion the only intrinsic evil about which they would get

really exercised. They have lip service to social justice, but many insisted that abortion would take precedence. So, despite institutional charitable works, politically they turned their backs on the poor. This is why they are so uncomfortable with Pope Francis. He was never in a situation where he felt he needed to turn his back on the poor because of their political allies.

I am a cradle Catholic and was shaped in the faith by my grade school education with the Sisters of Mercy and by the faith of my mother. I was brought up to know the difference between right and wrong and to look for the good in all people. However, it seems increasingly difficult in this day and age to find good in so many who engage in gun violence, sexual abuse and trafficking, wars, etc. I know that many times, these people suffer from the way they were brought up and can't always be held accountable for what they do, but it's hard when they harm or kill other people.

Back 50 years ago, my family joined a post-Vatican II parish. My Catholic faith was expanded and shaped by a very forward-thinking pastor. Through these 50 years, I have viewed the most pressing issues by what I have learned about Catholic social justice teachings. Once your eyes have been opened, you can never go back.

Most of my guidance has been through my religious community that constantly keeps me aware and acting on world issues. Some from the local diocese but not nearly as powerful.

Sharing in the experiences of my fellow Catholics who have taken activists roles in areas of their interest; it is so inspiring to hear with people all over the country are doing - it gives me hope! despite the damaging conservative bent of so many of our clerics.

My Catholic high school education taught me to be open minded. We learned about other religions and cultures. They emphasized loving

and caring for each other. They taught me that I am human and so is everyone else. No one is perfect. We must accept our faults but try to improve. We must help others.

My faith was shaped by the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception's charism to reach out with compassion, generosity, kindness, truth and love to those in need. Being a voice for the homeless, the poor and the marginalized. Volunteering at an outreach shelter. Signing letters of support for environmental issues.

My Catholic faith has taught me, through my parents, to feed the hungry, free the oppressed, visit the imprisoned.... and on. It is our responsibility as Catholics, not an option. Understanding and believing in the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and belonging to a parish community that believes that we have a responsibility to love all God's children, particularly those on the margins in our own church, those on the margins in our neighborhoods, in our communities and in the world

I am a "cradle" Catholic but have been fortunate to have traveled to many Catholic parishes and had diverse experiences, led by Catholic pastors who were willing to do what needed to be done so that these issues were addressed.

I attended Catholic schools, taught in Catholic schools and am active in my community.

Social values instilled in me since childhood and augmented as I have lived as a religious sister for 64 years have caused me to give personhood to all living beings in our neighborhood and to give them the same rights given humans.

I had some excellent teachers while studying theology, exposing me in depth to the social justice beliefs of the church.

My education in a Catholic School, but with exposure to a wide spectrum of both conservative and liberal beliefs. Most of my Church's emphasis on justice, however, came in college and from experiences in Native American programs and working overseas.

I have been shaped and guided to become an artist activist, a spiritual director, retreat facilitator, liturgist and dance/movement therapist. I am a child of the 60's, a baby boomer, ex nun and present advocate and supporter of "nuns on the Bus" Network, ISP (Ignatian Spirituality Project for addicts and homeless) Yoga and Ignatian Spirituality, teaching yoga for Seniors at Euclid Community Center, write letters to politicians, and was an early member and supporter of Women's Ordination, Dignity and Call to Action. I've worked in "renewing Catholic Institutions including as faculty at Loyola University Chicago and The institute of Creation Centered Spirituality promoting and supporting Lay Ministries everywhere. I have befriended and worked with liturgical artists and educators over many years and am humbled by the richness of my experiences making me so grateful to be a member of the Catholic Church. My time in Chicago with the 8th Day center for justice and Cardinal Bernadine were so hopeful. My Time with the Fountain Square Fools traveling the US and Ireland doing Youth Ministry work and creating material with Bill Cain SJ were so life giving and hopeful. Young people were open to hearing the Gospel and proclaiming it through the Arts of Music, Dance, drama and Art. The NALM brought church music to a "modern world" Such rich experiences I have had and so want to pass that story and hope to those who follow.

I learned more from the Quakers & others than through any Catholic group.

As an associate of this group, I think they say it best in their mission statement- As a medical missionaries of Mary in a deeply and violently

divided world, we are women on fire with the healing love of God. Engaging our own pain and vulnerability we go to peoples of different cultures where human need is greatest. Our own belief in the interrelatedness of God's creation urges us to embrace holistic healing, and to work for reconciliation, justice and peace.

As I share with my JPIC meetings at Good Shepard, I am learning how we can start with small steps for justice with health packets for Ukraine, Shelter packets, and petitions for justice with immigrants and the poor without housing.

I attended Catholic grade school and Catholic College. Now as an adult Catholic, I admit and regret that I squandered my time in Religion classes in college. However, it was the late '60's and 70's so we did get a feel for social justice. Grade school did not give me any knowledge of how to view pressing issues in the world, except to pray for the conversion of Russia. Looks like that did not have a long-term good outcome. It has only been through my involvement as a team member of RCIA that I have garnered an appreciation for what we should be doing as Catholics; for our own spiritual growth as well as what we are expected to do for our fellow humans. At my advanced age, still learning.

My parents both had their own prejudices from their cultural backgrounds. While they voiced these opinions it never stopped either of them from putting the gospel first.

For me it is distilled to one guiding principle - servant leadership. Put others before yourself, humble yourself to be of service in God's name, use words only if you have to otherwise let your actions speak for you. Do something. Mary is a huge part of my faith life and prayer life. She is the first disciple and her to God is the example I try to follow.

That's a very big question?! I would like to think that I see all of the pressing issues in

the world - in the U.S., in my community, and in my personal relationships - in a way that is consistent with my being raised a Catholic Christian. I try to act on those values, although I confess that I am often impatient, easily angered, and not always a very good listener. My goals and values were formed early on as a young Catholic student. Maybe it was earlier than that that I developed empathy and a sense of fairness, but they were reinforced by my parents and by teachings of the Church - even if the individuals who taught me them did not always model them well! I work with committees in my church, volunteer and financially support non-profits that feed the hungry, provide clean water, shelter the homeless, provide healthcare, aid and resettle refugees, fight institutional racism, work for living wages, and I correspond with a man in prison and try to advocate for his needs. I am empathetic to a fault. I used to be a staunch pacifist - I don't believe that militarism or nationalism are compatible with Christianity, but It's hard to see people suffering, and being a mother has made me wonder more than once what I would be willing to do to protect my daughter! Unfettered capitalism is antithetical to Christianity. Maybe my growing up a little bit poor also makes me more sensitive to issues concerning working conditions, fair wages, and decent housing. Dorothy Day is one of my heroes. I'm glad that the Church has come around to advocating for environmental justice and against climate change - thank God for Pope Francis! - but those principals have been important to me since long before Pope Francis spoke out on them. My background is in biology. Natural beauty, ecology, protection for the environment and for species, animal rights, even recycling and reusing, have been important to me for a very long time. As a Catholic Christian, I am even more concerned that climate change and pollution disproportionately affect the poor. My politics are also consistent with my belief in Catholic social teaching. I would never vote for a Republican candidate at this point.

The papal and episcopal encyclicals and letters on social justice issues have been influential.

Pope Francis documents, encyclicals have been very encouraging and challenging to balance care for the poor with care for the earth.

Catholic scholarship, encyclicals, theologians, Merton, Dorothy Stang, Matthew Fox Richard Rohr, Elizabeth Johnson, Ilia Delio.

Receiving the gospel message and many of social teachings of the church have influenced me. I cannot say the priests in most of my parish experiences helped me to understand act on pressing issues in the world.

Just Faith small group sessions from 2006-2022 are powerful interactions about the most pressing issues in our world. I have been a member or facilitator of a many sessions--a great educational tool for justice & action.

I was in my 20s when Vatican II happened and was in a liberal Jesuit parish in DC, so I learned through friends and priests and clergy about Vatican II I was teaching at Georgetown when they had the wonderful symposium following the conclusion of Vatican II assembly and was able to hear Hans Kung, Karl Rahner, and Courtney Murray speak. Then I knew that the church was aligning itself with the poor among us. Since moving to the suburbs, I realized that the clergy and hierarchy had not studied nor implemented Vatican II. It was 80 % of the nuns and orders of brothers and priests, who had studied and implemented so I could only learn from them. Meanwhile the hierarchy got into a relationship with the Republican Party based on the one issue of abortion and the majority are still there, moving more and more to the right. They don't seem to be concerned about health care, looking at birth control, the death penalty, homosexuality (which comprises at least 10% of the population), and no real response to racism, especially not the structural racism that has existed in this country. I am embarrassed by the vast majority of the

hierarchy. When they decided to investigate the nuns, one of the things that many of them said, was that the nuns were “too much into social justice”. I think that succinctly states just how far away they are from what I think the gospel message is. I go to many other groups, some that have no Christian affiliation whatsoever, to join with them to change laws to make this country better for all the people. I worry that our hierarchy is helping to bring an end to the democracy that we have in this country. The only reason I remain is because “I AM THE CHURCH”.

The social justice teachings of the Catholic Faith have always been an inspiration and guide for me. My early teachings came from the Maryknoll sisters and brothers and through my mother. While it's hard to remember specifics I think I experienced and internalized their values.

My faith has gone from being that of following everything taught to us by the sisters in Catholic school, CCD etc. My faith began to be shaped in/at Seattle U and U of San Francisco during the 60s. Seeds were sown.

Social values instilled in me since childhood and augmented as I have lived as a religious sister for 64 years have caused me to give personhood to all living beings in our neighborhood and to give them the same rights given humans.

I follow the teachings of Christ and try to act in a way that represents the love of God and the love of my fellow human beings. These are the 2 commandments I strive to follow.

My parents guided me early grateful for their example. Early religious life NOTHING about poor and marginalized. Went to first CALL TO ACTION meeting in the U.S and through faith tried to educate myself from then till this minute/ want MORE from Future Church. Do not leave us hanging! after a few zoom meetings.

With hope, reciprocity and that all is holy, animals, plants, the earth. Everything! My pastor, Fr. Colm, LMU, CGU and all the women, feminists around the world, the LGBTIQ+ community of which my brother is one. All the traveling that I have done that my faith formation has opened my heart to all peoples, especially the poor.

Have not had any church experience.

My upbringing in the Catholic Church, including my parents who were active in justice issues and my years as an Adrian Dominican nun, influence all of my decisions -- from the choice of candidates for whom I vote, to the social justice issues for which I lobby, to the social justice organizations which I support and/or join.

I have been lucky to have been involved with several parishes in my life that have been very strong on social justice issues. Our parish was led by the Franciscans for over 30 years, so the Franciscan community is very strong on encouraging people to be informed and be involved. Also, I have read the Vatican II papers, and they helped shape my spirituality in a big way.

Since as Catholics, theologically we begin with Incarnation, my Catholic faith and Tradition presume that all are part of the Body of Christ, regardless of financial, social, psychological, gender identity or sexual orientation.

My family guided and shaped my understanding of what it means to be catholic and respond to the pressing issues in the world. Women religious have also been influential in my understanding of social justice.

Catholic high school Sisters of the Humility of Mary social justice in action gave me a lifetime of awareness.

Cardinal Bernardine's philosophy of the Seamless Garment is a priority for me. Respect for human rights. Everyone is a gift from God and is equal in God's sight. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. I belong to PeaceWorks which is against Nuclear arms. I support ending the Death Penalty in Kansas.

I attended Catholic school in the '60s and post-Vatican II. What I encountered there still lives with me despite the conservative bent of today's church.

I grew up in Mississippi in the 60's. The priests and nuns that I knew were vocal about civil rights. I was proud of the church's outspoken stand on civil rights. The priests and nuns took risks speaking up. Their actions/words taught me the evil of racism and opened by eyes and changed my life.

Talks, retreats, and articles that have been provided by various groups,

I was "raised" from about 10 years of age on Thomas Merton and Dorothy Day, and a Jesuit parish and Catholic schools with Sisters, so learning Catholic Social Teachings was just part of all aspects of life. Active in politics from 13 years of age, I found it challenging, always, to bring faith into that picture. Taught for many years, including social justice and Vatican II concepts. The challenge is always how to motivate people to read the Gospels, much less live by them. My experience is common for my generation and others.

In college, I met Dan Berrigan and have always lived at the edge of the institution. I've been deeply impacted by religious women and missionaries who have pioneered projects to enable women to find their voices, both domestically and internationally. Looking for Catholic Social Teaching to inform those preaching.

Just Faith program. Franciscan parish or any order parish. Diocesan parishes have lost their way.

I grew up and was formed in a parish in Mississippi. My parish addressed racial segregation directly and spoke the Gospel to us all. In addition, the pastor strongly advocated Vatican II. That was my spiritual life and growth. Then I moved to New York and could not recognize the church.

I have been fortunate to have had good, not perfect priests to guide me in social justice issues, The Franciscan Friars. Since being a married woman, my parishes have varied, and I feel that they do not speak of the social issues as much. Different groups support the marginalized and others in need and I participate in all of them as part of my commitment to serve through my faith in Jesus.

Reading NCR articles has helped me reflect on social justice issues. Catholic women preach gives me fresh insights. Listening to Greg Braden and other scientists helps my faith grow.

I grew up with a family very centered on values of caring for others. This caring of others had stayed with me these 80 years. I feel lay people often want to participate in these values of compassion but are stymied by the structure of our current church with its emphasis on law and order to the detriment of others. I liked the presenters suggestion that individuals putting money for other organizations rather than money to support the hierarchical church politics

My faith has been shaped by many other Religious women and men who have been part of my journey. It has been shaped by my religious studies along the way and various "prophet" people who have broadened my understanding and deepened by love of God, Creation and all peoples of this tiny planet.

Because of the living, amazing witness of a passion for justice not just for persons or their own but an energy to recognize the transformation of systems towards justice in the people I've met since middle school and beyond who happen to also be Catholic challenged me to live out the faith in an authentic way. The more difficult living the faith becomes, especially from institutional attacks, the scriptures and groups like Future Church affirms the choice to be on the path of becoming Christian.

Catholic Charities has given me the opportunity to connect in a respectful way with people different from myself.

My parents taught me that it is our responsibility to "give back" to our community.

I have worked in the African American church and local community and joined them in their struggles for justice and equity. I am committed also to helping struggling immigrants in any way I can as well as other marginalized people, especially those of different sexual orientations.

Calls me to be mindful of the needs of others outside my own culture. (I'm a Dominican Sister.) Reminds me that as God's children we are all sisters and brothers. Invites me to be open to needs of others and to help in whatever way I can.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Wheeling, WV gave me the foundation to include all in love. The nuns have given the Church consistent credibility.

I have been fortunate through my position at Loyola University New Orleans to have a deepened faith enriched through study, reflection and call to action. This has added to my spiritual call and response to the Catholic Social teaching. Rooted in the Gospel, sharing in the life of Christ, I discover what gives goodness and meaning in my life.

I have been fortunate to always have a spiritual Director and have ,” Moved with the times and with the Sprits enlightenment.” Because of this I see things, I believe based on Jesus’ teaching in the gospels. I read and ponder those such as Teilhard, T Berry, Richard Rohr, Ilia Delio, and Matthew Fox.

Having experienced the freedom and creativity of Vatican and belonging to a Franciscan community, I have been extremely impacted by my Catholic faith...My faith is still strong, but it is a struggle to be a practicing Catholic, given too many of the Bishops’ views/expectations in the US re: women, GLBT community, reception of Eucharist, ties to very conservative Catholic organizations, etc.

Coming from a very conservative community in the Southern US, my views do not align at all with the current world issues. Looked on as an outcast in those communities for my views on abortion, LGBTQI, racism etc.

My love for Jesus and His Church has definitely formed my views. The Church has provided Catholic social teachings as a magnificent guide and it hurts to see so few bishops embrace efforts to further the respect for all peoples not just the womb, respect for God's creation and economic justice. Catholic teaching on conscience is not promoted rather a do this or you are evil is. Racism is a concern, and the bishops are slow and weak in their response. Charlottesville is an example where the response was slow in coming and almost echoed the Trump there were good people on all sides.

My faith has challenged me to pay attention to all that is happening in our culture. The Gospel is my guide. Unfortunately, I do not hear much about this in the homily on Sunday.

The call to care for the poor has always been there. But I've had to search out Catholic views that support for immigrants, prisoners, LGBTQ, women, POC, and other marginalized groups. Unfortunately, our Archdiocese and our parish seems afraid to take on these issues for fear of offending other parishioners who don't feel that way.

I don't think the actions of sexual predators in the Catholic Church as well as those who were complicit or indifferent to their actions in the church represent God's will. Yet, religious clerics across faiths often act like they have a monopoly on God. They also act like they have a monopoly on the Truth, acting like LGBTQ+ loving relationships are not in God's will. God is love. Jesus said that. Jesus said we especially should not harm children, and yet institutions who use His name have done just that with sexual abuse, etc. Jesus also never shamed women, and yet many male religious preach and teach that women who have had abortions should be shamed as murderers. I am sick about what the Catholic Church and other churches have done in Jesus' name. Man-made institutions that seek money from the poor and anyone who will follow them is not what Jesus

wanted. Live simply so that others may simply live is more in line with Jesus than the wealthy religious elites I've observed in different locations of the Catholic Church and other Christian churches.

I always felt I had a strong Catholic faith thanks to my parents. Lately I have been disappointed in church leadership because I think they are more concerned over their power and influence than values and what the church teaches regarding social justice issues. Some even admit that they feel Vatican II was a mistake. I don't want to see the church going backward instead of moving forward as was the goal of Vatican II

Much of the hierarchy of the church, other than the pope have been failing us on their leadership. I have looked to organizations like Future Church, Richard Rohr, Ilia Delio and clergy that I know and trust personally to be my guides in shaping my views and understanding of local and world issues.

Not much help from the hierarchy or parish priests.

This has happened mainly on a local level within advocacy groups based in our Catholic values. I have not been fortunate enough to belong to a parish that is focused on justice issues, but rather a "milk-toast" version of religion.

My Catholic faith taught be to me moral, guiding me to help other people; be kind; not to lie, steal etc. There is a real disconnect when you see how gays and divorced people are treated by some priest (not all) The racial inequality that was seen in residential schools carried out by religious; setting out to take the Indian out of the child ; making the aboriginals dependent on the welfare system ; violence against aboriginal women. Immigrants not being treated fairly etc.

My Catholic faith has shown me Jesus Christ and all the ways. Jesus leads us to address the pressing issues everywhere. However, I don't always see Jesus Christ manifested in the Church. It can be too tied up with clericalism and legalism and not transparent with finances or personnel decisions. The Church also forgets that the laity are the church. When we are not there it will not be there, there is no Church.

It is my faith that keeps me active on the peace and justice of our world. Mostly, my work is with the rights of all people to be on the move and their right to be received wherever they go. I am all too frequently discouraged in my efforts and tempted to give up on my Catholic Church, but I count on my faith to carry me through until I am finished. God help me!

I do not feel all of the hierarchy of the Church is in sync with the faith on many of these issues but has fallen into a rigid mind set where it can issue an edict as ridiculous as the one in which those who were baptized by a priest who used the word "we" instead of "I" have been found to have invalidly received other sacraments including confirmation and marriage. This kind of clericalism makes Catholics a laughingstock. I continue to pray for a more Christian Catholicism!

Even though I have had a lot of experience organizing with secular activist groups, it is first and foremost through the lens of my Catholic faith that I engage with public and communal issues. We are taught to prioritize care for the poor and creation and regard the individual conscience of our fellow humans on Earth. This is why I get so frustrated and disillusioned when people who are Catholic choose to divide, abuse, and attack people with different beliefs or life practices than themselves. Church leadership needs to be doing more to bring this variety of people and perspectives into dialogue rather than promoting a narrow ideology of how we are instructed to vote, choose, love, and participative in public and private.

It's my world view, in spite of the hierarchy. My Catholic faith has always pushed me to do more, be more in the industries I was involved with by being a good listener and advocate.

Today I see immigration, healthcare, the protection of children and women, protecting minorities, and preserving the earth we all share as moral obligations.

Need to have faith activities and Liturgy of the Eucharist to those in need as the migrants, etc.

My Catholic tradition has taught me that we are first and foremost servants to each other and stewards of God's creation. This sacramental world view and gratitude of creation shapes the way I attempt to respond to all of the issues I encounter in the world - at a global, national, community and family level.

Christ paid attention to the woman bent over, to the widow who lost her son, to the blind and to the mentally ill. As a child, I knew caring for people who suffered was a Catholic's responsibility. Today I see immigration, healthcare, the protection of children and women, protecting minorities, and preserving the earth we all share as moral obligations.

My faith has taught me discernment and developed my conscience. From that, I try to choose the best of often lousy options.

Jesus' words and teachings shaped and guide me still. Jesus said: God is love. Jesus said: thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Thus, while earth is not heaven, we should try to do God's will and love on earth. Love others, love the environment, etc. If you love someone or something, then you want the best for the person / thing. You don't want something for yourself at the expense of another human being or thing.

I believe that God made everyone, and all should be welcomed in our church some people are made different than others colors choice

of partners and all should be welcomed in our church I think God is the only one that can judge us.

My Catholic faith has taught me compassion, understanding and openness.

I try to put on the mind of Christ, listen to God more than I listen to the institutional Church when in conflict with what I believe God is calling me to.

My Catholic faith has lead me try to live my life with a theme of love one another. Follow the Commandments. However, it does not mean that failure by the faithful to spread this belief with all should be forced on all by the passage of laws - such as antiabortion laws. We should be focusing on economic equity and education so that all lives are valued - If this were done there would be no unwanted” babies. I believe in the Commandment - Thou shall not kill - thus, I wear a mask to prevent my transmitting COVID 19 that could kill someone. Further, this Commandment require the Community of Nations to punish Mr. Putin and those who have carried out genocide in Ukraine and Syria to be punished for killing of innocent lives.

I really think my Catholicism is part of who I am now, probably has been for years.

My faith is my core. It defines me as a Catholic Christian, a humanitarian, liberal, embracing the beatitudes and outreach to service of others in need.

My Catholic faith has shaped my view that we are all one people created and loved by God and taught by Jesus Christ that as God loves us, we are to love others, not just in our minds but in our actions. Discrimination of others and even extreme nationalism is not Christian as it is the antithesis of Jesus’ teaching.

Values: respect people, thus I embrace feminism, fight against racism and support peace & justice.

My faith in Jesus is what has shaped and guided my views.

Belief in the inherent value and dignity of human beings!

It is the foundation for my beliefs on which I make any choices or life decisions.

The question is how is justice served, human dignity honored? Is at the center of all my perspectives on pressing issues. Please note, what serves the church is not at the center for me; what serves continuing the life of Jesus Christ is what is at the center for me.

I grew up being told and expected to follow the golden rule - that we are all created equal.

My basic faith and expanded faith through education and life experience has enlarged the lens to see, listen and act and react to the marginalized, political agendas - US & World, Inequalities and racism.

My faith has shaped my views on social justice issues and political issues such as capital punishment; care for the poor, sick, immigrant communities; education.

We all need to witness Gospel values about human dignity-of caring for the dear neighbor.

For me it is distilled to one guiding principle - servant leadership. Put others before yourself, humble yourself to be of service in God’s name, use words only if you have to otherwise let your actions speak for you. Do something. Mary is a huge part of my faith life and prayer life. She is the first disciple and her to God is the example I try to follow.

Respect for all people, here present or presenting the future, is an underlying tenet.

Catholic faith/trust is my basis, but I feel I’ve matured and progressed. I attempt to focus on

inclusiveness, forgiveness, humility, and charity (in both senses of the word) when I assess issues. Often, I've found that those were and still are missing from Catholic Church teaching and practice.

My faith has taught me to view the plight and suffering of others as something I cannot turn away from, but instead must do what I can to alleviate. Our world was created by God for us as God's children and as such, we are responsible for caring for creation rather than participating in its demise. Jesus taught us that we are all one, no matter Jew or Greek, slave or free--I fear we have not done such a good job at unifying our world and adhering to the belief that we are all one body, united in Christ.

It has taught me to follow the example of Jesus who reached out and constantly looked to what was needed rather than what was traditionally taught.

As a Christian, that I am in solidarity with others and for the common good.

I am more empathetic and thoughtful about the trials of others.

If we love God, then love what God creates. Today, that means Catholic institutions, in particular, must practice responsible actions for environmental justice. Why can't each parish rectory install solar to initiate renewable energy for all Catholic buildings. (17,000 parishes in USA, alone.

I try to see the greater world and our Christian call to love everyone as God's people.

Love has many faces and expressions. God is equally everywhere. God is the experience of relating. Mutuality is truth. Creation has personhood. God is constantly creating and stays. We ultimately transcend the Church and any institution. Unity in diversity depends on how much love is present. Forgiveness is a gift. We ultimately receive everything; God loves us

first. Justice calls me to speak. I may not give up. God is in and infinitely beyond the greatest darkness. Light and darkness is in everything and one. Light and Truth ultimately prevail.

I try to see God in all things. Need for faith and hope.

Compassion for ALL and to use my strength to push judgement of others intent to the back so my decisions are based solidly on facts and care for all members of all communities.

The catholic faith has brought me closer to Christ, to my faith community, to creation. And in doing this it pains me to the distance that our Bishops take to what is truly moving the people of God as we move forward not backward.

My Catholic faith has helped form my conscience. It has taught me that Peace must be based on Justice. Reflecting on the Incarnation has shown me that love is the basis for unity.

My experience of my Catholic Faith has shaped me in my call to act justly, to love tenderly, to serve others, to love my neighbor as I love myself and to walk humbly with our Lord. My road map to guide me on the journey are the Beatitudes. I believe that all of Creation is sacred, and that each of us are beloved sons and daughters of God and that in our purest form we are LOVE.

What could I lean on and be challenged by if not my Catholic faith? There is nothing else that would make sense and feed my need to see that injustice must be ended. My faith is a certainty in my life, and it is what has given me the courage to speak up and to act.

Seek the common good, respect the rights and dignity of individuals, respect and obey the law when rightfully constituted - I cannot separate my faith from who I am. Faith and its

practice have been my life-long discipline and inspiration and aspiration.

I have a deep sympathy for prisoners, the homeless, the hungry and the homeless. They are always in my prayers, and I do whatever I can to help them.

My faith in Jesus and his message guides my life in small and major matters. My Catholic faith is not always in step with my faith in God in Jesus.

Being made aware of injustices in community, locally and globally through social media and newspapers.

I believe that we're called to help the poor, the suffering, the marginalized, to try to ensure that all will have what's needed to have a decent life. We're also called to protect I was heartened when bishops what God has created, to do no harm.

My Catholic faith colors ALL my views of every issue. I decided in October of 2020 that I would follow ALL Catholic teaching and not allow a political party to determine which I will follow and which I needed to rationalize not to follow. I am at peace now and have experienced many pleasant results of that decision.

I empathize with the marginalized and value communities which care for each other and advocate for our most vulnerable neighbors.

I am grateful for my formation as a 'thinking' person called to Faith in Jesus filled with the Spirit living as a Dominican Sister dedicated to Truth and Gospel values!

My Catholic faith has shaped and guided my views through engagement with laity, both Catholic and non-Catholic in addressing various social justice issues. Clergy have not been participants and role models.

Catholic faith impacts how I think about nuclear proliferation/war, economic issues such as the widening income gap, and strengthened my views on ecology and environmental matters.

I have always believed in God's love for all of us so it has been so upsetting to see how our church has left out so many of God's beloved because they are women, divorced and remarried, LBGQTQ, immigrants, people of color, other religions etc. To me this is not God's dream for His people.

Baptism has really been a call to be priest (one who worships and teaches), Prophet (one who risks for the sake of the Gospel), and King (one who takes leadership, even with the "knocks" I have received).

ALL are welcome. ALL sexual orientations, all races, nationalities. The Holy Spirit speaks to lay people as well as clergy. Our US church is stuck in the past. Young people are leaving because we are so out of touch with today's reality.

By learning from the teachings of Jesus, the importance of openness to all, acceptance of all, especially the poor and marginalized these values have helped shape a just response.

Visiting our diocesan missions years ago in Peru and more recently going to Haiti to serve for a couple weeks with my 2 sons has fashioned my sense of justice.

Being open to the opportunities presented in terms of education and mutual sharing of members of the faith community have shaped and guided my views.

Awareness of moral guideposts, witness of faith-filled people, opportunity for reflection on Scripture, study and faith sharing in small groups have all influenced my interpretation of happenings in society and pressing issues all around.

Racism--all human beings were created by and equally loved by God Climate Change--our loving Creator gave us this earth to care for as God cares for us. We are all interconnected.

We are the descendants of the Apostles. This is our church, and we must do all we can to continue the work of the first Apostles. We must not forget that we are the Church. As a result, I share ownership of it.

the Presence and Power of the Spirit, co-creators with the Creator and redeemed by Jesus the Christ, Faith doing Justice. Faith, Hope and Love very connected.

Being a member of the Church community, all my life created an environment of community where the values of service and relationships are of major importance, grounded in prayer and gratitude.

Religiosity led me to a personal Jesus. Religious life pushed me beyond my world.

Thereafter I continued to grow asking questions of what, where, who and why

Justice, charity , inclusion - Jesus was a great example for that . Jesus first appeared to a woman at resurrection. Women are visible and active but not accepted as a valuable group. so, I pray that women will be deacons, ordained priests in my lifetime!!!

Taking care of the poor, especially those at the southern border, now that Ukrainians are wanting to come to our country. What do we do with those who have been waiting for months to come in? The church must be at the forefront to help these poor people.

It is my faith, my Baptismal commitment that has always impelled me.

My faith has grown tremendously from the time I was young and just accepted whatever the

sister or priest told us or what the catechism instructed us. I really believe that it is up to all of us to speak for one another, especially those that no one will listen to. Today, in this troubled world, my faith teaches me to work for that to happen in this world.

Modalities of discernment. Silence leading to deep questioning. As I hear the cry of women, the planet.

Upbringing to respect Church, those in my small church communities, justice groups, and living the Gospel.

My Catholic faith teaches that we are all one which leads me to want the members of the Church be more vocal in the pressing issues and send members out to the margins, get involved and encourage the marginalized to attend our Church. As members of the Church on a local level we not encouraged to involve ourselves.

My Catholic faith guides me to seek understanding of the root causes of problems in today's world, guides me to avoid being judgmental and instead seek to coexist.

My faith teaches me to care for the sick, poor, needy, downtrodden, etc. - the world is filled with these needs.

Sharing the love of Jesus should be inclusive. I try to live that each day in the school (Catholic) I teach.

My Catholic faith has helped shape my love for all human beings and my passion for immigrant justice and advocacy.

My Christian/Catholic faith continues to guide me in opening me and moving me towards the issues in the world, God's world where we are to be light, salt and leaven.

My faith has blessed me to be a Eucharistic Christian, to be the Body and Blood of Jesus in

all that I do: in prayer, work, ministry and play.
I am a blessed child of God!

My Catholic faith taught me that Christ preached love and kindness to those who may be marginalized. My faith is the love of others guides my views.

Listen, forgive, hope, be an agent of peace, within and without. Ask yourself, What would Jesus do?

Behaving as I believe Jesus did in recognizing, caring, and acting in our beleaguered world.

I feel a connection with those on the outside. They teach me much. They are the ones that Jesus treasured.

My Catholic faith and my experiences (teaching and counseling in inner city schools) have helped me to be more open to other viewpoints and lifestyles. Very grateful for this.

My Catholic faith has grounded me in the Law of Love as proclaimed by Jesus in the Gospels.

My Catholic faith has guided my views by helping me consider the dignity of the human person when hearing about pressing issues. The most important thing the Catholic faith has taught me is to love everyone and all of creation, and I take this into thought on pressing issues.

Try to put myself in their place. Be kind. Be there, listen.

I am addicted to current events, and I try to view all events through a lens of faith.

Discussion, acceptance and respect of other opinions.

I see a global perspective and, sadly, it's the lay leadership that convene around pressing world issues, not my local parish and not the diocese.

It is foundational and informs my commitments and way of living.

My Catholic faith says love your neighbor, care for the least among you, feed the hungry, blessed are the peacemakers, the kin-dom of God is at hand. This faith has affected my commitment to help those who are poor and hungry through acts of charity and through advocating for political policies and programs that lift up those living in poverty in my community, our nation and the wider world. My faith challenges and calls me to work to break down the walls that separate us - walls of racism and economic privilege. My faith calls me to trust in God's dream for God's creation; to be courageous in holding fast to The Way of Jesus Christ.

It has made me more aware of the sin of capital punishment; the need to help poor people; give shelter to refugees fleeing terror, violence & war; need to welcome people unlike ourselves...

God is relation. The Trinity is relation and Jesus included the most marginalized in His own Mission. that has shaped my understanding of inclusivity: women, LBGQ+, races and ethnic groups, the homeless... It has also shaped my understanding the guns and militarism are not part of building Community!! Rather listening, including, acceptance, negotiation... The Eucharist and Sacraments- to BE nourishment and gift to other... to let Jesus Spirit guide and form my/our actions... form community on every level possible. Work for Justice and Peace.

My Catholic faith is universal. that includes everyone. It guides me to be inclusive in my relationships, my thinking, my actions. I want for others what I long for myself: faith in others good will, hope for my life, and love unbounding.

Increasing recognition to be involved in that which promotes justice and a kind welcoming atmosphere.

I don't believe there is a division between sacred and secular. My Catholic faith is the foundation of how I live. The gospel, beatitudes, corporal works of mercy and catholic social teaching is the measuring stick and foundation for how I make all my decisions regarding work, play and politics.

God loves and through his love all creation is manifested. All creation matters and all humans have dignity and are worthy. No one is loved more or less by God. Our uniqueness and diversity are what we offer to the greater whole by way of enrichment for all.

My faith guides me to focus in a significant way on greater social justice in the world, specifically improving more equitable access to material, educational and occupational resources and opportunities both in the U.S. and abroad.

It has shaped by views of world issues profoundly as well as issues facing our country and world in terms of poverty, war, justice, health, ministry, women's issues, children etc.

I try to view these issues with the eyes of the Christ, inspired by the Spirit and informed by Sophia.

My Catholic Faith has shaped my views by teaching me the words and life of Jesus, the beatitudes and commandments, etc. I am aware that we are to love others as ourselves and to give to others as our brothers and to forgive others as He forgives us. I believe we have to affirm justice and mercy in our world, country and community and not be complacent and self-absorbed or self-satisfied with the status quo, especially if we are comfortable.

I have always felt that care for the poor was an important part of the Catholic mission.

However, I feel now that this focus was more directed toward evangelization of others through missions and as most Catholics who were immigrants are now more invested in maintaining status and are bracing conservative values and dissociating with Dorothy Day social justice values. I am encouraged that there still are many who maintain the courage to continue living as early Christians, so I am guided by them.

My experience working in and with religious organizations in service of the unseen and marginalized is the foundation of my faith. This was outside of a local parish community, most of which were not on the same page.

We are all one - brothers and sisters. We are a universal church and responsible for one another.

I have been guided by the social teachings of the church and by the life of Jesus.

It's the only framework I have for assessing these issues since general society does not seem to have common moral values anymore.

Jesus taught us to love one another. Our world needs a lot more love and a lot less hate. A hot war in Ukraine where Ukrainians are being slaughtered by a lying megalomaniac dictator, watching a Supreme Court Justice nominee be treated with so much racist and sexist animus by Republicans in the Senate, a Florida Governor who signs a ,” Don't Say Gay,” bill which marginalizes everyone in the LGBTQ community, this is all hate, and it has nothing to do with the law of love that Jesus taught us.

I see/sense a oneness that continuously tries to push above the rhetoric and divisions

Concern for Ukraine, political division in our country, those on edges of society.

I'm 76 and I have come to look at all our pressing issues (who could list them all) in the

light of my Catholic faith. And since God has given us everything, we have it's only right to try to see with His light--to think about what Jesus would say or do in these situations.

As a cradle Catholic, my parents were faith filled and brought up six children to maintain that priority. Not just in prayer and sacraments but by being role models who were kind and compassionate.

My faith has very much shaped my view of national/international issues. I do believe in separation of church and state, but my faith is how I decide right and wrong. The sacredness of life guides me to want to see the abolishment of the death penalty. I didn't always think this way until I listened to Sister Helen Prejean.

The catholic church has traditionally been on the forefront of addressing some social issues. I now wonder how the issue of abortion has now made a cleft in approach.

My belief in God and in the Gospel is the defining guide for everything I believe about human rights, social justice, war and peace and every social issue.

Not so much my Catholic faith, but my faith in general has opened my heart, eyes and life to those on the margins and how we must be their voice and listen to and respond to their suffering and oppression and do what we can to support their plight.

I know that God will take care of us. The Spirit is at work in a way we may not see yet or understand.

As a Catholic follower of Jesus, I believe in the "fullness of life" for all. This is the vision guiding my views as I participate in seeking justice for the marginalized and for our earth.

My faith gives me the desire to stay in the church (I am the church) and listen and share with others.

I pray for wisdom for our President and a softening of heart for President Putin. I see all political issues through the lens of my Catholic faith, and I vote accordingly.

The sense that each person is our brother or sister which was part and parcel of what we learned and experienced in our Catholic education and watching our families live out this practice.

Following the teachings of Christ and growth over the years.

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you and love your neighbor as yourself summarizes the way my Catholic faith has shaped my life.

Strongly influenced.

Human Dignity, Human Needs of all people are met.

Our Catholic faith calls us to justice to stand with the marginalized and to work for change in our world. This is what Jesus modelled for us. This is what our baptism invites us to. Creation includes all the cosmos, and our invitation is to care for all and work until all are one.

It's made me understand that I need to work for justice in whatever ways I can.

I have been given a much-expanded view of what the issues are and what can be done. There are so many resources to help in this.

Belief in the necessity of inclusion for all people regardless of sex, sexual orientation, divorce, etc.

"Roadmap" of active change for those on the margins.

Jesus law and example of love God, others,
then self. try to see through the eyes of faith.

Respect for others, commitment to love others/
even our enemies.

My faith and the world are one.

My faith has led me to seek the truth in places
other than the institutional church.

Jesus taught that all should be one as Jesus
and the Father are one. We are all sisters and
brothers together in God's love.

My faith has shaped my understanding and
sensitivity to all people and that differences
between us are beautiful and speak the
diversity of God's creations and should be
valued, cherished and held with the deepest of
dignities.

By doing acts of mercy mainly for those in
need, writing stories for diocesan and parish
news and features, coming from my heart.

Q2. Share a time when you were heartened by the response of the bishops to a troubling event in the country or world.

Times When Pope Francis and the Bishops Inspire.

I am heartened by this synod.

I have been on mission in the Philippines for many years and was heartened by bishops willing to stand on the side of the poor, oppressed by the Duterte regime.

I am most heartened by the bishops of the US when they recently met in Chicago to discern what is causing the divide among bishops within the US.

I don't think of a time that I felt "heartened." More often I am disappointed by their responses. I am glad that the bishops do encourage the participation in the current synod.

I was heartened by the Synod on the Amazon. The bishops from South America were speaking the voice of the Gospel.

There have not been many. The bishops today mostly seem to focus on sin and what not to do! Probably when Pope Francis addressed the issue of welcoming immigrants is the most memorable time I was heartened.

This is hard! Hard to think of a time when I was heartened... There were times when bishops should have spoken and didn't (next question, I see). I think the bishops have spoken about the atrocities in The Ukraine.

When you say "bishops," do you mean USCCB or all bishops in the world? I'll come back to this question. Still stumped. I'll have to research this one. Maybe I've become so alienated by the bishops' lack of response to lots of other issues that I've not taken in anything that heartened me. Coming back to this question again, I still cannot think of anything.

I think Pope Francis as Bishop of Rome has heartened me in number of times by his responses to troubling events, like the plight of immigrants from the Middle East and the war in Ukraine. The bishops of the Amazon have also been a source of encouragement. Bishop St. Oscar Romero remains a great icon of a bishop who truly comes to "smell like the sheep."

I was heartened by the response of our bishop (now dead) to the sexual abuse scandal. He faced it head on and tried to follow the Charter. His response was not perfect, but he sincerely tried to deal with the situation.

I have not been frequently heartened by the response of the bishops to a troubling event in the country and the world. However, many bishops did respond well to the war in Ukraine and that was heartening.

I can't ever recall a time I was heartened by their responses, except by a few Bishops' response to the death of George Floyd.

I'm heartened with all that Pope Francis has written and how he chooses to live. I know a few priests who truly live the gospel message.

I am heartened by Pope Francis' promotion and leadership for the care of creation. There is not sufficient promotion by bishops.

I am thoroughly heartened by Pope Francis and his call to Integral Ecology - a whole life to live in a holistic way. I am grateful to bishops who are part of Pax Christi and challenge us to

make peace. There are other Catholic groups which have episcopal approbation, and I am glad to know of those.

Previously not much prophetic response from Canadian Catholic Bishops, but more recently their work in sexual abuse, and Native Reconciliation has been most of their focus. Can't say I've been "heartened" by anything... very UN offending stuff, mostly.

I was heartened by the response of many bishops to the horrible conditions at the US border crossings and to the tragedy of family separation there. I do think they could have spoken out more about this matter though.

I was heartened when bishops spoke out against the treatment of migrants at the southern border, and in the past, when bishops have spoken out against civil rights violations and against war.

I am constantly heartened by Pope Francis (as I was John XXIII) . They both listened to the Holy Spirit/Sophia and led the church to a greater sense of inclusion, joy and peace across all kinds of divides.

I am heartened by the message of the German Cardinal speaking out on the need to accept and minister to the LGBTQ+ community, and by even some of our local bishops who are championing this community, like Bishop Stowe of Lexington, KY, and by some other bishops who are speaking out about racism in the church.

I felt heartened when the Archbishop from Santa Fe, New Mexico took a stand against Nuclear weapons and nuclear waste in his state and has been very vocal. I hope his voice and position have a positive effect for the health & welfare of people in that state & in other states. The Archbishop has good discernment qualities & courage. I wish more bishops would be accountable & take a stand.

As a group the last time the bishops heartened me was Vatican II. As an individual the Archbishop of Santa Fe pastoral letter on nuclear weapons was very courageous.

I think there have been few times when I have been heartened by the response of the U.S. bishops, in particular. I was heartened by the so-called "Peace Bishops," but they were poorly received by the Vatican at the time John Paul II.

In our diocese I was heartened by the response of our archbishop in the summer following George Floyd's murder. They publicly decried the racism involved in his murder and held public ecumenical prayer services in the communities where demonstrations were taking place.

I was heartened by the 1970s Quest for Justice documents...early actions regarding immigration reform.

Some bishops seem to break from the conservative bloc to recognize and follow the Gospel in relation to racism, sexism, clericalism, etc. When they do, I am heartened.

I am heartened by Pope Francis' speaking out on Ukraine and calling Russia to account.

I am heartened by the compassionate and intelligent responses of our Bishop of El Paso, toward the migrant population on the Texas-Mexican border and his political activism on their behalf. I am consistently disappointed by the formal body of the USCCB for their lack of movement on the issue of migration.

I was heartened by the response if Archbishop Hunthausen to the nuclear weaponry being developed in this country, and his other acts of concern for the community.

I was heartened by Cardinal Bernadine's "Seamless Garment" (Abortion/ Death Penalty dignity of life treatise,) Bishop Ken

Untner's presence. and promotion of lay ministry and artists, social Justice. Rembert Weakland (LGBQ+ communities) Several more over the years that. do not come to me immediately as I write now. I do remember profoundly though Mr. Lucien Roy who with Cardinal Bernadine went to Rome for the Synod on the Laity where only a few laity were even involved.

I was heartened when the Canadian bishops called on Pope Francis to make amends and apologize to the First Nations in Canada for the great harm done to Native children in Catholic boarding schools. I was heartened by the many bishops in the US who refused to deny communion to politicians. We are all sinners. Jesus came to heal sinners. He ate with sinners. I am heartened by many of the German bishops in their willingness to listen and be more open. I am heartened by the bishops who support refugees, migrants and immigrants.

A few US Bishops publicly support Care for Creation (Stowe, Cupich, Tobin, a few more) - it's good to see these few be visible. The USCCB just updated Catholic investment guidelines to include corporations' commitment to Paris Climate Agreement. These guidelines will not have an immediate effect and it is not at all clear to the general Catholic population that our bishops are actively working to save God's earth. They do not organize any marches or petition their favorite politicians. So, I am only mildly heartened by seeing the few, brave bishops who love God's creation more than the donations of fossil fuel & banking executives.

The recent apology of Pope Francis to indigenous people in Canada allows for healing and reconciliation to move forward. Pope Francis' document on the Earth has opened our eyes and helped us to see our responsibilities in helping care for our home.

Whenever he speaks, I feel hopeful that our church is listening to the cry of the poor with

sincerity...and I'm always deeply touched when I hear Pope Francis ask us to "smell like the sheep" because he's spot on in his desire to love each of God's created souls.

Pope Francis has always been a ray of hope for me. I think we would like more action, but the wheels move slowly. I pray that he is able to enact more changes in our church and in the world.

Years ago, they spoke out about peace & war. Now they speak very little and often work against leadership of Pope Francis.

I am happy they spoke against the death penalty. I do not have much faith in the USCCB at the moment. They are too split...I am hoping Francis will live long enough to replace the Die-hard conservatives with pastoral persons.

Pope Francis has changed the dialogue and has given voice to the cry of the poor and marginalized that has not existed for decades.

Depends on the Bishop: very grateful for DC Bishop, Joe Tobin in New Jersey, San Diego Bishop, Cardinal in Chicago, etc. Keep them coming, Francis!

I cannot think of one. Pope Francis has been genuine and inspiring in his response to many ongoing crises: climate change, war, racism, immigration.

The response of the Canadian Bishops most recently to the discovery of the unmarked indigenous children's graves in BC and other provinces. And the most recent apology of Pope Francis.... an historic moment and step forward in our relationships with our indigenous siblings.

Right now, I'm encouraged by Pope Francis commenting on the way Russia is attacking the Ukraine, but I can't say that any of my bishops encourage me.

Pope Francis in his outreach to Ukraine.
The bishops of Canada in their work with Indigenous persons.

The election of John XXIII and Francis and the beginnings of the Vatican II movement but otherwise I must confess I have been so disheartened by the way the bishops behave from closing parishes to moving predator priests around to keeping pastors in place who have defrauded their parishes not supporting religious women communities -- it is all sickening to me and reeks of a power-hungry male hierarchy which may doom our Catholic Church.

Pope Francis has given me hope that the bishops and the faithful will truly care about the cry of the earth and cry of the poor. Bishop Romeo is an ikon of a shepherd - caring for people.

Those who support Pope Francis and his call to be one with our sisters and brothers.

Archbishop Schnurr on the priest abuse scandal by acting swiftly in July 2019, putting a priest on administrative leave immediately. And his statement on David Haas's music - Archbishop Schnurr addresses issues fairly and immediately. I LOVED Pope Francis consecrating Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart on March 25th - look - Russia has started to pull out.

Pope Francis.

Vatican II, Saint Pope Paul VI, and Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis at times.

I have always felt they could have been more to the point. I treasure the writings of Pope Francis.

I have been touched by Bishop Tom Gumbleton and his constant stand with women and the poor. His presence among others is

one of accompanying as Francis encourages. He is not afraid to speak to the power of other Bishops who fail to listen with compassion to the people of God.

I am thankful to Pope Francis for appointing Cardinal Tobin to our archdiocese. Our leadership has improved with his appointment, and he has been very responsive to the needs within our archdiocese and beyond. I think of when they encouraged parishes to sponsor families from Afghanistan who emigrated to our area. Our parish helped a family who moved to our community as they made the transition to a new life here in the US.

When I read the writings of Pope Francis

It is heartening to me that some (few) bishops have spoken out in support of immigration reform, the treatment of refugees/asylum seekers, anti-racist actions, the support for Pope Francis and his initiatives, and other Catholic Social Justice issues.

Not the Bishops but certainly Pope Francis.

Our present Pope Francis, who is compassionate as the Lord is compassionate, who is bringing us to a more embracing, loving and expansive space. I did not think I would live to see another Pope that was like John XXIII.

I can't say enough positive words about Cardinal Wilton Gregory and his pastoral efforts toward antiracism and inclusivity.

USCCB Challenge of Peace and movement away from the "Just War Theory" to active communities working toward Catholic infrastructure that supported a culture of justice that would bring peace. The alliance nationwide of "Dignity" allowing for the gathering of the LGBTQ community in Catholic Parishes. The work of the Sisters in promoting all forms of justice in compliance with the movements of change in National

governance. The Movement toward Woman's Equality in the late 70's that could have translated into Women's Equality in the church. Bishop Hunthausen's stand on Nuclear proliferation as a faith leader. Liturgical movements that promoted an understanding that lay participation as informed Catholics was key to gospel living.

Only a few bishops defended Fr. James Martin when he dared to speak out on the Pulse nightclub massacre. I greatly admire those who did including Cardinal Tobin.

When Cardinal Joe Tobin stands beside protestors and prays with them, that is what we need in all of our church leadership. Justice and love should be part of every church service as it is the crux of Jesus' mission and ministry.

Cardinal Joe Tobin in Newark NJ is always preaching and speaking on behalf of the poor and marginalized.

When Cardinal Gregory said he would not use the Eucharist as a weapon in regard to Biden/Communion controversy.

Our new Archbishop and now Cardinal, Wilton Gregory, who is an African American seems to be right on board with most of the injustices and inequalities we find in our society and hopefully can help bring some sense of reparation to our consciences.

Depends on the Bishop: very grateful for DC Bishop, Joe Tobin in New Jersey, San Diego Bishop, Cardinal in Chicago, etc. Keep them coming, Francis!

More through individual Bishops and Cardinals. Cardinal Bernadin was a person of justice. Bishop Stowe of Kentucky who works with Pax Christi. Bishop Seitz who is on the border and wrote a powerful letter and constantly speaks out. Sorry to say the USCCB usually doesn't inspire us.

When the child abuse story from Boston broke, I wrote to USCCB to say that the cardinal of the time in LA had hired 38 lawyers to make the 'Issues' be handled. I got a letter back within a week saying they were grateful for the information.

Cardinal Tobin came to the defense of the American Sisters when we were being accused of not teaching the faith properly in schools.

Cardinal Gregory and Bishop McElroy's challenge to the criticism of political leaders who receive the Eucharist and have been 'JUDGED' by Church "leaders" as unworthy... nourishment denied anyone is a 'crime/sin'.

the homilies and comments of Cardinal Cupich from Chicago and the Cardinals of Washington, D.C. and Boston.

Cardinal Bernadin, just modeling how to live, and how to die.

I can't think of any, except for Cardinal Bernadine who called for the seamless garment vision of life.

I am heartened by the message of the German Cardinal speaking out on the need to accept and minister to the LGBTQ+ community, and by even some of our local bishops who are championing this community, like Bishop Stowe of Lexington, KY, and by some other bishops who are speaking out about racism in the church.

I am thankful to Pope Francis for appointing Cardinal Tobin to our archdiocese. Our leadership has improved with his appointment, and he has been very responsive to the needs within our archdiocese and beyond. I think of when they encouraged parishes to sponsor families from Afghanistan who emigrated to our area. Our parish helped a family who moved to our community as they made the transition to a new life here in the US.

It was a little heartening to hear some of the Bishops (e.g., Cardinal Gregory) support the BLM movement during the summer of 2021.

I was heartened by Cardinal Bernadine (“call me Joe) “Seamless Garment” (Abortion/ Death Penalty dignity of life treatise,) Bishop Ken Untner’s presence. and promotion of lay ministry and artists, social Justice. Rembert Weakland (LGBQ+ communities) Several more over the years that. do not come to me immediately as I write now. I do remember profoundly though Mr. Lucien Roy who with Cardinal Bernadine went to Rome for the Synod on the Laity where only a few laity were even involved.

Many years ago, Cardinal Bernadine represented my views on care for the marginalized.

Most of what I hear from Cardinal Cupich from Chicago heartens me.

I’m always inspired by listening to Archbishop Blase Cupich.

I cannot say I have been. On a personal level, we had an issue of housing for Low Income in Anchorage and the Archbishop commissioned a lawyer to see what could be done. From that Faith Based Community Organizing began in Anchorage and then the Mat Su Valley. It is supported by the AB’s that have followed and thrives.

It is hard to picture a moment like that. Sometimes they just issue statements. My archbishop Jose Gomez issued a statement on the death of George Floyd saying that it was senseless and brutal, it was a sin that cries out to heaven for justice. Also in June 2018, he denounced the separation and detention of immigrant children at the border.

Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen, stood in front of the trains taking missiles to the Trident

Submarine Base. But that was so many years ago.

Archbishop Hunthausen of Seattle was a model for a leader who stood for the poor, stood against the destructive elements of nuclear energy, and lived the poverty of Jesus.

When families were being separated at the border, the Archbishop of San Antonio took many public stands on the evils of this policy even leading a huge group of interdenominational church people to City Hall to demand some action to help change the policy.

Archbishop Schnurr on the priest abuse scandal by acting swiftly in July 2019, putting a priest on administrative leave immediately. And his statement on David Haas’s music - Archbishop Schnurr addresses issues fairly and immediately. I LOVED Pope Francis consecrating Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart on March 25th - look - Russia has started to pull out.

I felt heartened when the Archbishop from Santa Fe, New Mexico took a stand against Nuclear weapons and nuclear waste in his state and has been very vocal. I hope his voice and position have a positive effect for the health & welfare of people in that state & in other states. The Archbishop has good discernment qualities & courage. I wish more bishops would be accountable & take a stand.

As a group the last time the bishops heartened me was Vatican II. As an individual the Archbishop of Santa Fe pastoral letter on nuclear weapons was very courageous.

In our diocese I was heartened by the response of our archbishop in the summer following George Floyd’s murder. They publicly decried the racism involved in his murder and held public ecumenical prayer services in the communities where demonstrations were taking place.

When they wrote and disseminated the pastoral on justice and on the economy- in the 80s. Some bishops have written stellar documents anti-racism. Archbishop Hunthausen and others protested nuclear armament

Archbishop Desmond Tutu when he chaired The Truth and Reconciliation Commission to address the atrocities of apartheid in South Africa.

I was heartened by the response of Archbishop Hunthausen to the nuclear weaponry being developed in this country, and his other acts of concern for the community.

Archbishop Bernardin of Chicago spoke about the seamless garment/cloth of life and our need to pay attention to the needs of the poor.

I have been on mission in the Philippines for many years and was heartened by bishops willing to stand on the side of the poor, oppressed by the Duterte regime.

Whenever he speaks, I feel hopeful that our church is listening to the cry of the poor with sincerity...and I'm always deeply touched when I hear Pope Francis ask us to "smell like the sheep" because he's spot on in his desire to love each of God's created souls

Responding to the refugees at the border, to the migrant workers, to the poor and to climate change.

I can't think of anything specific the Bishops have done. I am grateful for Catholic Relief Fund and Catholic Charities which provide for the poor and those hurt by tragedies.

Cardinal Tobin in Newark NJ is always preaching and speaking on behalf of the poor and marginalized.

In 1999-2000 Jubilee Year when the Vatican and USCCB called for debt forgiveness for poor countries.

Pope Francis has changed the dialogue and has given voice to the cry of the poor and marginalized that has not existed for decades.

In the 1970s Bishop O'Rourke declined to live in the Bishop's mansion. He built a home for the amount of money allotted to a poor person and lived in the neighborhood as a good neighbor. He helped his neighbors and tended his own garden. He lived in right relationship with others and was a great advocate for sustainable lifestyles, feeding everyone and advocating for rural Americans who were marginalized.

Bishop Untener was outstanding in his diocese, asking people to contemplate the poor at each of their meetings and living among his people and not in the Bishop's Quarters.

When our bishop said that we all needed to make an option for the poor and determine what it would mean for us, i.e., where we'd need to change our attitudes and actions. The U.S. bishops have spoken out several times in favor of justice issues, for example some pastoral letters.

Archbishop Hunthausen of Seattle was a model for a leader who stood for the poor, stood against the destructive elements of nuclear energy, and lived the poverty of Jesus.

Pope Francis has given me hope that the bishops and the faithful will truly care about the cry of the earth and cry of the poor. Bishop Romeo is an ikon of a shepherd - caring for people.

It's been a long time ago, but when Bishop Quinn arrived in Sacramento (early 80's probably) the first thing he did was to sell an opulent bishop's residence with surrounding acreage, and he used that money to expand services to the poor. The Bishop moved into a basement room in the Cathedral rectory. He walked the inner city in the evenings, talking

to young runaways and to the homeless in the area. When he retired as bishop, he left Sacramento and went to serve rural Native American communities in AZ and NM. Bishop Quinn was an actual servant leader, and I was lucky to have seen his example inspire many to service.

I have been touched by Bishop Tom Gumbleton and his constant stand with women and the poor. His presence among others is one of accompanying as Francis encourages. He is not afraid to speak to the power of other Bishops who fail to listen with compassion to the people of God.

Occasionally something is said about the poor or about the plight of migrants.

I think there have been few times when I have been heartened by the response of the U.S. bishops, in particular. I was heartened by the so-called "Peace Bishops," but they were poorly received by the Vatican at the time = John Paul II.

I appreciate Romero changing his position and standing up for the poor. Beyond that I can't think of anything.

Vatican II as a whole. Recently the bishops' conference of Texas has communicated with Gov. Abbott, asking him to spare the life of Melissa Lucia, an innocent mother.

The bishops or some bishops? The Canadian bishops put out a document in the 80s around the economic situation in Canada, having a more progressive pope, being earlier in a diocese with a Vatican 2 bishop - the last in Canada

Our bishops have lost their way to one issue politics. They have forgotten Vatican II.

Immediately following Vatican II, our Canadian bishops were very conscious of social justice needs. Hence, Catholic education leaned much

more toward 'being one another' keepers that on hierarchical teaching.

Have to go back to shortly after Vatican II when we got support for the changes implemented at all levels of the Church.

Sorry, nothing comes to mind. USCCB plays too much in the USA political arena. Their role in clergy sexual abuse and hiding \$ from survivors is troubling itself. Their position paper on anti-racism without action or follow up is troubling. Their failure to embrace the principles of Vatican II is troubling.

In 1999-2000 Jubilee Year when the Vatican and USCCB called for debt forgiveness for poor countries.

The election of John XXIII and Francis and the beginnings of the Vatican II movement but otherwise I must confess I have been so disheartened by the way the bishops behave from closing parishes to moving predator priests around to keeping pastors in place who have defrauded their parishes not supporting religious women communities -- it is all sickening to me and reeks of a power-hungry male hierarchy which may doom our Catholic Church.

Maybe the recent visit of Canadian Indigenous peoples to the Vatican to meet the Pope. I know the Bishops (some, anyway) facilitated the visit, and will facilitate the upcoming visit of the Pope to Canada. This is good, very good. I don't want to say too little too late, as Canada is very young in its truth and reconciliation journey.

Vatican II, Saint Pope Paul VI, and Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis at times.

I have been much encouraged by the evident authenticity of Pope Francis and his resolve to be guided by the experience of Vatican 2. But I know he does not have all the insights and answers. In my opinion, he is

much handicapped by his clerical, priestly formation which has isolated him from many transformations in consciousness occurring in my lifetime and his.

As a group the last time the bishops heartened me was Vatican II. As an individual the Archbishop of Santa Fe pastoral letter on nuclear weapons was very courageous.

I think there have been few times when I have been heartened by the response of the U.S. bishops, in particular. I was heartened by the so-called "Peace Bishops," but they were poorly received by the Vatican at the time. John Paul II. The bishops' response to the immigration crisis at our border is the most proud I've been of them.

Unfortunately, I seldom hear of something that heartens me. On the southern border, I hear of individual priests or other Catholic organizations who are there to support people, but nothing from the USCCB.

Responding to the refugees at the border, to the migrant workers, to the poor and to climate change.

Acknowledgement of the maltreatment of immigrants at the southern border in San Diego by the Bishops of San Diego. Openness of women's roles, place and authority in the church in the San Diego diocese. Openness to the LGBTQ communities including diocese sanctioned ministries.

It is hard to picture a moment like that. Sometimes they just issue statements. My archbishop Jose Gomez issued a statement on the death of George Floyd saying that it was senseless and brutal, it was a sin that cries out to heaven for justice. Also in June 2018, he denounced the separation and detention of immigrant children at the border.

More through individual Bishops and Cardinals. Cardinal Bernadin was a person

of justice. Bishop Stowe of Kentucky who works with Pax Christi. Bishop Seitz who is on the border and wrote a powerful letter and constantly speaks out. Sorry to say the USCCB usually doesn't inspire us.

I was heartened by the response of many bishops to the horrible conditions at the US border crossings and to the tragedy of family separation there. I do think they could have spoken out more about this matter though.

When families were being separated at the border, the Archbishop of San Antonio took many public stands on the evils of this policy even leading a huge group of interdenominational church people to City Hall to demand some action to help change the policy.

I was heartened when bishops spoke out against the treatment of migrants at the southern border, and in the past, when bishops have spoken out against civil rights violations and against war.

I believe it was when former President Trump was clamping down on allowing immigrants to come into the U.S. and was allowing children to be separated from their families. If I remember correctly, the USCCB came out in support of keeping families together and not separating them at the border.

Pope's condemnation of the war in Ukraine; bishops response to immigration at the border.

I have respected Bishop Seitz for his actions and preaching on the border

I am heartened by the compassionate and intelligent responses of our Bishop of El Paso, toward the migrant population on the Texas-Mexican border and his political activism on their behalf. I am consistently disappointed by the formal body of the USCCB for their lack of movement on the issue of migration.

The response to the consideration of the migrants at the border but more statements need to be made.

The bishop response to the immigration crisis and to our former president's call for a border wall to keep migrants out.

been active in programs to move forward with the indigenous people and all peoples. of his community.

Our Archbishop is welcoming immigrants, but I do not know how he is doing that specifically.

Denouncement of war in Ukraine

Focus on the critical issues - climate change, refugees, the war in Ukraine, the economy and reform in the church.

I am currently very disturbed by the faint response of our Church leaders to the crisis on Ukraine. Where is the leadership of Christ our Liberator??

Since the invasion of the Ukraine, I haven't heard of a special collection to support them. We say a prayer for them at mass. I'm thinking the bishop doesn't want to detract from the current annual diocesan collection going on right now. However, when we got a new priest a few months ago, he didn't hesitate to ask parishioners to donate to a fund to buy some new statues for the church.

Jesus taught us to live one another. Our world needs a lot more love and a lot less hate. A hot war in Ukraine where Ukrainians are being slaughtered by a lying megalomaniac dictator, watching a Supreme Court Justice nominee be treated with so much racist and sexist animus by Republicans in the Senate, a Florida Governor who signs a "Don't Say Gay" bill which marginalizes everyone in the LGBTQ community...this is all hate, and it has nothing to do with the law of live that Jesus taught us.

Today, I hear nothing from the Bishops concerning Ukraine. Supporting refugees who need asylum. The attack on the administration over abortion and threats. The lack of speaking out against war, capital punishment, environmental atrocities, refugees. The support of one issue voting. The attacks on Pope Francis for his support of works of justice.

Concern for Ukraine, political division in our country, those on edges of society.

See question 3 plus no one in our diocese or the bishops council seem to be saying much about Putin and the war in Ukraine.

When a terrible situation is happening - e.g., migration, immigration, Ukraine's devastation, women's role in the Church and so many topics, WHEN they are happening, the bishops are often silent. They have become political and seem to be always hedging their bets.

This is hard! Hard to think of a time when I was heartened... There were times when bishops should have spoken and didn't (next question, I see). I think the bishops have spoken about the atrocities in The Ukraine. When you say "bishops," do you mean USCCB or all bishops in the world? I'll come back to this question. Still stumped. I'll have to research this one. Maybe I've become so alienated by the bishops' lack of response to lots of other issues that I've not taken in anything that heartened me. Coming back to this question again, I still cannot think of anything.

To stand for justice, to pray and help Ukraine, to reach out to welcome refugees from all countries, to fight to end the death penalty. To help all marginalized people, to provide education, food and shelter for ALL children, to help the elderly. (A Phila diocese recently sold 6 Catholic nursing homes recently to a for-profit corporation, so the care of the elderly is nonexistent there).

I think Pope Francis as Bishop of Rome has heartened me in number of times by his responses to troubling events, like the plight of immigrants from the Middle East and the war in Ukraine. The bishops of the Amazon have also been a source of encouragement. Bishop St. Oscar Romero remains a great icon of a bishop who truly comes to “smell like the sheep.”

I think that God is calling us to speak up both as individuals and as a church. Ukraine is calling for a plea for peace from the top leadership in the church. Why?

One event has been their response to the war in Ukraine.

I have not been frequently heartened by the response of the bishops to a troubling event in the country and the world. However, many bishops did respond well to the war in Ukraine and that was heartening.

Find a way to stop the war in Ukraine.

Collection especially to support those in need in the Ukraine.

Right now, I'm encouraged by Pope Francis commenting on the way Russia is attacking the Ukraine, but I can't say that any of my bishops encourage me.

Pope Francis in his outreach to Ukraine. The bishops of Canada in their work with Indigenous persons.

I am very disappointed with the American Bishops Conference in not issuing Pastoral Statement on the Pandemic, the War in Ukraine and many other moments when we need to hear the compassion of the Shepherds.

Pray for peace in Ukraine, teach nonviolence in all dimensions, language and behavior; empower peace and role of women.

I am so impressed with our Pope and his responses to the war in Ukraine--to ALL people's rights too.

Now is a good time to reflect as we see what is happening in the Ukraine. I think our Pope Francis and other prelates have put forth prayers and words to address what Putin has done.

Somewhat by their response to the situation in Ukraine.

Archbishop Hunthausen, Thea Bowman, Mother Theresa, the current president of Ukraine Pope Francis Gandhi Bishop Tutu (You people at Future Church, who put us in contact with lovely people and each other).

Archbishop Schnurr on the priest abuse scandal by acting swiftly in July 2019, putting a priest on administrative leave immediately. And his statement on David Haas's music - Archbishop Schnurr addresses issues fairly and immediately. I LOVED Pope Francis consecrating Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart on March 25th - look - Russia has started to pull out.

The bishop of my diocese responded to the Ukraine War by encouraging all to donate to Catholic Charities so the money can be sent to the Ukraine people.

Both are speaking out against the war in Ukraine and lending aid.

Pray for peace and unity. Our Congress has become so partisan instead of working for the common good. Pray for peace in Ukraine.

The Official Church has a voice larger perhaps at times than any one of us. I look to that voice to speak out with unity amidst the diversity and call for justice for all of God's people. We look to our past and see the many “sins” committed by the Official church in regards

to human rights...in our own country from the time of the earliest settlers stealing and killing native Americans, to the slave trade, to treating women as 2nd class citizens, to denying that those who struggle to come here to be safe and raise their families in peace are met with welcome and hope...particular at our borders to the south at this time. As some have noted, we have had open arms to the dear sisters and brothers coming from Ukraine...with their white skin and blue eyes. We are not so welcoming to black and brown skinned people, however. That is a place that needs changing.

Praying for the people of Ukraine was a good thing but I feel the collections for food, medicine, and other necessities is better.

If any U.S. bishop is doing anything besides praying about the destruction of Ukraine and the wars in so many other countries, I don't see it. Praying is necessary, public statements are helpful, but I want them to do more than talk.

The people of Ukraine.

Romero. A few sisters who are not naive about climate change, immigration issues, covid/'vaccinations', the Ukraine war. A few lay people who are not afraid to call priests and bishops to accountability.

Our diocese has been outspoken against Russia and in support of Ukraine and its refugees.

The 1980's Challenge of Peace and Economic Justice for all documents. With war in Ukraine and with 1% of households having 43% of global wealth (UN), the bishops need seismic action for reform.

Certainly not the Ukraine / Russian situation happening now. Or I haven't heard a uniform voice.

It is extremely disappointing to me that so many prominent bishops are accepting of Donald Trump who has mistreated so many

women and those who disagree with him and who sought to overturn a legitimate presidential election and continues to do so while they have threatened to withhold Communion from President Joe Biden. Many of these same bishops seem indifferent to racism, poverty, the synodal listening sessions, the need for vaccinations/masks/precautions against the corona virus, the wars in Ukraine and Yemen and other places, and many seem to accept funding from moneyed Catholics who espouse these attitudes. These are not political issues, but rather issues of social justice and truth.

The Pope's denounce of the invasion to Ukraine.

War in Ukraine.

Pope's condemnation of the war in Ukraine; bishops response to immigration at the border.

Maybe the present crisis of Ukraine is getting due attention.

I am heartened by Pope Francis' speaking out on Ukraine and calling Russia to account.

As I share with my JPIC meetings at Good Shepard, I am learning how we can start with small steps for justice with health packets for Ukraine, Shelter packets, and petitions for justice with immigrants and the poor without housing.

Hmmmm. Sadly, I cannot think of such a time in the past 20 years. What have then said about the Russian attack on Ukraine.? Few commented usefully on Covid. Years since race was addressed formally. Focusing almost exclusively on abortion, making Eucharist a political weapon, aligning with right wing politics is what we her. I cannot remember being heartened, which is why most Catholics ignore them.

Not encouraging Catholics to get the Covid vaccine; not speaking out against Russian war crimes against Ukraine; siding with right wing politics and with an immoral and unethical former president when he was in office.

My Catholic faith has led me try to live my life with a theme of love one another. Follow the Commandments. However, it does not mean that failure by the faithful to spread this belief with all should be forced on all by the passage of laws - such as antiabortion laws. We should be focusing on economic equity and education so that all lives are valued - If this were done there would be no unwanted” babies. I believe in the Commandment - Thou shall not kill - thus, I wear a mask to prevent my transmitting COVID 19 that could kill someone. Further, this Commandment require the Community of Nations to punish Mr. Putin and those who have carried out genocide in Ukraine and Syria to be punished for killing of innocent lives.

Well, I guess the bishop’s response to the crisis in Ukraine has been positive.

The response of the bishops over the war in Ukraine is encouraging.

To war in Ukraine.

The current situation in the Ukraine.

In my view, I can’t remember a time when I was heartened by the response of the bishops. Their responses seem empty to me. Take, for instance, the crisis right now at our southern border with Hispanic refugees seeking asylum. I have not seen a response from the bishops that indicates to me that they have a real concern with what is happening in countries in Central and South America that has caused this great migration. And little response to help the refugees seeking asylum once they reach the southern border. Right now, they could be petitioning the Russian bishops to speak out about the atrocities Russia is imposing on Ukraine. Where are there voices? In prayer

only? Sometimes actions are needed on top of prayer.

When the bishops shared in prayer for the people in Ukraine.

Q3. Share a time when you felt disappointed by the response of the bishops to a troubling event in the country or world.

The Crusades The Inquisition The Holocaust
The famine in third world countries The sex abuse scandal The recent Presidential election when I heard from the pulpit that there was only one candidate who was pro-life (sic) The current situation in the Ukraine The abuse of nuns The disrespect of the laity The scarcity of women in church leadership The lack of ministering to undocumented people in my community

The USCCB's political policies endanger women and girls every day. 1. They actively oppose the Violence Against Women Act ostensibly because it includes protections for LGBTQ people. 2. The USCCB's June 23, 2010, statement on Abortion and Medical Procedures to protect "health" of the mother makes clear that if doctors assess that a pregnancy is stressing a woman's organs that a direct abortion is not permitted. In their statement they refer only to the "health" not the "life" of the mother. To me, they are in denial that women do die unnecessarily in pregnancy and that when a woman is only 11 weeks pregnant for ex., and will die if the pregnancy is not ended, they, as "pro-life" bishops basically condemn both the adult woman and the baby to die. This is immoral and shows me that the male hierarchy still does not fully value adult women. The Catholic Church leaders cannot say that they protect the lives of mothers; they do not in all circumstances. It breaks my heart to say this, but pregnant women cannot rely on Catholic hospitals to fully protect their lives.

the cover-ups of the sex scandals; the money to cover up and not deal with situations properly. the

killing of a nun in Baltimore who attempted to assist girls being sexually abused by the priests and other men.

Election of Joe Biden, the Pulse nightclub shooting, the Covid 19 pandemic

All too often bishops are out of touch and political pawns of trump and conservative money donors. I don't trust bishops and I don't spend much time listening to them

Anti-abortion hateful rhetoric and telling people they had to vote Republican in the U.S. b/c abortion -- literally, the Harrisburg Archbishop said on TV in an interview years ago that the most vulnerable are the unborn and we must vote to protect them from abortion -- he was clearly responding to the interview question about who to vote for by saying vote Republican b/c of ONE ISSUE. Yet, no help to prevent abortion. Anti-funding / etc. to promote free / affordable access to contraception for women and girls. And certainly, no criticism of the majority of all violence perpetrated by males. It's like abortion gives male clerics a reason to put women / girls down, and yet women volunteer more than men in the communities, in the parishes, etc. 2. Bishops in the U.S. telling people to vote for Trump. 3. Bishops in the U.S. siding with the Far Right and spouting conspiracy theories about the U.S. Presidential election that Trump lost. 4. Bishops in the U.S. threatening to not give communion to Democrats or anyone who is pro-choice (which is NOT pro-abortion). 5. Too many more examples I can list if I go back over the years, especially since the 1980s. Maybe Far Right bishops are angry still about Vatican II. They certainly seem threatened by the current Pope, who is not radical like Jesus in terms of treating women fairly.

The Bishops were clearly in opposition to women being ordained in the Catholic Church. I believe there should be more women ordained priests.

Disappointed in Catholic Bishop to Biden re: Holy Communion. Thought personal conscience prevailed. I guess not if the Bishop has a different opinion.

I feel guilty thinking sometimes of the homes in the places that these bishops and popes live in and they're large and worth a lot of money in and people are living in poverty and the Vatican is it's like a castle. And I feel so guilty seeing this.

I am definitely and completely Vatican II (at 87). I can't understand any bishop not backing the Holy Father.

The sexual abuse

The failure of the bishops and priests to address critical social issues in their homilies. Instead, we get rather bland attempts to try and explain some rather obscure readings, mostly from the old testament. None of the excellent spiritual writings from the last 2000 years are allowed at mass. Women may not preach. Ridiculous!! The Holy Spirit is responding to our prayers for change but is not saying what many church leaders want to hear.

Extremely disappointing is that a great number of bishops in the US choose to deny the devastating effects of the sexual abuse crises on scores of individuals and families. Disappointing that church authority refuses to listen to the call of the Holy Spirit to ordain women to priesthood.

There's often no response or the focus is misdirected. The Church also tends to point the finger and others and not see its own faults.

I was disappointed by the bishops who want to deny Eucharist to Catholics, by those who are in denial that Black Lives Matter, those who want to exclude LGBTQ+ persons from the church and the sacraments, those who continue clericalism and the patriarchy to the exclusion of women and the laity, by those who covered up sexual abuse of children by priests and reassigned them to other parishes, by those who dismissed sexual abuse of adults by priests as unimportant, by those who closed parishes in minority communities. Their response to migrants, refugees and immigrants is often disappointing.

Bishops and priests in their homilies have not expressed their support enough.

Trying to prevent a person from receiving Communion when the person is following his or her own conscience

I think the issue of bishops not wanting our President to receive Eucharist because of issues related to abortion!!

Cardinals (from Burke to Dolan) are seen as aligned with the Republican party (as if abortion is on the issue in our culture that needs to be addressed)

The priests sexual scandal is so disappointing, and St. Michaels in Findlay Ohio very recently experienced this. How can it still be happening????

We have some Bishops in the US who are siding with the Republicans - when they shouldn't be siding with anyone but THE POPE and God! Then, Pope should demote them for not following the bosses stances.

They didn't join together and defend Raymond Hunthausen.

Response to the actions of pedophiles and the acknowledgement of their victims, denouncement of Joe Biden and other Catholics who are judged by them instead of God.

Often

The bishops who ignored and/or covered up the sexual abuse of minors was a huge disappointment to many Catholics who left the Church. I didn't leave, but I've not trusted too many bishops since, especially the conservative ones who seem rigid to me in digging in and closing ranks against any attempt to reform the Church.

Bishop Lennon in Cleveland and his manner in closing Churches and reforming communities of faith. He was not Lay Ministry Friendly. I presently have no connection whatsoever with the current Bishop of Cleveland. In the past I was engaged

with several, being on committees and projects both. approved and disapproved, sometimes not appreciated at all, but I did have a connection with both Bishops Hickey and Pilla. Under Archbishop Quinn I was denied being a Eucharistic minister because I was a liturgical dancer and “some of the Catholic faithful were scandalized by such a thing in the sanctuary of the church.”

Bishops’ response to child sex abuse. Bishops who live in luxurious splendor, while there is well-known poverty in their diocese (e.g., Philadelphia, some towns in Germany).

Not encouraging Catholics to get the Covid vaccine; not speaking out against Russian war crimes against Ukraine; siding with right wing politics and with an immoral and unethical former president when he was in office.

I have been very saddened by the response of the bishops to the BLM movement, support of immigrants, support of LGBTQ people.

Not saying anything about “Black Lives Matter”.

Whenever it is too little, too late - on slavery, on Nazism, on racism, and on the complete failure to engage Catholic women in full participation in the Church.

Too many to mention! As a country, we CLEARLY have done a horrific job in addressing the history and the Catholic Church in Canada’s role in the attempted extermination of our indigenous people. The CCCB continues to shoot itself in the foot and ONLY when publicly shamed and exposed, are they willing to do “the right thing”

Child abuse scandal, the lack response and accountability for decades of harm to this day in 2022.

Placing abortion over Black Lives Matter

Myopia on abortion; distorted focus on fetal life as separate from the mother. Misogyny is embedded

in the culture of the hierarchy. Imagine if the bishops had chosen to respond to Roe v Wade by championing universal maternal care, instead of fifty years of self-righteous anti- legal abortion.

Almost every time the USCCB opens its mouth

When there was not a word to correct the statements of Trump against the immigrants and the poor.

The whole child sex abuse issues and its aftermath.

Just about every time

How can I tell you? How to count the ways? One comes to mind - when our President Biden was sworn into office, Cardinal Gomez, as leader of the USCCB sent a letter of criticism to him for his views on abortion and followed up by calling to have him virtually “blacklisted” by trying to deny him the Eucharist in a public way. Disappointed doesn’t begin to describe my reaction. Need I say more?

The bishops threat to withhold communion from President Biden.

Very disappointed with my bishop’s response to Covid (reopened Masses right as delta variant took off, did not adjust the policy in face of this, refused to permit pastors to require masks, issued a policy eliminating any mask mandate in Catholic schools when omicron variant was still spreading); bishop issued “guidance” to Catholics voting in 2021 State elections that was very directly political, elevating abortion issue above all the other life issues in play in the election (see covid, immigration, health, education), thus leading to the election of very Trumpian governor. He also issued a very troubling statement regarding trans children that toes the governor’s line and ignores science, medicine, and psychology - at least he says to love them, but then says don’t give them any care - would he deny care to a child born with any other “defect” - missing a limb, blind, etc? how is this different?

Truly living a faith that does justice not simply lip service Greater focus on racial equity, healing, and justice All are welcome is a lie--what about our BIPOC and LGBTQ sisters and brothers

The clerical abuse scandals. The actions of the Bishops conference regarding the Affordable Care Act

I'm disappointed by the slow response to Pope Francis call for synodality and attention to us as a diverse world of people.

The bishops certainly disappointed me with their handling of the clergy abuse issues and the politicization of the bishops.

Issues regarding women's reproductive rights, a singular stance of abortion as Pro Life

telling people from the pulpit that if they voted for Biden they were going to hell

My Pastor response to the "listening" event seemed minimal, who was reacting to what the Bishop had to say about this task. With the bishops permission the Extraordinary Mass on Sunday afternoon continues. I have no problem with that, for then folks who want that have an opportunity. What is happening many of those responses are finding their way into other Sunday, Saturday Masses. Our long-standing choir and director were replaced with new music and a new director without explanation. Where was the parish council? What about the Liturgy ministry? Does the pastor need permission for these changes?

The response to the sexual abuse crises and the bishops inability or refusal to come clean. This has led to the mistrust of families, dads and moms, whole families leaving the church. The financial crises follows. Secondly, the changeover of parishes into a pre-Vatican stance in liturgy, music, parish leadership. Vatican 2 happened, and folks are trying to bury it and the communities who embraced the spirit of change and inclusion. More of us are leaving. The church is in crises as well as the rest of the world.

The response to Residential schools in Canada and the abuse endured over many, many years by Indigenous students who were forced to attend them.

Archbishop José Gomez, President of the USCCB, giving an address in Madrid, and repeating the message that "new social justice movements" are "pseudo-religions...", etc. Shameful and sad! I have a keen sense of justice, I am passionate about my justice work and my charity work, which are mostly done with friends in my parish. We do it out of love. How dare he?! It is especially distressing to me that he leads the USCCB. If you want an example of how the bishops as a group have badly disappointed me, look to the ongoing sex abuse scandal. They never apologized to the faithful or accepted their full responsibility for the many years of horror, the people left damaged, spiritually and psychologically. They protected priests, themselves, and the institution before they protected the children or saw to the mental health needs of damaged adults who were victimized when they were young. They have even worked to keep statutes of limitations short, so that victims could not be heard or compensated. We are supposed to just look ahead, not obsess over past sins, and be proud and grateful for all the child protection programs put in place by some of the dioceses - BS! Have you ever heard of the importance of the truth and reconciliation programs in places where other horrors took place, e.g., South Africa? We need truth and reconciliation sessions in dioceses across the globe for the sex abuse scandal, and we need to know that the victims are all being heard and taken care of. The one short session that we had in my parish was woefully inadequate.

Recently, with much but not all of the hierarchy, disappointed is far too mild a feeling. I am deeply embarrassed by their shenanigans which are the alt-right agenda. Of course many of the alt-right Catholics have oodles of money that I don't have.

I have been so disappointed by their inability to deal with the big questions of today. They seem to place great emphasis on individual rules of the

church rather than using their influence to raise the consciences of priest's and parishioners to the inequalities surrounding us in our country and the world. I never hear statements coming forth on climate problems (affecting the poor especially), poverty in general, food insufficiencies, racism. They carry so much influence (or once did) but they don't use it for the betterment of all societies. When you consider the ministries of Jesus, the Bishops for the most part (I know there are some with broader ideas) seem to not be following his example.

Lack of interest in the impending climate change crisis

Their response to Vietnam, homeless, racial issues, women's futures. Some days it seemed that there was nothing they were involved in. Admit that some years I really didn't care to what was/or not being done. Fortunately, my eyes eventually opened.

When the hierarchy dialogued publicly about politicians' access to Holy Communion, I was very distressed. Then the ridiculous discussion about which pronoun a priest must use when administering the sacraments was embarrassing and appalling.

The incident of having to re-baptize persons who were baptized with the "wrong" pronoun..."we" instead of "I" smacks of patriarchal clericalism.

They have not been great about systemic racism and the dangers of capitalism, and they are TERRIBLE on issues of gender and sexuality

So many of our bishops seem completely oblivious to the needs of the poorest and marginalized. I'm often disappointed.

Annually bishops ask parishioners for thousands of dollars to promote the annual diocesan appeals. While the money is earmarked for excellent causes such as seminary education, faith formation in children, little attention is paid to faith development for adults. Once they are confirmed, bishops rarely address faith formation for adults. With the demise

of a significant number of Catholic elementary & secondary schools, this is more necessary than ever,

Oh, let me count the ways. But for me, the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back and has likely pushed me toward not going back to the official Catholic church (though I will always be Catholic in my beliefs) was the outrageous nonsupport of now President Biden when he was inaugurated--beginning with the less than lukewarm commentary on his inauguration, then immediately followed up with the hoopla regarding not allowing him to receive communion, while calling it something else (i.e. needing to have all Catholics understand the Eucharist more). I was taught, and believe, that we receive communion BECAUSE we need it, because we are all sinners. The level of judgment levied by the Bishops and politicization of the sacred meal of Jesus disappointed, saddened and, I must use this word, disgusted me.

I don't want or expect bishops to engage in politics or world events.

Quite recently our bishop has threatened to take away the Catholic identity of a Jesuit run middle school for troubled boys (in the diocesan city), unless they removed their BLM and their PRIDE flags in front of their school but then again I've been very disappointed a number of times in my ministerial life.

Most of the time I am disappointed on the silence of our bishops regarding war initiatives, anti-homosexual laws and attitudes, racism, Trumpism, etc.

Almost all other times. Definitely in relation to the pedophilia, they couldn't write about women, they aren't at the borders as a whole, they aren't publicly challenging notions of immigration, racism, sexism. they only seem intent on divorce, anti-gay, and abortion.

They are overly conservative and not willing to embrace the changes that the Pope wants.

Responses on matters concerning sexual issues, especially as they effect women.

When the Bishops speak out in support of Trump or Trump's policies, or things that do not seem to take the poor and marginalized into account, I am very upset, angry and disappointed.

Often, because when a statement is made it is almost because they are expected to say something. The only time they seem to call on legislators to act is when it involves abortion.

The present on-going situation about the Eucharist and who is worthy to receive/lots of priests hold the same view. St. Francis said we should not judge.

Their lack of action and disappointing response to pedophilia, LBGTQ, Women's vocations, staunch stand on abortion, their influence in voting.

U.S. bishops lack of support for more aggressive legislation for climate change issues.

Totally disgusted with our Bishops lack of unity, concern, no listening just mandating

It is extremely disappointing to me that so many prominent bishops are accepting of Donald Trump who has mistreated so many women and those who disagree with him and who sought to overturn and a legitimate presidential election and continues to do so while they have threatened to withhold Communion from President Joe Biden. Many of these same bishops seem indifferent to racism, poverty, the synodal listening sessions, the need for vaccinations/masks/precautions against the corona virus, the wars in Ukraine and Yemen and other places, and many seem to accept funding from moneyed Catholics who espouse these attitudes. These are not political issues, but rather issues of social justice and truth.

Wanting to deny communion to Joe Biden. Not supporting the Synodal process

Today just about everything. Although I do believe we have some excellent ones.

I was disappointed and angry at the silence of the bishops around the actions of former president Trump and then their condemnation of Joe Biden on his stance regarding abortion. Their general denial of communion to politicians and leaders who vote their conscience on abortion and the emphasis that they place on this one issue above other issues of Catholic social teaching is very disturbing.

Appointment of bishops to key cities that turned VII dioceses to clericalized forms of governance. Removal of many religious highly educated women from Archdiocesan positions ending years of VII program development by strategically imposing groups like Opus Dei to key cities and throughout the South the Legion of Christ effectively quashing the structures based in shared power and responsibility moving those positions to hire people uneducated that would do what "Father" said. Knowing for 30 years priest pedophiles were moved from parish to parish in and out of the state and country protecting the "image" of the church over the brokenness of people and their communities. Realization of the huge amounts of the treasure of the church was being used in the legal system to protect the hierarchy from criminal behavior without recourse to justice. Realization that the hierarchy used women as a workforce-not partners in ministry-and that their low wages and "genius" were no more than simply a commodity that could be used for their advantage in their culture wars, abused at their discretion to create wealth and fortune for themselves and thrown out like old pieces of furniture that are not needed.

Their constant stance on the abortion questions and ignoring the other pro-life issues.

The total lack of response to Laudato Si, especially that in 7 years, the world reaches the Tipping Point unless systemic change now.

The U.S. Bishops were talking about whether President Biden should receive communion. President Biden's faith is very important to him and denying him communion would have been a terrible injustice and a terrible sacrifice for him.

Very little and too late statements on George Floyd

Our bishops' and pope's complicity in the covid coverup and pushing the so-called vaccine is a crime against humanity.

The most recent example that I can think of was the troubling comments & "weaponizing" of the Eucharist when the bishops were trying to come up with a document on the Eucharist that might comment on denying the Eucharist to public figures (politicians) who don't oppose issues that go against Church teachings. I was totally disgusted by that whole scenario.

I am almost always disappointed when I read about what the US bishops are doing with their time and money. Though they have said they have confronted the clerical sex abuse problem, there is evidence that much remains to be done.

The sexual abuse issue. Immigration. Birth control. Orientation. Keeping power/ non mutuality in decision making with women and laity. Punitive dealings and statements regarding LGBTQI. They are born or wounded that way.

Now is a time when so much goodwill could be extended and instead, mandates and threats of committing "grave sin" are handed out to the spiritually starving from the institutional leader of our local institutional leader, Wenski. https://www.miamiarch.org/CatholicDiocese.php?op=Article_archdiocese-of-miami-covid-mass-attendance-obligation-resumes March 16, 2022, there was an announcement from our local bishop of a mandated obligation. This hurts my soul. Teaching in this archdiocese for decades, a confirmation class each year since 1987 until 2017, this backlash of threats feels like what a soldier fighting and killing innocents, killing what is living, this is what it must feel like. War for an unknown or wrong cause. This messaging comes through not justice in ADOM news but to my personal email that does not ask how my family is braving the pandemic but instead warns of pending doom if we don't attend mass inside a building. Shame is on us along with the

pope's naming of shame towards all the efforts to suffocate the wisdom of indigenous first peoples everywhere.

Lack of openness to the value of having married priest and/or women priests More than disappointed when homily is about abortion, undermining diversity, mocking Muslims, etc.

The inclusion of the leadership of the Church as a political bloc

It's always disappointing because the Bishops choose the safe way that keeps them in the past...always against anything new or different, immediately label it as evil. They just don't take the time to listen and understand.

I felt very disappointed when the bishops wanted to limit the Eucharist to those who agreed with their political strategy.

The Canadian Catholic Council of Bishops lack of ownership, accountability and transparency with regards to Residential Schools in Canada. The past coverups and ongoing coverups of sexual abuse by Canadian Bishops which protected priests and bishops who had been accused of sexual and physical abuse against children and young men and women. The Vatican's response to members of the LBGTQ community who desire full acceptance into the Catholic church. It is hard to believe the bishops of the church see same sex marriage based on a loving relationship as a sin, yet they turned a blind eye to acts of pedophilia.

After January 6, I was disappointed in the reaction of our local archbishop. He did have a mass of peace but would not speak out against the violence and placed blame on both sides, though not equally at least. And though our archbishop has passively allowed LGBTQ ministries, he has not given vocal support to the welcoming message that Pope Francis has put out. Of course, the LGBTQ should not only be welcomed but accepted and allowed to be active members in their parishes.

Bishops remaining silent on climate change, the remarks made during Black Catholic History Month right before the USCCB national meeting, overall silence on significant social justice issues, an egregious emphasis on the reception of Holy Communion

Sex abuse crisis - opposition to Pope Francis

I was troubled by bishops who let politics seep into their leadership roles especially those who supported Trump when he was president (and even now) who caused so much racial division and had such a negative impact on our country. Everything Trump stood for was against my Catholic upbringing. Most recently the issue of denying the Eucharist over their political perspective concerning abortion, especially President Biden who to me truly represents Catholic values, was very disappointing to me.

Even when bishops finally speak out on an issue—gun violence, refugees, whatever—they issue a paper document and figure that they’re done. That’s not enough. Why don’t they go to Congress with ordinary people (and women religious) to lobby or demonstrate at nuclear weapon sites or get to know some LGBTQ people and then walk with them in the places that are not welcoming? If any U.S. bishop is doing anything besides praying about the destruction of Ukraine and the wars in so many other countries, I don’t see it. Praying is necessary, public statements are helpful, but I want them to do more than talk. [I acknowledge that there are exceptions by a few bishops, often so few that we can count them on one hand. I am grateful for them.]

So many cover-ups with abuse cases. The number of priests who abused and were transferred to other parishes...perpetuating the situation.... tragic!!

Always

The silence about racism and the fear of making white persons uncomfortable. The unwillingness to confront white privilege and the lack of courage to preach about the sin of systemic and institutional

racism. The Bishops said little or nothing about Trump’s racialized comments and actions throughout his presidency.

Local community Attempting to close two churches. Would not give confirmation to a young adult because she told him she was gay

As a north American, I have been totally disenchanted by the ecclesial response to the politics of abortion, since abortion became legal. I have listened to too many stories of women’s life experience when they have been pregnant when they don’t want to be.

Their lack of transparency in the priest sex scandals. . . It was bishops covering up at the parish level but in the hierarchy i.e.: McCarrick. . . It was disgusting and many lost their faith in the Catholic Church

Their proLife view making abortion the most important thing.

A bishop from Massachusetts was written up in the Sunday Boston Globe for taking a position to remove a “Black Lives Matter” Sign from a Jesuit school. I believe that was a wrong move to take. Someone from a Vatican II discussion group that I attend has written a letter to that bishop. I applaud her. I think the bishop’s stand was dangerous for the welfare of the people who attend the school & in particular for the African Americans who joined the school. I need to think if I will take such a move myself. I remember this bishop coming to my hospital for the Confirmation of Catholic patients who have medical & psychological disabilities.

Another example of extreme disappointment of some bishops making COVID vaccinations, anti-masking, buying into political cultural wars.

I was so disheartened by Cardinal Dolan’s catering to Pres. Trump instead of publicly criticizing Trump’s treatment of immigrants and refugees from around the world and now by the bishops focusing on a huge gathering on the Eucharist while there are so many issues that are tearing the

Body of Christ apart because of racism, economic injustices, destruction of the environment, and so many other injustices. I feel like the bishops are overlooking the real issues of our time.

The whole sexual abuse of minors and religious women has been especially troubling. A cousin of my father was a priest who reported another as a sexual predator and was told to keep the secret. Eventually, the predator became the bishop of his diocese and Dad's cousin was sleeping in his car! Very sad part of the personal history that our family was aware of long ago.

In the United States the bishops have not done enough to speak on issues of violence, racism. Our current bishop is not doing anything for the synod process. Instead, he celebrated what was done in the diocese several years ago.

Covered a little in previous question. But I am very disappointed in the lack of inclusion for the LGBTQ community, particularly around the transgender community. My son is gay, and he left the church because he was only reminded he was going to hell for who he was and not welcomed as a brother in Christ.

We hear nothing from our bishop about any social issues.

Have not a clue to be what it's like to be a pregnant female, even under the best of conditions.

The public refusal of the Eucharist to President Biden for his views on abortion is scandalous. Jesus did not give the Eucharist so it could be used as a political weapon. It is a sacrament to bring us closer to God.

I have been very disappointed in the U.S. Bishops and there are more reasons than I can explain. I wish they were less political, listened to the cries of people, and followed Jesus. My heart aches for women of all ages, our LGBTQI brothers and sisters, and many more people whose voices are not heard. I would also like more of our Bishops

support Pope Francis. We need a reformation in our Church. Many of our Bishops have identified themselves with the rich and the powerful. I know many people in the U.S. who don't trust our Bishops.

I can think of several examples over the past couple years: any kind of united pastoral response to Covid/the vaccine/mask policies, to the blatant racism that gave rise to Black Lives Matter, to LGBTQ persons, to the horrors of immigration issues at our borders, support for one and condemnation of another President ...

As I study the history of the Catholic Church and racism, I am very disheartened by what has occurred and continues to occur in our Church.

I have been disappointed when our leaders don't speak out about Racism and the terrible experience of January 6, 2021, but seem to be afraid they will lose some of the people that support them if they speak up. Little was said in our Diocese by our Bishop.

I am constantly disappointed that the church is not addressing the sin of blaming victims for sex abuse. It has done a great deal of damage to victims of sex abuse (whether by clergy or by others). We cannot speak of what happened to us for fear of being blamed for it. If abused by a priest, the church offers confidential resources. But for those of us abused by others, there is nothing, and we sit in painful silence while everyone is talking about priests, priests, priests. We have Masses for those who have had abortions, etc., which is a very good thing, but we have nothing for people who experienced sexual abuse.

Their comments on racism, clergy abuse and their attitude toward the homosexuality. Also, the January 6th event at the Capitol.

Just about any topic one could think of, racism, social justice, immigration issues, death penalty, LGBTQI, climate change, etc.

The responses of the Bishops, including the Popes, to the horrific abuses of pederasty in the Church

I cannot remember a response. good or bad.

I'm disappointed in the bishops' (1) frequent silence when politicians' priorities and policies are detrimental to the poor, the sick, the marginalized; (2) weaponizing the Eucharist, (2) encouraging support for candidates based on a single issue, (3) silence about politicians' disinformation campaigns

Black Lives Matter movement

There is so little response from our US Bishops to the massive problem of refugees at our border and the treatment of women and children in detention buildings.

Bishop Binzer's handling of the priest abuse as stated above in Cincinnati - before July 2019. He was in charge of the 'Abuse Incidents' and did not inform the Archbishop as dictated and gave this priest at least 2 'chances to change'!! I could not have been more disappointed after all this time he did not do his due diligence in reporting.

Lately, I have been so disappointed with those who are in authority. Many seem to be corrupt and care more about the loyalty to their lifestyle and power than actually serving the needs of the people they are supposed to serve. If the church is falling apart, you can look to those in power. Pope Francis is finally a Pope who is coming back to the way Jesus wanted us to be, and there are those Cardinals, Bishops and priests who are against him. They even have media to further their causes. It is quite shameful. As far as the horrible way they have handled the sexual abuse and the financial abuse is sinful. Those who have the power and have put themselves in authority above others, denying, lying and covering up for their own selfish purposes will someday have to answer to God for how they abused their power. May God have mercy on them, for they showed no mercy towards others.

Every day! Sacramento had its worst shooting in history over this past weekend (6 dead, 12 wounded) - and there's been not a word from our Catholic bishop. And if he had spoken, it would have been with the usual 'our prayers are with them' platitudes. In the meantime, the Episcopal Bishop spoke about the need for services to those embroiled in gang violence and for additional gun control - and the Episcopal church closest to the shooting is having a vigil service this evening. Our Catholic bishops have sold their souls to the Republican party because the only issues that they care about are ending abortion and limiting gay rights.

Certain hierarchy who do not want to listen to the voices of the poor, of women; those who speak out against Pope Francis. Those who wanted to refuse Communion to President Biden.

Bishops' discussions about the denial of Eucharist to politicians based on their political stances

The in-fighting over who is "worthy" to receive Communion has been disgusting. Given the clergy sexual abuse, emphasis on abortion vs all life issues and emphasis and bowing to big money has totally destroyed any moral authority of the bishops.

The lack of recognition and giving voice to the evil of white supremacy in our country and in the church. They tend to ignore it or join in the "I don't see color" group. They take no strong stance on white supremacy in the church and in society.

So many times.... lack of 'response/inclusion' to the marginalized: unhoused, LGBTQ, addicts, poor, victims of violence, racial injustices, etc.

The bishops drag their feet. They are fearful of stepping outside the boundaries of Church law. This is their priority, not people in need.

Certainly, the sex scandals - there is no excuse that I can find for the cover ups over the decades. But when there is something, the Church can do (divesting funds, assisting refugees, homilies on current events with a call to action), the Church should be doing it. Far too often homilies are focused on Roman times and how Jesus acted - not on how we are called to act today.

I have been deeply distressed by the majority of bishops to the rights and needs of LGBTQ people. Priests at my local parish (I assume with support from the diocese) spoke out against gay people and distributed anti-gay marriage signs (Prop 8) after Mass. Jesus would not have done this.

I believe it was Dolan who brought Donald Trump to a meeting of Bishops to lobby for subsidies for Catholic Schools. It was as if he and all that participated with him had sold their souls to the devil in hopes of gaining a few dollars.

The controversy over President Biden and communion. Receiving the Eucharist is not a reward but a connection to the living presence of God.

Archbishop Gomez recent speech criticizing Black Lives Matter as being anti-religious. The scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' time would be right at home with him.

Here in Philadelphia, PA the response of several bishops has been so troubling, and disheartening related to the sex abuse scandals. Also - in a church with such racism is in our DNA - not a word! I haven't heard about the care of the earth but parishioners have taken up the cause. The voting issue is scary in this diocese... forming conscious is not the norm... It's about MONEY!

Often troubled by our Bishop's response to troubling events. Our Holy Father, Pope

Francis as our Bishop has responded in so many ways to our troubling times. Would like our Bishop / Bishops to do the same. Pope Francis has helped us all (the World) to see and hear the poor, the needy, the Earth's needs.

The response to the sexual abuse was terrible.

I am so disappointed in the amount of racism in the American bishops and how concerned they are about the correct words that must be pronounced in order for a sacrament to be valid. Our lord would probably call them a brood of vipers for being so concerned about "the law" and not the people.

To George Floyd's murder and connecting to the violence. Their responses to abortion and women's reproductive health, their stance of hubris on the abuse scandals. Stance on complementarity!!

Bishops who decide who may receive communion (if you come to my line, I may not refuse anyone). Bishops who see abortion as the only "life" event--forgetting about so many others. Bishops who are more interested in the clothes they wear than the homeless.

Issues of gender orientation, matters of remarriage, having parishes be leaders in social justice. Speak out against injustice and be a leader in something besides abortion.

Bishops attending the Republican National Convention and publicly supporting Donald Trump, a fascist. Bishops calling on Catholics to vote on one issue: abortion, thereby helping Trump to win the presidency. In spite of the low character and sick behavior of Trump. I was astounded and so hurt and humiliated.

Homeless people had their tents destroyed in St. Petersburg, FL.

The whole sexual abuse issue by church leadership is one area that disappoints me. It is almost as though they are still more concerned

about reputation than the good of the those who have been victims. There have been some public apologies, but in my mind not enough.

There was an incident in the community where the parish priest had overstepped his bounds and a couple of parishioners went to the bishops for his involvement. The bishop was clear that he would simply support his priest even though he agreed that he had overstepped his bounds

The sex abuse coverup is the most troubling. I don't hear any response to the increase in poverty, the increase in mental health problems with our youth, the climate change crisis. I don't hear anything in the mainstream local news from the archdiocese.

Ever since the 1980's, most of what the Canadian Bishops have written about, has not been "radical" in the sense of getting to the root of the problem!

Recently, I was disheartened by my bishop's response to the controversy that was started by the US Bishops and their attempts to sanction Joe Biden. In addition, I read about Cardinal Dolan's homily on Dorothy Day which was disheartening because it appears that he misread her life.

I think the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops could have been more quickly willing to own the role of the church / the regret and the sorrow inflicted in residential schools and not hide behind a hierarchical structure of leaving replies only to individual Bishops and their fiefdoms.

Their response to Covid, their denigrating of President Biden in his Catholicity; comments about LGBTQ people, most are refusing to talk about/ consider full equality for women in the Church.....

I am shocked by the little our bishops have done to denounce the multiplying efforts in our

country to reduce voting rights and resist gun control legislation.

I often wonder where are the Bishops and Church leaders on many issues such as equality, openness and acceptance of LGBTQ community, refugees at the borders, etc. Except for Francis! Thank God for him.

In the past there was no owning of the sexual abuse crisis and it caused much harm to young families and turned them off of the Church. Full disclosure of all aspects of church life needs to happen to regain people's love of the church. The exclusion of women is also seen as discrimination.

The baptismal formula issue. The solution was impossible and probably on shaky ground since baptisms in other religious groups are accepted, i.e. Orthodox

Silence on the abuse by clergy; no action or direction on clericalism; no response to priests who were falsely accused; no support of priests who left and could be welcomed back due to accepting priests from other Christian denominations and are married with children.

Very few spoke against the Iraq war; some chose to ignore the sex abuse scandals and pedophilia, misuse of funds, and other injustices or scandals within the church system

Failure of the USCCB to speak out in the past year on racism. Comments of their president were particularly disturbing Failure of the USCCB to endorse synodality; uneven response depending of the Bishop of each diocese The split in the USCCB--particularly what appears like an anti-Francis sentiment among some and reverting to pre- Vatican II theology Cardinal Dolan's public support of President Trump The statement that gay people were "objectively disordered"

The whole racism issue has been ignored, it seems, by the American Bishops. They don't speak out when an incident occurs.

bishops' judgmental response to Joe Biden elected as president... Bishop not allowing women to be a part of the Holy Thursday washing of the feet ritual.

I have found it difficult that the bishops have centered everything around the abortion issue when there are so many needs in our world. To have so few speak out about the racism in our Church and in the US is troubling. To stand with the poor in the Poor Peoples Campaign would be wonderful but I don't see that happening among Catholic Clergy. It is truly shameful that they are not present or calling their people to help because it isn't their "creation", but they aren't doing anything about the poverty, racism, militarism in our country.

Bishops response to the election of President Biden with a warning about receiving communion

My response goes back to slavery. Not many Church persons addressed that issue and as a result, Blacks are still feeling the residuals from that lack of humanity. The Bishops were a little better with the Black Matter Issue but more could and can be done to address this racial issue that plagues our country like leprosy.

The division among them regarding the vision of Pope Francis.

I remain profoundly disappointed that the US Catholic bishops do not lead the Catholic faithful in calling for a generous and welcoming policy for immigrants at the US borders. They don't push back against the groundswell of nationalism, hate and exclusion, and fail to advocate for the poor who are huddling, massing, at the border.

My bishops have only acted as administrators of a structure. Moral leadership to face crises has been nil.

The issue of clerical abuse of minors is terribly troubling. I have been part of Voice of the Faithful since its inception pushing for just response to victims of abuse. There is minimal response.

The response to racism has been tepid, at best; the latest letter on racism never names white supremacy or bias. And the response to Biden's election was disgraceful, fussing about whether or not he was "worthy" of Eucharist.

To all bishops who talk one story, but live another

slow response to the sexual abuse in the church but our particular bishop has acted and taken initiative prior some other diocese.

Just how some of our bishops in our country are not moving forward with Laudato Si, the Synodal experience. Making a big to do about Biden and missing the real issues. Lack the power of the magisterium as teachers.

Any of the bishops' meetings seem to discuss trivia and neglect the pressing needs of the world. They also are becoming too political as opposed the Gospel values

I am still troubled by bishops who deny the Eucharist to people because of their beliefs. It appears that they are trying to "play God" and stand in God's shoes judging who should or should not be able to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. God calls all people to him to give them spiritual nourishment.

see #3 -- all of the things I have listed are profoundly disturbing to me -- in thinking about it I would also add the reluctance of our bishops to ask for forgiveness for the evil they have done and allowed to perpetuate as if we

don't see what is being done in our Church's name!

The US bishops and some local priests have been too aggressively political even from the altar.

I am very disappointed with the American Bishops Conference in not issuing Pastoral Statement on the Pandemic, the War in Ukraine and many other moments when we need to hear the compassion of the Shepherds.

Any support of President Trump or Trump's actions by any bishop was truly awful.

When the child abuse story broke there was Voice of the Faithful that I joined in hopes change would come. That was 2003. We are still seeing news that it is continuing. The priest needs to be held accountable for not reporting a crime. The perpetrators need to go to prison

Not joining the ecumenical letter after January 6 Insurrection. Silence.

Bishops conference in US that get stuck on outdated doctrine instead of facing troubling country and world troubleshooting

Our US bishops are muted by money and the advice of conservative politicians. Law is more important than mercy, compassion and love. Jesus is writing in the sand!

Having a tough time-sharing authority with women and laity of multicultural backgrounds. Not really open to changes in the church. Likes the traditional way of doing things.....it is safer for him.

There have been many times when I have been disappointed. One big one is the Synod on Synodality. My particular parish does not know it is going on. It is on the diocesan web site; however, folks don't know to go there and nothing is said to the clergy to make the synod process happen.

I am disappointed that Laudato Si has not become the premier issue of the Church and its bishops.

Of course, the entire sex abuse reality was very poorly dealt with, and it made me embarrassed. Thank God we have good Pope Francis who is now calling all of us to become who we proclaim to be - the presence of Christ in our world!

Responses to racism - even now responses to the Ukrainian slaughter, and of course TRUMPISM!

No response or a call for conversation regarding women's needs, and rights over their own body.

When God's children were discriminated against because of who they love, who lost their jobs, were threatened with their catholic identity being taken away. (Indianapolis)

The Phoenix Bishop banned JustFaith, denounced a nun who was administrator of a hospital for her handling of life and death, and denounced the participation of women on the altar.

No response to the wars, the pains of the poor, immigration reform and the really big issues. Room at the Table was a far cry to address racism.

Lack of integration with what is occurring other than "prayers of the Faithful"

The support of Trump for the presidency was shocking.

The establishment of a Eucharistic year in the USA so that the faithful become aware of God's enduring presence when we have Laudato Si that is so powerful in God's presence in integral ecology.

I did not see any deeper response from the bishops than CEO's in business.

Bishop Gomez by his seemingly political driven leadership instead of more solidly based on what the pope has noted as concerns.

That document wasn't followed as it should have been. Denying communion to LGBTQ and legislators. Going overboard on the abortion issues and not connecting other life issues to the right to life.

I wrote to the NY cardinal re the treatment of immigrants at the border during the Trump administration and cited Matt 25 and was told that he worried that I wasn't concerned about the abortion of babies.

Bishops who clearly politicize moral issues are destructive to the church community. The attempts to deny communion to persons who are pro-choice, for example, is highly demoralizing.

Not enough was spoken when the BLACK LIVES MATTER was surfacing and took center stage. Too much silence.

Countless times by the Bishops responses to the sexual abuse findings of 2000 to 2018+++ It is time for optional celibacy for priests to end the political man-made rule from the year 1139, which has not helped priests have a more healthy life.

No mention of the plight of refugees!

Many times - racism, sexual abuse, LGBT acceptance are some.

When they supported Trump and his ideas.

I find Bishops are usually vocal about things like anti-abortion and silent on matters such as racism or women's rights or matters of indigenous rights.

The response to this synod has been very poor in our diocese at the diocesan and most parishes

The CONTINUAL protection of the pedophiles and other predators. The USCCB support of our ex-predator in chief, 'build' the wall Trump was a BIG factor in my fleeing the Catholic Church in Terror.

In the USA, the bishops making abortion the "prominent" social issue of today, divorcing it from the other life issues - like racism, sexism, etc.

In this diocese when Robert Finn was bishop, he did not respond appropriately to the priest child abuse scandal. Praise God he is no longer a local ordinary! However, he's still a bishop with all the privileges thereof; he was not held accountable!

Some bishops tried to place sole electoral importance on the abortion issue the message of which they sometimes distort.

The whole recent issue about who should receive communion. Their attitude of prolife really being pro birth and then not considering the rest of life and thinking they can decide who can receive communion. Also, the issue of the one word in the sacrament of Baptism that nullified all the sacraments of thousands. That when the world is in crisis and little is being said about that. The incident was shameful and sad.

Reaction to this synodality movement and to the priorities of our Pope in general.

Disappointed in the response to the question of a married priesthood and the need in the Amazon rainforest.

Failure to address sexual abuse, sexism, racism, etc. from the pulpit and/or in leading people to confront those sins ~~ practically.

thinking - even THINKING of refusing communion to the President

I have many where they failed; standing up for immigrants against ICE in our community (our community is 60% Hispanic), hiding pedophiles and forgiving religious embezzlers.

Cardinal Dolan with his backing of Trump at least in appearance

I am very disappointed in how the church hierarchy have handled the clergy sex abuse scandal. It seems that they refuse to take ownership for what happened.

Too many lack of reaction or response

I am disappointed that our Bishops have not addressed CURRENT issues of race, sexism. But I think they have been hampered by the pedophilia issue in our Church and their failure to respond to it adequately.

The US Bishops over-emphasizing certain issues, especially abortion and guiding people to vote on singular issues and ignoring other human and social issues.

The Bishop in Sacramento took great offense at the "desecration" of a statue of Juniper Serra white saying nothing about the treatment of indigenous people or the ongoing murders by law enforcement of people of color.

Too much support for right wing causes and politicians.

The list is long...but what comes to mind is the pedophile situation...

I have been disappointed by the response of the bishops to many events including the Communion Wars in the US, as well as the response of some of the bishops to COVID-19. Having bishops be resistant to COVID-19 health and safety guidelines and vaccines was

very disheartening and has endangered many lives.

In the past few years, the USCCB has CHRONICALLY failed to respond to TOO MANY human crises in the United States. I am both gob smacked and scandalized.

When they are silent. When they push the rules and not the spirit of God

The treatment of Joe Biden

Recent decisions.

There is so much war. And the troubling issues at the southern border of the US seem to be ignored. Our Pope speaks out but so many US priests seem to be blind to plight of God's people suffering.

Areas of racism, sexism, women, LGBTIQ.

I never hear from the bishops here in Mexico. I haven't seen very much coming from the U.S. bishops affecting the climate, women's equality and equity, racial problems, etc. This has been quite disappointing.

The response of the bishops, and not all, to the pain of divorced Catholics and LGBT members. Law seems to rule, not understanding and love.

I believe that the bishops have lost credibility as they spoke from the pulpit telling us to vote for former President Trump making our elections only about abortion, though this is important but where is the care for children and mothers at the Borders who are trying to escape violence, gangs, drugs, rapes but are told to go home...that too is a form of abortion. There have been so many situations where we wait for some strong voice to speak out about racism, inequality of services for the poor, to address hunger and loss of housing for families and our Church is silent. Their strong stance of being outwardly against Pope Francis is destructive to

the faithful. There are times I wonder if we will have a Church of the people or will we just go through the motions of being Catholic.

Throughout Trump's presidency the church in Alaska was silent on his lack of honesty and his abandonment of refugees. While Trump made a mockery of the truth the sermons we heard were all about the sin of abortion and how we needed to return to pre-Vatican II in order to become holy.

But he undoes what he said on November 4, 2021, when he said that the protest for the death of George Floyd was Marxist-inspired, anti-Christian, and pseudo-religious. Also, on the election of President Biden instead of congratulating him, he was playing politics, his message was very critical. If you compare his message to him Pope Francis's message, you will notice a big difference.

I have been very disappointed by the seeming lack of enthusiasm and the lack of attention on the part of many of the US bishops for participating in and encouraging their dioceses to undertake the synodal process.

Now, in this time in the U.S., I'm very disappointed by the bishops partisan political actions, particularly related to issues effecting women, people of color, and LGBTQ community. I was also very disappointed when some of the bishops supported Donald Trump for president in 2016 solely because he said he would take actions to overturn Roe v. Wade.

Many times! 1) They remained silent after the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on January 6. The United Church of Christ condemned the rioters and Trump, but the Catholic bishops remained silent. 2) I was not around then, but I know that the Catholic Church did not condemn Hitler's atrocities in World War II or do much to welcome Jews to the U.S. 3) When former President Trump put children in cages trying to cross the border in Texas, no one condemned that. 4) They did not condemn

the murder of George Floyd and others. 5) the sexual abuse scandal. So many more issues where I've been disappointed in the lack of response..., but these are some that come to mind right now. 6) Bishops could have put in a mask mandate so people would be safer in church, even in states that were laissez-faire about masks. Instead, they didn't, and no one wears masks in church anymore. Maybe they were afraid of turning off people who refuse to wear masks (and lose their \$\$), but instead, they turned off people like me who won't go back anymore. So, they've lost me instead! More continued in #9 below...

Many of the bishops in our country seem to have aligned themselves with our former president and the Republican Party and with the abolition of abortion, without including all the other forms of injustice and inequality that is rampant in these our United States of America, especially, Racism and White Supremacy, that they seem to embrace.

LGBTQ persons=intrinsically disordered; clergy "fragility" around sexual abuse; BLM being dismissed as "pseudo-religion"; Dolan's support of Trump, etc....

So often: in their silence regarding Trump's immorality; one issue focus in politics rather than a true pro-life stance; the insistence on exclusion regarding the Biden-Communion controversy; the "in - out" attitude towards the marginalized, such as LGBTQ+; the resistance of too many to Pope Francis; the denials of continuing clergy abuse.

Any time women, LGBTQ or Black Lives Matter issues need support.

Immigration, racism, misogyny, housing, war, homelessness, voting. We talk about these issues as folks in JPIC, in our working groups-lay led. These issues rarely if never come up in the pulpit. Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation

When a CD showing marriage can only be between a woman and a man costing thousands of dollars was sent to all parishioners in the diocese. Gay marriages were not valid. Money could have been used for other purposes for those truly in need.

Silence in the face of elected officials whose actions destroyed freedom of speech, of participation, and supported violence, destruction, racism ... When fear of losing \$ or 'image' led Hierarchy to non-prophetic silence, to fear seeing and speaking the truth.

In questioning and renouncing the reception of Holy Communion by the President, Joe Biden. And in giving the message that to be pro-life Catholics must vote for D. Trump.

The sex abuse scandal worldwide. The non-acceptance of LGBTQ. Racism in the Catholic church

The Bishop's silence around Donald Trump's racist imperialist violent language was shocking; and the manner in which it appeared some Bishops coddled and supported him was embarrassing. And - compare that to the USCCB immediate criticism of Catholic Joe Biden, with Archbishop Gomez and others almost out the gate criticizing his views. Follow that with the incredibly backward Eucharist discussion where the whole point - at least publicly - was whether politicians who support legalized abortion can receive the Eucharist. This was bad on so many levels. First of all - the bishops - who should instead have spent considerable time in collective repentance for their role in enabling abuse to occur - had the audacity to determine who can receive Eucharist. And then the obvious political angle - the question was not whether racists, or slumlords, or gun manufacturers, of domestic abusers, or white nationalists, or unbridled capitalists, or deniers of health care - can receive, the only issue discussed was abortion. A complete aberration of Catholic Social Teaching and the Gospel.

I think that the polarization of the bishops conference has helped divided our country. A young priest that I know from South America thinks that the US Catholic bishops are the most conservative in the world, and that is saying something.

The current divisiveness in the USCCB over issue of sexuality and politics. It takes on many flavors but is most blatant in the bishops who have adopted the gender dichotomy approach to sexuality. LGBTQ+ folks are on the margins in many places, why would they join the attack? There are some amazingly positive bishops, a growing number. We in Columbus have just received word that our new bishop is the first Indian American bishop in the country's history, a man who grew up with discrimination. We are hopeful.

A negative response to the above proposal. the removal of all altar girls from the sanctuaries of our churches. women encouraged to be only in the kitchen. lack of promotion of involvement in justice issues when the lay people recognize the necessity of promoting justice issues

There are many times I have disappointed by the bishops response: on clergy sex abuse crisis, in supporting policies against the LGBTQ community, lack of commitment against war and abolishing nuclear weapons, continuing the support of the just war theory to name a few.

The role of most Bishops in the US that need to maintain the status quo of power and control of the clergy at the expense of the body of Christ in its richness of diversity and life.

During the last Presidential election, when many U.S. bishops supported Donald Trump simply because of his stand against abortion despite this man's clear dishonesty, ignorance of democratic principles and support of racist and sexist policies.

I am disappointed by the \$ devoted to the upcoming Eucharistic extravaganza they are planning. I am disappointed by the closing of churches and the sequestering of assets by bankrupt dioceses, to avoid paying compensation to victims. USCCB is not adequately teaching seminarians -- most don't know about Vatican II. I am disappointed by the pomp and circumstances with which they lead their lives, when they should be shepherds and "smell of their flocks".

They are amazingly silent on political issues, like health care needs, poverty, abuse of women, LGBTQIA's and trans abuse, gun violence

I am currently disappointed in Cardinal Dolan, His response to the Synod has been abysmal. He is more interested in raising money than in social responsibility.

When a terrible situation is happening - e.g., migration, immigration, Ukraine's devastation, women's role in the Church and so many topics, WHEN they are happening, the bishops are often silent. They have become political and seem to be always hedging their bets.

To one in our diocese or the bishop's council seem to be saying much about Putin and the war in Ukraine

The Bishops and clergy that rejected the Black Lives Matter actions. When the pullback came to Vat II; The awful translation of texts for Liturgy that came out a few years back.

The campaign and election of Donald Trump

I was told by a Bishop that Catholic Social Teaching was not of primary importance in education of youth.

I am very disappointed in the seemingly lack of compassion for the brother Bishops who have been accused of hiding priests accused of sexual abuse. I believe our Bishop Emeritus

did what he believed to be right. At the time decisions by himself were made. I hope he will be proven not guilty of wrongdoing and will be reinstated to his beloved priesthood. All make mistakes. But to me he is being crucified for being honest with the people and the media,

It's not just the bishops, but also the priests (probably influenced by the bishops) who seem never to be a part of an ecumenical group taking a stand for a social justice pertinent to our city, state, country.

I believe that the Church in the U.S. for the most part is ultra conservative and sides with the Republican party and their wealthy donors and does nothing to upset them. I am furious that the church has said nothing about the former president who is no example of piety or justice. I am disgusted with how bishops have shown partiality to Republican office holders. It has really diminished my regard for the hierarchy and their moral voice. I do not have the respect for the Catholic hierarchy that I once did. I believe they are more interested in the financial picture than they are in the pastoral picture of the church. It is sad but I believe that it is true that many of them love their positions more than helping the people. They are not a source of my being fed spiritually. I am a Catholic despite the hierarchy of the church. I really don't respect the whole idea of today's hierarchy. They are out of touch with the people.

Unfortunately, it's every time. They do not agree on anything which erases the possibility of any faith filled response to anything. Only Francis provides leadership

Painful how much \$\$ was spent on responding to same-sex marriage issue locally. We should be rejoicing in those who find love.

Bishop in San Francisco re: people who are gay and Bishop in La re: Black Lives Matter and social justice

Almost always disappointed. Most of the clergy has lost my respect at this point. I feel like they have lost their way, being swallowed up by politics and pandering to the conservative, rich, white males in their diocese.

Sexual abuses, interested in building the big churches rather than building places for the poor & homeless

The head of our Bishops Conference now is highly critical of the Black Lives Matter movement - highly critical. I think that is a major tragedy.

lgbt, racism, immigration

The partisan politics of the USCCB regarding major policies during the Obama administration - especially pushing back against ACA. The same stances towards candidates in the 2016 and 2020 elections.

Today, I hear nothing from the Bishops concerning Ukraine. Supporting refugees who need asylum. The attack on the administration over abortion and threats. The lack of speaking out against war, capital punishment, environmental atrocities, refugees. The support of one issue voting. The attacks on Pope Francis for his support of works of justice.

Threatening to withhold communion from Joe Biden because he supports a woman's right to make her own reproductive decisions.

The Bishops would not speak out against the regime of Donald Trump who demonstrated time and again assaultive behavior towards women and a racist view towards People of Color. Priests were allowed and, in some cases, even encouraged to encourage people to vote for Trump. Such a disappointment and travesty, another injustice for women and POC in our church

Although Catholic Charities does wonderful work, our Cardinal limits their influence. It

seems that he highlights Food Handouts, and public events rather than meeting the immigrants, mentally ill and homeless people in their lives. The incarcerated and injustices around ICE detentions are not ever spoken about.

Since the invasion of the Ukraine, I haven't heard of a special collection to support them. We say a prayer for them at mass. I'm thinking the bishop doesn't want to detract from the current annual diocesan collection going on right now. However, when we got a new priest a few months ago, he didn't hesitate to ask parishioners to donate to a fund to buy some new statues for the church.

Deeply troubling: their one-issue endorsement of political candidates, regardless of all the candidate's other stated positions - on immigration, nuclear disarmament, death penalty - the list goes on and on.

I was troubled when my diocese joined a suit against the governor of our state for instituting a mask mandate during early Covid.

The fact that bishops took out insurance policies in the 20th century to cover losses they anticipated incurring due to scandals of child sex abuse in the 21st centuries, rather than addressing the issue thoroughly when they could have, is the core of why the patriarchal model has no integrity through its self-aggrandizement and preservation.

I am disappointed when Bishops use the threat of withholding the Eucharist to people. They could be more caring to the LGBT community. But they are influenced by powerful, large money donations.

I cannot see how any priest or bishop could support Donald Trump. Supporting him in any way is supporting less for the poor and more for the rich. It's supporting the poor treatment of women.

I am very disappointed by the response to the LGBTQ community.

US Conference of Catholic Bishops focus on communion for Biden instead of justice for the marginalized.

I am currently very disturbed by the faint response of our Church leaders to the crisis on Ukraine. Where is the leadership of Christ our Liberator??

Charlottesville is close to my heart, and I was horrified to see it happening where I use to work and eat my lunch. The ministers and rabbis that stood against the instigators were not joined by any Catholic priests and only by a young man who was studying Theology. And then our diocesan follow up was so meek.

I am usually disappointed in most of our American Bishops as they do not support Francis' leadership. Also, I abhor the fact that they supported Trump and run down our current president, Biden.

I was profoundly disappointed when the Archbishop of New York aligned himself publicly with Donald Trump. I have been profoundly disappointed by the USCCB's lack of response to racial injustice, poverty, the plight of refugees and the environment.

The Black Lives Matter movement was never addressed in our diocese or the plight of the LBGTQ community!! The leaders of the Catholic Church in the US are all about white colonialism!!

The Bishop's still seem to be an insulated group - they are not the Church. The Gospel is alive, not a document to legislate from - that got the pharisees in trouble with Jesus

I will never forget the disastrous end of our United States' Bishops' attempt to write a pastoral letter on "Women" which totally failed and never was published. That is a great

comment on where the church stands with women and their issues. I need not mention the sexual abuse scandals which were hidden and then poorly handled at all levels by the hierarchy.

I am disappointed by their lack of leadership in racial justice. Even their pastoral is too little, too late. I am disappointed by their divisions also. I am disappointed that some refuse sacraments as a response to public persons!

The bishops response to the victims of sexual abuse. That should have been a "no brainer"!

As a social worker doing restorative justice and I organized a national organization of mediators and others to mediate clergy sexual abuse cases. The response of the religious orders was the most positive while the dioceses were more legally oriented.

Their lack of commitment to including LGBTQI in the life of the church especially with the latest laws passed in Florida

I was extremely disappointed with the way the bishops handled the sexual abuse crisis. the protection of their "brotherhood" was disgusting. I have also been very disappointed with the lack of cooperation of our US bishops with Pope Francis' agenda.

Daniel Horan OFM coined the term "clerical fragility" to capture the lack of engagement on the part of priests and bishops to sexual abuse. Believing the Dallas Charter put in place all that is needed is overly simplistic and unrealistic.

Bishops asking priests not to give communion to President Biden was absolutely unforgivable!

the lack of response by the USCC Bishops to the request to hear from the people in relation to the Synod...breaks my heart and thank goodness for Future Church

Certainly, the January 6 event was most troubling with the focus on the President receiving communion when our whole democracy was at stake, again so focused inwardly!!

There were also bishops who would not speak publicly in defense of the poor for fear of political repercussions. This was disappointing.

Frequently - horrified to hear of bishops who actively support Trump; not enough support for refugees, or the needs of the global south or climate change issues - and the list goes on, not to mention the sexual abuse issue

When some of them supported Trump in the election.

All views on abortion, LGBTQ as sin.

I remain frustrated at the lack of public support re: issues of racial justice and poverty.

There are numerous times we felt disappointed and when we tried to communicate this, we received no response or reaction.

I wish that more instruction from the diocese regarding social issues would come down to the individual parishes.

The overall response to sexual abuse of children by priests.

When nuns were criticized and threatened w/ consequences for their justice work

Women's ordination and LGBTQ issues are two that come to mind.

Lack of speaking out about more than abortion

Many times, our bishops do not want to move forward and prefer to hide behind tradition - without being pastoral. We can see this with BLM, the rights of women, the refusal to recognize LGBTQ+ individuals, etc.

The current weaponization of the Eucharist is disgusting. It is being used as a bludgeon for those Catholic public figures who don't know the line on abortion politics.

No mention of justice principles during the administration of D. Trump.

They don't seem to realize that their own politics prevent them from effective teaching.

The fact that I never heard anything from the priests or bishops about the separation of children from their parents and immigrants put in detention centers.

Disappointed by local Bishop re Synod on Synodality - poor effort. Generally disappointed with this Bishop.

Where is the leadership on issues other than abortion? And how can they espouse "religious freedom" in matters such as health care or employment? I've worked for parishes where I did not receive unemployment compensation, retirement, or time off. And my health care didn't cover women's health. During the ACA I can't believe the church would rather let people die than have health care that may provide women with birth control.

When the popes shut down all discussion of ordaining women, but more recently the support of the GOP in the US by American bishops.

Sexual abuse of children by clergy, the silence when the poor were and are getting "beat up" by Right wing political folks.

The response of the USCCB to Pope Francis. He's treated very differently than Benedict.

Lack of strong response to racial injustice summer of 2020

lack of support for Black Lives Matter, for
LGBT community, for HIV/Aids community

Where was forgiveness after 9/11?

As a group of bishops in the United States,
they have never spoken to any of the troubling
issues in a way that the Gospel has been at the
heart of their response.

Clergy abuse, Racism

Q4. Name one or two people who offer you inspiration when it comes to engaging our world and communities through the lens of faith. Share some examples.

I heard a bishop speaking at a catechetical conference say of grief - rage against injustice and let the blessings bless; I have been graced to be led by Bishop Gossman in past years who stood in line with the workers seeking basic human right.

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM; Fr. James Martin, SJ; Pope Francis; Bishop Barber (the Poor People's Campaign); SOJOURNERS.

Reverend Doctor William Barber, Reverend Al Sharpton, Bishop Robert Barron.

I'll start with Pope Francis and his ongoing work with the whole world. I am also impressed with Bishop Barber and Rev. Liz and the Poor Peoples Campaign for Moral Reformation in our country. They continue to work hard to get justice for the poor and low-income folks - no matter what color, creed, orientation.

Sr. Joan Brown who is the director of Interfaith Power and Light in the state of New Mexico. Rev Barber and company with the Poor People's campaign.

Rev William Barber of the Poor People's Campaign has inspired me in his biblical application of Jesus's teachings in support of workers, families, minorities. As for Catholics, there are priests in our diocese who are also supporting those communities, as well as the

LGBTQ community, and that gives me hope for our Church.

I am inspired by my friends in my church who work very hard in service to the poor and who work for justice in a number of different ways to help the poor get out of poverty. If I had to name a public figure who inspires me, it would be the Rev. Dr. William Barber, a leader of the Poor People's Campaign.

Dorothy Day Houses of Hospitality.

Dorothy Day, Joan Chittister (spelling?), Pope Francis, Richard Rohr.

Dorothy Day, Maxmillian Kolbe and others who have suffered martyrdom, and now thousands in Ukraine.

I work with young adults ages 21-30, they inspire me and open my eyes to the world from their perspective as Christian people and the injustices and inequalities that exist today and have for so many years in my lifetime.

A local woman, Kathy O'Callaghan, started an organization called Hearts and Homes for Refugees. This organization has helped settle many refugees to our locality. I am, of course, inspired by more famous heroes such as Dorothy Day, and the Berrigans.

Historical figures like Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, the Berrigans.

Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day, MLK - but also those local faithful who help shore up our community by giving of themselves.

Dorothy Day, Elizabeth Packard

Dorothy Day and Richard Rohr OFM

Dorothy Day, for all her inspiration on how to live a Christian life.

Dorothy Day - Oscar Romero - Martin Luther King

Thomas Berry, Richard Rohr, Pope Francis, Dorothy Day, Teilhard de Chardin

Sister Elizabeth Johnson, Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Pope Francis, Cardinal Merton Gregory, (of Archdiocese of Washington), My Religious Community, the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, etc.

I think of Dorothy Day and her work among the poor. And my neighbor at the local church who is there to do what needs to be done regardless of the pastor and his needs.

Sister Carol Gilber, OP... who has lived -day in and day out - for the past 40+ years her convictions of disarming nuclear weapons. She and Sister Ardeth Platte OP, deceased now, were a strong example of doing what they could each day. Also, Sr Barbara Reid, OP who is now president of CU in Chicago has excelled in Scripture studies and has authored many books about women in the Scriptures. She is an example of sharing her knowledge and presenting this to all.

Richard Rohr, Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day

Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day, Sr. Carol Keenan, Dolores Huerta.

Dorothy Day

First and foremost, Pope Francis. Also Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King; Also those brave women who have been missionaries and were murdered. Our own native Americans in Wisconsin and Michigan have been wonderful examples.

The life of women like Dorothy Day and Thea Bowman. Day for her gift of journalism to

reach others about the plight of the poor and Bowman for her joy.

Pope Francis, Mother Teresa, Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day, Dan Berrigan, Thea Bowman, Ken Untener

Pope Francis and the Cardinal Gregory of Washington. When Trump held the Bible up outside the church in Washington, Cardinal Gregory spoke out. The Pope washed the feet of criminals on Holy Thursday.

Dorothy Day: action and ministry to the poor.

Dorothy Day because of her commitment to the poor.

Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day - of course... Martin Luther King, Jr, Bishop Gumbleton, Joan Chittister, Marie Dennis, Rev. Brian Massingale

Our former parish pastor Fr. Jim Henke preached regularly on social justice issues. Pope Francis is a most inspiring leader in our world today; I was most impressed when, after becoming Pope, he showed humility, love and inclusion by washing the feet of Muslims.

Dorothy Day

Fr. Richard Rohr - See his daily newsletter. Fr. Phil Egitto from Our Lady of Lourdes in Daytona - I follow his homilies on YouTube

Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement

Thomas Merton, Peter Maurin, Dorothy Day. They lived the gospel message of love, kinship, compassion, service, and solidarity.

Dorothy Day. Joan Chittister. Martin Luther King Jr.

Dorothy Day, Shannen Dee Williams!!

Dorothy Day, ML King, Eleanor Roosevelt, Ghandi, Bishop Romero, and Jesuit priests at Holy Trinity Parish in Washington, DC, some holy lay people so many who have brought me forward. A Benedictine nun, Sr. Ruth, who lived with my family when I was a child before she became a nun and in the past 20-year Brother Malachy Broderick FSC who was the DRE at our parish and continued to talk about Vatican II and knew so much about the Bible. And two priest friends of my husband, who were in the seminary at Carroll College, MT and were in the DC area for quite a while and were living examples of what was Christian and also so very knowledgeable.

Pope Francis. Dorothy Day. John Dear. Greg Boyle, S.J. Fr. Bryan Massingale. Sr. Thea Bowman

Pope Francis, Dorothy Day, James Martin, Br. Mickey McGrath.

Francis of Assisi + Dominic de Guzman + Vincent de Paul+ Elizabeth Seton + Dorothy Day + Oscar Romero+

Dorothy Day, Pope Francis, Corita Kent

Dorothy Day and her thirst to help the marginalized and find God in small things.

St. Francis, Mother Teresa, Dorothy Day, anyone willing to break rules in order to honor the Divine, as Jesus did.

Dorothy Day, Catholic Worker House (in Harrisburg and Baltimore and Davenport)

Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero

Pope Francis, Laudato Si and many other writings, teachings, and actions. Fr Richard Rohr in his books, emails, the Center for Action and Contemplation. Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. St Francis. Hans Kung. Elizabeth

Johnson. Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza. Matthew Fox. So many others. I am so thankful for all of them!

Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker Movement

As a social worker doing restorative justice and I organized a national organization of mediators and others to mediate clergy sexual abuse cases. The response of the religious orders was the most positive while the dioceses were more legally oriented.

The Coalition of Immokolee Workers and Alliance for Fair Food Farmworkers Faith Organizing Committee -began in the basement of a Catholic Church in 1999 and has since become a model of interfaith labor, anti-racist, pro-immigrant organizing

Responding to the refugees at the border, to the migrant workers, to the poor and to climate change

When Bishop Rich Garcia went out to the farm workers in Sacramento in the time of Cesar Chavez Rich has passed away.

Rev. William Barber and the Poor People's Campaign

Sister Theresa Harpin of Sister of St Joseph of Carondelet. He is a tireless worker for dignity and life opportunities for incarcerated. Father Greg Boyle and his perseverance regarding work among gang members in Boyle Heights. Both are driven by their love of God - which translates into love and concrete work on behalf of those on the far margins.

Kings Bay Plowshares/courageous stand against nuclear weapons; Simone Campbell/ committed former head of Network; the countless Catholic Workers who live their faith sincerely.

The workers on the southern border.

Catholic Social Teachings make the Scriptures relevant to daily life. Groups like Maryknoll, Catholic Worker, Pax Christi have given me ways to live my faith more faithfully

Catholic social teaching is the foundation of my faith. Helping the marginalized have a voice is very important to me. I'm a retired licensed social worker, so all my professional life has been devoted to helping people have agency for themselves and advocating for that agency. My social justice foundation promotes the idea that I have to be involved and pay attention to ways in which people don't have access to the basic things they need.

Sr. Patrice Sullivan, CDP who is now deceased. Back in the 60's she had me boycotting grocery stores to support the farm workers union. She taught me that speaking up and demonstrating publicly is the only way to live the Gospel. She taught me the importance of praying always and acting justly out of the prayer.

All of the teachers I encountered throughout my years of Catholic education from first grade and all through my undergrad years. In addition, all of my coworkers who I encountered working in a Catholic hospital for 50+ years.

Back in the 1970's and 1980's the Catholic Bishops of Canada made multiple public statements on a variety of issues (e.g., workers' rights) that inspired me

Catholic Worker persons

Catholic Worker folks/houses.

Members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the Los Angeles Catholic Worker Community

President Biden who is trying to give and live the Christian response to the world and its problems today.

Pope Francis, Joe Biden, Joan Chittister, Richard Rohr,

Joe Biden

Joe Biden

President Biden seems to do his best to live by Gospel values. Pope Francis, Joan Chittister are other examples.

Zelenski Jamie Raskin, Joe Biden, Shiva Vandana

Joe Biden and Nancy Pelosi (awful that I cannot spell her last name!!)

President Biden

Joe Biden

Joe Biden who truly understands the abortion issue from a woman's perspective (yet gets punished for it).

IMO President Biden is a good and decent man of integrity. Without explicitly using 'Catholic-speak' he exemplifies, for the most part, a world view that is Christian.

President of the Ukraine

Archbishop Hunthausen, Thea Bowman, Mother Theresa, the current president of Ukraine Pope Francis Gandhi Bishop Tutu (You people at Future Church, who put us in contact with lovely people and each other)

Both are speaking out against the war in Ukraine and lending aid.

The people of Ukraine.

Romero. A few sisters who are not naive about climate change, immigration issues, covid/'vaccinations', the Ukraine war. A few lay people who are not afraid to call priests and bishops to accountability.

Deceased Father Ted Hesburgh of Notre Dame. Strongly defended the right of Catholic universities to include courses and professors of other faith traditions

Amanda Psychology professor who teaches class in prison and works with HomeBoy organization in CA (reform for prisoners).

Professor Elizabeth Johnson with her books and lectures.

Greg Boyle, SJ, Sr. Helen Prejean, SCJ, Chris Schenk, CSJ, and many of my professors in Grad School

My family. The religious Sisters who helped in my faith formation: Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, O'Fallon, Missouri and School Sisters of Notre Dame - Central Pacific Province. The voices of National Catholic Reporter. The voices of FutureChurch. Father Dan Horan, OFM.

A friend who is a sister of St. Mary Namur who is compassionate about what is troubling me, for example, my worries about my family, which includes a gay son & a divorced son & a divorced daughter

Pat and Patty Crowley (my parents, I admit!)

The people who inspire me are people in the pews ... A friend of mine who for many years sent a card to every family who lost a loved one on the one-year anniversary of their loss. My husband who for 25+ years has spent every Saturday morning April to November repairing used bikes for those in need, homeless, immigrants, children through an organization that he operates with the assistance of several other men and women.

Fr. Jim Clifford, an Augustinian Priest. He was truly the first I noticed who openly defended everyone. We were living in Southern Oregon and at that time there was an anti-

gay, lesbian measure on the ballot. Fr. wore a pin in support of that measure and it was the surprising the number of people who left the parish. He also fostered the rewriting of the parish "statement" - all are welcome here was the first line. When we started to have an Hispanic population he again arose to the occasion and read a statement at the Masses regarding the treatment of the Hispanic families. He had to read it because he was very angry and didn't trust that he wouldn't be priestly. I learned a lot from him.

Mary, mother of God. She said, "Yes," to God and then lived a life totally devoted to being the mother of Jesus. She was his first teacher, knew him and like any mother pushed him into his life when he didn't recognize he was ready (the wedding at Cana). There are some people who are close to me that I am inspired by none are know to others but they are known to me. Others include Oscar Romero, Marguerite Bourgeois (Canadian saint), and my own parents.

Future Church and other organizations remind us of who we are and how we are to be in the world - with each other. Remi deRoo (a bishop here in Canada who recently passed away) was unafraid to spread and live out the documents of Vatican II.

Joan Chittister, Joe Gunn, Bishop Casaldeliga and Bishop Ruiz

Pope Francis and Archbishop Blase Cupich...all my Jesuit friends and priests who I have learned from at Creighton CSP program

Bishop Howe of Lexington in his work for economic justice and support of LGBTQI

Pope Francis--I recently read a biography where I learned about the very delicate line he walked while he was a Bishop in Argentina

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM; Fr. James Martin, SJ; Pope Francis; Bishop Barber (the Poor People's Campaign); SOJOURNERS.

Reverend Doctor William Barber, Reverend Al Sharpton, Bishop Robert Barron.

One of our auxiliary bishops in Detroit --- Tom Gumbleton. He has long been a pastoral leader in peace and justice issues.

Holy Cross Sister Patricia Cornell, for 30 years a spiritual companion who listened with her heart and engaged with the Living Word, providing prophetic guidance. Bishop Joseph's Gossman, who stood among the people wherever they found themselves - including on the street corners, at the factories.

St. Archbishop Oscar Romero, whose faith propelled him to work to eliminate institutional marginalization of the poor and voiceless.

Father Dan Horan, Father Richard Rohr, Matthew Fox, Henri Nouwen, Bishop McElroy, Father Ronald Cochrane. They all are prophetic and live in the real world seeing that there is goodness in the world and recognizing the evil in the world that can be overcome with love by truly caring and helping each other.

See names of Bishops mentioned above - and of course Francis encouraging us to get out there with the stinking sheep.

Richard Rohr, Joan Chittister, Barbara Brown Taylor, Archbishop Curry

Bishop Tutu

Pope Francis definitely in trying to engage the whole world church. Bishop Untener in his care for the poor.

Late Bishop Raymond A. Lucker, Bishop of New Ulm, MN and our cousin.

Pope Francis, Fr. James Martin, S.J. Sister Joan Chittister, Sister Helen Prejean, Bishop of Chicago, Fr. Richard Rohr.

I'll start with Pope Francis and his ongoing work with the whole world. I am also impressed with Bishop Barber and Rev. Liz and the Poor Peoples Campaign for Moral Reformation in our country. They continue to work hard to get justice for the poor and low-income folks - no matter what color, creed, orientation.

bishop Remi de roo [recently deceased]

Most Jesuits, and the Oblates...Bishop Sylvain Lavoie, an Oblate from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Bishop Robert Barron

Archbishop Hunthausen, Thea Bowman, Mother Theresa, the current president of Ukraine Pope Francis Gandhi Bishop Tutu (You people at Future Church, who put us in contact with lovely people and each other)

Dorothy Day - of course... Martin Luther King, Jr, Bishop Gumbleton, Joan Chittister, Marie Dennis, Rev. Brian Massingale

Bishop John R. Quinn, RIP

Archbishop John Wester

Bishop Robert Barron; Fr. John Riccardo

Late Bishop Stephen Blaire (formerly of Stockton California), who was passionate about the environment, and pushed the California Bishops to do something. Pope Francis.

St. Oscar Romero, Mandela, Archbishop TuTu, Martin Luther King, Roy Bourgeois, Fr. John Dear, Dan and Phil Berrigan, and several Maryknoll Sisters.

S. Joan Chittister Bishop Mark Seitz (immigration)

Romero. A few sisters who are not naive about climate change, immigration issues, covid/vaccinations', the Ukraine war. A few lay people who are not afraid to call priests and bishops to accountability.

Pope Francis in his efforts to reach out to people on the margins and his advocacy for immigrants. Bishop Madden, our former urban vicar who in his humble way engages with those struggling with urban decay, poverty, and violence and has led public prayer walks in those communities.

Bishop Gumbleton, Joan Chittister, Rosemary Lynch (deceased Nevada test site prophet)

Dorothy Day, ML King, Eleanor Roosevelt, Ghandi, Bishop Romero, and Jesuit priests at Holy Trinity Parish in Washington, DC, some holy lay people so many who have brought me forward. A Benedictine nun, Sr. Ruth, who lived with my family when I was a child before she became a nun and in the past 20-year Brother Malachy Broderick FSC who was the DRE at our parish and continued to talk about Vatican II and knew so much about the Bible. And two priest friends of my husband, who were in the seminary at Carroll College, MT and were in the DC area for quite a while and were living examples of what was Christian and also so very knowledgeable.

German bishops and role of women

Bishop McElroy for wisdom

Bishop Robert McElroy, San Diego

Fr. Romero

Dorothy Day - Oscar Romero - Martin Luther King

Saint Oscar Romero - Planting seeds for social justice and truly hearing the Gospel message

Oscar Romero

Mary, mother of God. She said, "Yes," to God and then lived a life totally devoted to being the mother of Jesus. She was his first teacher, knew him and like any mother pushed him into his life when he didn't recognize he was ready (the wedding at Cana). There are some people who are close to me that I am inspired by none are known to others but they are known to me. Others include Oscar Romero, Marguerite Bourgeois (Canadian saint), and my own parents.

Douglas Roche, former Canadian Ambassador to United Nations on disarmament, Mary Jo Leddy, foundress of Romero House in Toronto

Francis of Assisi + Dominic de Guzman + Vincent de Paul + Elizabeth Seton + Dorothy Day + Oscar Romero +

Oscar Romero's example has been a strong inspiration to me. Brother Anthony who worked in my Inwood Good Shepard church before his transfer to Massachusetts.

Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero,

Pope Francis, Father Richard Rohr, Sister Joan Chittister

Deceased Father Ted Hesburgh of Notre Dame. Strongly defended the right of Catholic universities to include courses and professors of other faith traditions

Robin who runs My Father's Heart in Oregon City.

Thank you for offering this opportunity to respond to the plea of the Holy Father and giving us the chance to participate since that wouldn't have been possible in my Diocese ... the church must move forward in truly answering the call of the Christ...the current church isn't doing that and perhaps that is God's plan, but change is sorely needed and I

pray that the Pope will have the strength and courage to continue to move us closer to what Jesus came here to do ... as Easter approaches I hope the church will rise to the occasion and embrace the true vision of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ!

Pope Francis Father Tony Rigoli both embrace a church that is community of and for all, both speak to and live a non-hierarchical view. They want to listen, so their love deepens

I have been greatly influenced by Father Thomas Judge who called us all to respond to our call of discipleship. I have worked to be sensitive to Jesus's call to know and feel the poor, the marginalized.

Father Judge

Sister Joan Chittister and Father Richard Rohr

Sister Thea Bowman. Father Bryan Massingale, Father Jim Martin. The nuns who have given their lives to teaching the word of God. The Mission Soup Kitchen in the basement of my church.

Father Dan Horan, Father Richard Rohr, Matthew Fox, Henri Nouwen, Bishop McElroy, Father Ronald Cochrane They all are prophetic and live in the real world seeing that there is goodness in the world and recognizing the evil in the world that can be overcome with love by truly caring and helping each other.

Sister Theresa Harpin of Sister of St Joseph of Carondelet. He is a tireless worker for dignity and life opportunities for incarcerated. Father Greg Boyle and his perseverance regarding work among gang members in Boyle Heights. Both are driven by their love of God - which translates into love and concrete work on behalf of those on the far margins.

Parishes led by Paulist Fathers and Franciscans

Sister Annette McDermott has been a faith advisor to me for years. She introduced me to Future Church and several notable Catholics who are trying to bring good to the world by loving all people. I also am inspired by Father Jim Martin and his outreach to including LGBTQ+ people in the Church. Many of my friends are both Catholic and LGBTQ+ and knowing he is working for their inclusion is heartening.

My family. The religious Sisters who helped in my faith formation: Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, O'Fallon, Missouri and School Sisters of Notre Dame - Central Pacific Province. The voices of National Catholic Reporter. The voices of FutureChurch. Father Dan Horan, OFM.

Cannot identify a response by the bishops as a whole, only by individual bishops and our Holy Father. For peace, for reconciliation and for self-knowledge.

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis as our Bishop has responded in so many ways to our troubling times. Would like our Bishop / Bishops to do the same. Pope Francis has helped us all (the World) to see and hear the poor, the needy,

Jesus taught that all should be one as Jesus and the Father are one. We are all sisters and brothers together in God's love.

Father John Finnegan

The whole sexual abuse of minors and religious women has been especially troubling. A cousin of my father was a priest who reported another as a sexual predator and was told to keep the secret. Eventually, the predator became the bishop of his diocese and Dad's cousin was sleeping in his car! Very sad part of the personal history that our family was aware of long ago.

Father Mychal Judge

Father John Sullivan

Father Phil Egitto

I am sad to say I do not have an event to share. I can share that as a young mother returning to my Catholic roots our Bishop at the time always addressed with the words “my beloved people”. He had a very gentle grandfatherly presence and would tell us how much he loved being with us.

We are called to continue to live in faith, hope and love with growing our virtual global communities as we pray and grow our mycelium like web, pulling inward, as extending outward towards unknown entanglements, trusting in a Source that is good. Be about engaging our vagus nerve, connecting and be in open spaces of nature, to experience the love of the ultimate lover of all. Be aware. Breath, prepare for being open to amazing new things because the spirit is a moving all over. We cannot even imagine what God has planned for us. 1 Corinthians 2:9 We are to be new wine skins for the new wine being cultivated. Mark 2:22. This empowers and sustains the engagement in LWV, Network Lobby, PPC, CIW, and so many other wonderful communities doing the justice work , the GREAT WORK, as Father Thomas Berry would name it that is self-regulating and unfolding.

Father Fred Bugarin and Sister Andrea Nenzel

Appointment of bishops to key cities that turned VII dioceses to clericalized forms of governance. Removal of many religious highly educated women from Archdiocesan positions ending years of VII program development by strategically imposing groups like Opus Dei to key cities and throughout the South the Legion of Christ effectively quashing the structures based in shared power and responsibility moving those positions to hire people uneducated that would do what “Father” said. Knowing for 30 years priest pedophiles were

moved from parish to parish in and out of the state and country protecting the “image” of the church over the brokenness of people and their communities. Realization of the huge amounts of the treasure of the church was being used in the legal system to protect the hierarchy from criminal behavior without recourse to justice. Realization that the hierarchy used women as a workforce-not partners in ministry-and that their low wages and “genius” were no more than simply a commodity that could be used for their advantage in their culture wars, abused at their discretion to create wealth and fortune for themselves and thrown out like old pieces of furniture that are not needed.

When Bishop Hickey went to visit with a priest, who was dying of AIDS, I was pleased with his action. Bishop Hunthausen was abused by the church, and I think I admired him, and I think he was a holy man. The Fathers Berrigan and other that protested our out-of-control military spending, while children don’t have enough to eat in this country. The American Sisters in El Salvador that were tortured and killed. Bishop Romero.

Father Richard Rohr on his teachings in his daily newsletter and in his many books.

Sister Joan Chittister, Father John Cusick

I am definitely and completely Vatican II (at 87). I can’t understand any bishop not backing the Holy Father.

Father James Martin

Father Rollheiser

Father Gregory Boyle

The former editor of America - is it Father Treece?

Father Simon And father Alex in our church they don’t make people feel that they were always doing wrong they often mention

how they do things wrong and they feel and sometimes their stories are funny and it makes me feel like I am part of a church and even priest people have things That they deal with.

The writings of James Martin, SJ

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM; Fr. James Martin, SJ; Pope Francis; Bishop Barber (the Poor People's Campaign); SOJOURNERS.

Ernesto Cardenal SJ follow his conscience and became the minister of education in Nicaragua and promote the greatest literacy campaign my country has ever done. Coming to the U.S.A my adopted country I learned from the example of great people like Kabat OMI who protested against war and nuclear weapons and took radical prophetic actions.

Thomas Merton; our present Superior General, Fr. Sosa, S.J.

Greg Boyle, SJ, founder of Homeboy Industries, preaches the Gospel by acting on the message of Christ to reach out the marginalized, to listen to them, and most of all to LOVE them as God loves them.

Sr. Christine Kresho, CSJ who maintains a weekly Zoom Prayer group for many marginalized Catholics.

Greg Boyle, SJ, Sr. Helen Prejean, SCJ, Chris Schenk, CSJ, and many of my professors in Grad School

A second person, among many I could chose is Bill Cain SJ

A Peabody award winning playwright, writer, director, catholic priest and friend with whom I had the pleasure of working with to produce performances based on "The Good News" of the Gospel of Jesus. He wrote and produced the series " Nothing Sacred". He founded and worked with many major theatre companies producing material of substance around the

issues of "church in the modern world", while not being "strict /rigid churchy, but rather "embodied church in the world". His latest writings , based on some of his homilies from the scripture readings for daily Mass ,are in the book he titled " The Diary of Jesus Christ "(with forward by Greg Boyle SJ of "Homeboy Ministries")Cries out to me : This IS church the 'stuff of life', feelings, reflections, wisdom, social justice at its depth encouraging Catholics of good faith to go deeper, love more, be kind and welcome everyone no matter the scars including yourself, because love heals. I believe we follow Jesus the Healer and we his beloved community are called to be healers in this world in every aspect of life around us.

Pope Francis, Father Richard Rohr, Sister Joan Chittister

I was "raised" from about 10 years of age on Thomas Merton and Dorothy Day, and a Jesuit parish and Catholic schools with Sisters, so learning Catholic Social Teachings was just part of all aspects of life. Active in politics from 13 years of age, I found it challenging, always, to bring faith into that picture. Taught for many years, including social justice and Vatican II concepts. The challenge is always how to motivate people to read the Gospels, much less live by them. My experience is common for my generation and others.

My sister inspires me to learn, discern and act. She attends protests on issues that are important to her. She encourages others whom she encounters to use that lens of faith when engaging the world and communities.

Dorothy Day, Joan Chittister (spelling?), Pope Francis, Richard Rohr.

The sense that each person is our brother or sister which was part and parcel of what we learned and experienced in our Catholic education and watching our families live out this practice.

I could name sisters belonging to the Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions in Canada who engage the ecological questions of our day and the marginalization of indigenous people in the focus of their ministry.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Wheeling, WV gave me the foundation to include all in love. The nuns have given the Church consistent credibility.

My faith has very much shaped my view of national/international issues. I do believe in separation of church and state, but my faith is how I decide right and wrong. The sacredness of life guides me to want to see the abolishment of the death penalty. I didn't always think this way until I listened to Sister Helen Prejean.

Sr. Maureen Sullivan and Sister Joan Chittister

My sister, Pegeen Comerford

Prior to joining the church in 1953 I was leaning toward a conservative philosophy and political view. My contact with OK sisters and priests opened me up to a more progressive view of race relations, ecumenical contacts, and other social justice applications. But in later years those priests and sisters left their ministries and most of the priests now are a bit right wing and not to helpful of social justice matters.

We are all one - brothers and sisters. We are a universal church and responsible for one another.

Holy Cross Sister Patricia Cornell, for 30 years a spiritual companion who listened with her heart and engaged with the Living Word, providing prophetic guidance. Bishop Joseph's Gossman, who stood among the people wherever they found themselves - including on the street corners, at the factories.

Sister Joan Chittister and Father Richard Rohr

My family guided me as they were active in the Church and in community. I am from Minnesota, and we knew everyone in the community and church and churches worked together plus the priests and sisters knew all of us and we all did things together

My sisters

Sister Ardeth Platte OP (deceased) and Sister Carol Gilbert OP, nuclear disarmament. Sister Barbara Reid OP, Scripture Scholar, new president of Catholic Theological Union, Chicago (excellent preacher).

Sister Thea Bowman. Father Bryan Massingale, Father Jim Martin. The nuns who have given their lives to teaching the word of God. The Mission Soup Kitchen in the basement of my church.

Sister Theresa Harpin of Sister of St Joseph of Carondelet. He is a tireless worker for dignity and life opportunities for incarcerated. Father Greg Boyle and his perseverance regarding work among gang members in Boyle Heights. Both are driven by their love of God - which translates into love and concrete work on behalf of those on the far margins.

Sister Simone Campbell of Network

Sister Elizabeth Johnson, Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Pope Francis, Cardinal Merton Gregory, (of Archdiocese of Washington), My Religious Community, the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, etc.

Many Sisters of Charity inspire me... certainly their founder St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. I'd also say Dr. Martin Luther King was a wonderful inspiration.

In the present life, I'd say the small community of the Sisters of Charity at the border, reaching to immigrants - giving them education, medical services, etc. There are 4 Sisters there, so I cannot narrow it down to just 2.

I was also impressed with the group of Sisters who went to Washington to have a stand-in peaceful protest in the capital to protect DACA recipients. They were arrested peacefully and did not resist arrest. One of the Sisters was 84! She, too, spent time in the jail. Religious orders from all over the country came to Washington to protest and were arrested. Other Sisters fight to end the death penalty.

There is a Sister who runs a local food pantry. Another Sister runs a garden where volunteers grow veggies to give to a free medical clinic. A Sister at the clinic is a nutritionist, and she provides the clients with recipes and food preparation ideas. So many wonderful ministries by the Sisters that it's hard to choose just one! Other Sisters have put in geothermal and solar panels to help the environment.

Sisters I know are afraid that if a traditionalist cardinal were to replace Pope Francis in the future, that the Vatican might reinstate the "Apostolic Visitation" - which was nothing more than harassment of the Sisters. Thankfully the LCWR stood up with gentle persistence, and Pope Francis canceled the whole thing.

Sister Roberta Winkels, as both of us work with the poor outside the U.S. We are both U.S. citizens and can offer each other inspiration on both situations and issues.

Sister Annette McDermott has been a faith advisor to me for years. She introduced me to Future Church and several notable Catholics who are trying to bring good to the world by loving all people. I also am inspired by Father Jim Martin and his outreach to including LGBTQ+ people in the Church. Many of my friends are both Catholic and LGBTQ+ and knowing he is working for their inclusion is heartening.

To understand the call for sisterhood/ brotherhood of all, regardless of social,

cultural, political, geographical, etc., differences. We are all children of God and custodians of the Earth.

Sister Carol Gilber, OP...who has lived -day in and day out - for the past 40+ years her convictions of disarming nuclear weapons.... She and Sister Ardeth Platte OP, deceased now, were a strong example of doing what they could each day. Also, Sr Barbara Reid, OP who is now president of CU in Chicago has excelled in Scripture studies and has authored many books about women in the Scriptures. She is an example of sharing her knowledge and presenting this to all.

Sister Joan Chittister. The women of contemplative outreach. The members of the Association of Contemplative Women.

Catholic high school Sisters of the Humility of Mary social justice in action gave me a lifetime of awareness

The orders of sisters who quietly, faithfully meet needs at the border, in poverty, in prisons, etc.

Sisters of Mercy Justice Committee. They women and men are intelligent, caring, have moral courage and are great communicators. They inspire us and move us to action in our wounded world.

My family. The religious Sisters who helped in my faith formation: Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, O'Fallon, Missouri and School Sisters of Notre Dame - Central Pacific Province. The voices of National Catholic Reporter. The voices of FutureChurch. Father Dan Horan, OFM.

Saint Marguerite Bourgeois and the Sisters and Associates of the Congregation of Notre Dame (CNDs) - inclusive community, environmental protection, support for immigrants and refugees, living a life of true Visitation and love.

Become more aware of the humanity AND divinity of each person. See each other's as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Sisters of Sophia (Bev McClure, Michelle Scherer, Edna Perry, Sylvia Reyes-Gonzalez, Felice Garza)

God is calling us to be alive with the FAITH, seeing all as sister/brother and to work for peace and justice - to not be complicit but to act responsibly -

The leader and sisters in my congregation

Better formation of the laity, sisters and seminarians re Jesus' way of Life. Recognize and respect that we are ALL on the same road no matter our culture, beliefs, etc.

Cardinal Tobin came to the defense of the American Sisters when we were being accused of not teaching the faith properly in schools.

I am a cradle Catholic and was shaped in the faith by my grade school education with the Sisters of Mercy and by the faith of my mother. I was brought up to know the difference between right and wrong and to look for the good in all people. However, it seems increasingly difficult in this day and age to find good in so many who engage in gun violence, sexual abuse and trafficking, wars, etc. I know that many times, these people suffer from the way they were brought up and can't always be held accountable for what they do, but it's hard when they harm or kill other people.

My faith has grown tremendously from the time I was young and just accepted whatever the sister or priest told us or what the catechism instructed us. I really believe that it is up to all of us to speak for one another, especially those that no one will listen to. Today, in this troubled world, my faith teaches me to work for that to happen in this world.

The National Black Sisters Conference and the IHM/Oblate Coalition

A friend who is a sister of St. Mary Namur who is compassionate about what is troubling me, for example, my worries about my family, which includes a gay son & a divorced son & a divorced daughter

Pope Francis. Fr rich Rohr, Fr James Martin. Fr. Massingale, all of the religious sisters

Pope Francis, The Co-Directors of Future Church, Many of my Religious Sisters and Friends.

I am grateful of my formation as a 'thinking' person called to Faith in Jesus filled with the Spirit living as a Dominican Sister dedicated to Truth and Gospel values!

Calls me to be mindful of the needs of others outside my own culture. (I'm a Dominican Sister.) Reminds me that as God's children we are all sisters and brothers.

Those who support Pope Francis and his call to be one with our sisters and brothers.

Listen! Hear the cries of the poor. Remember that the "Least of these" are my sisters and brothers. Help in the way I am able.

The Official Church has a voice larger perhaps at times than any one of us. I look to that voice to speak out with unity amidst the diversity and call for justice for all of God's people. We look to our past and see the many "sins" committed by the Official church in regards to human rights...in our own country from the time of the earliest settlers stealing and killing native Americans, to the slave trade, to treating women as 2nd class citizens, to denying that those who struggle to come here to be safe and raise their families in peace are met with welcome and hope...particular at our borders to the south at this time. As some have noted, we have had open arms to the dear sisters

and brothers coming from Ukraine...with their white skin and blue eyes. We are not so welcoming to black and brown skinned people, however. That is a place that needs changing.

These many issues are part of the fabric of our country and hopefully this awareness will bring more people of faith coming together to reach out to all sisters and brothers in need of healing, hope, homes and wholeness.

I have been very disappointed in the U.S. Bishops and there are more reasons than I can explain. I wish they were less political, listened to the cries of people, and followed Jesus. My heart aches for women of all ages, our LBGTQI brothers and sisters, and many more people whose voices are not heard. I would also like more of our Bishops support Pope Francis. We need a reformation in our Church. Many of our Bishops have identified themselves with the rich and the powerful. I know many people in the U.S. who don't trust our Bishops.

St. Oscar Romero, Mandela, Archbishop TuTu, Martin Luther King, Roy Bourgeois, Fr. John Dear, Dan and Phil Berrigan, and several Maryknoll Sisters.

Jesus taught that all should be one as Jesus and the Father are one. We are all sisters and brothers together in God's love.

Sister Landry

When George Floyd was murdered, we had a good response against racism, but once Black Lives Matter became a movement that was demonized, the Church went silent. There is good support for treating our immigrants with dignity, but there is also silence around the building of the wall and the negative rhetoric about who those refugees really are. Our brothers and sisters.

Sadly, I feel our Church leadership has gotten involved with the more politically

right and have lost their way. I see religious sisters always being open and educating themselves on the issues and speaking for the marginalized. But I don't see the male religious leadership doing the same. Thank God we have our religious sisters who are leading the laity in Catholic justice issues.

When I ministered in Appalachia Bishop Sullivan inspired me. Before and after I spent time in Central America the people, priests and sisters encouraged me.

Sister Joan Chittister, OSB: "The Time is Now: Taking Action with Uncommon Courage".

Sister Christine Schenk, co-founder of FutureChurch!

There is a Sister who is responsible for an immigration center, perhaps in Brownsville, Texas, who shows respect for captives who are released to a nearby bus station, and she has recruited Spanish-speaking members of our diocesan Social Services office to help those immigrants who might be friends of Jesus in Disguise. They offer food, shoes, clothing, a roof over their head, and assistance with how to get to their relative/sponsor through the bus routes. That is the work Catholics should be doing at the southern border. (Not just at Brownsville.)

I went to Catholic grade and high school. I was a Sister of St. Joseph for 5 years and attended a Catholic College

NETWORK: Advocates for Justice Inspired by Catholic Sisters

Sister Aneta Gics

My faith was shaped by the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception.... their charism...to reach out with compassion, generosity, kindness, truth and love to those in need. Being a voice for the homeless, the poor and the marginalized.... volunteering at an

outreach shelter. Signing letters of support for environmental issues.

Joan Chittister, Richard Rohr, James Martin, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace

I was impressed the way most bishops came out in support of Black lives after George Floyd's death. For a short period of time, the showed great support to our black brothers and sisters.

Pope Francis Sister Joan Chittister

Father Fred Bugarin and Sister Andrea Nenzel

Romero. A few sisters who are not naive about climate change, immigration issues, covid/'vaccinations', the Ukraine war. A few lay people who are not afraid to call priests and bishops to accountability.

USCCB Challenge of Peace and movement away from the "Just War Theory" to active communities working toward Catholic infrastructure that supported a culture of justice that would bring peace. The alliance nationwide of "Dignity" allowing for the gathering of the LGBTQ community in Catholic Parishes. The work of the Sisters in promoting all forms of justice in compliance with the movements of change in National governance. The Movement toward Woman's Equality in the late 70's that could have translated into Women's Equality in the church. Bishop Hunthausen's stand on Nuclear proliferation as a faith leader. Liturgical movements that promoted an understanding that lay participation as informed Catholics was key to gospel living.

Sister Joan Chittister

Religious Sisters in my own community I am a lay associate of: Sr Carmen de Santos/Sr Janice Belanger

Sister Joan Chittister for her faithfulness to the church while still recognizing the urgent need to change how the church treats women. This past fall, I travelled with her to Egypt and truly learned so much from her teachings.

Social values instilled in me since childhood and augmented as I have lived as a religious sister for 64 years have caused me to give personhood to all living beings in our neighborhood and to give them the same rights given humans.

My faith has gone from being that of following everything taught to us by the sisters in Catholic school, CCD etc. My faith began to be shaped in/at Seattle U and U of San Francisco during the 60s. Seeds were sown.

The social justice teachings of the Catholic Faith have always been an inspiration and guide for me. My early teachings came from the Maryknoll sisters and brothers and through my Mother. While it's hard to remember specifics I think I experienced and internalized their values.

When Bishop Hickey went to visit with a priest, who was dying of AIDS, I was pleased with his action. Bishop Hunthausen was abused by the church, and I think I admired him, and I think he was a holy man. The Fathers Berrigan and other that protested our out-of-control military spending, while children don't have enough to eat in this country. The American Sisters in El Salvador that were tortured and killed. Bishop Romero.

St. Augustine and the Augustinian Spirituality and the Medical Mission Sisters and Associates as they profess and live as a healing presence to others.

I feel along with a loving family, caring and kind my moral base has evolved to be solid reflective of the way Jesus asks us to live. Vatican 2 was an eye opener for me as growing up and with 12 years of Catholic Education

pretty conservatives. I embraced the “fresh air” that were replacing many ideas and ways, also thoughts about what church was, and what it could be now. Then things began to slip back to pre-Vatican II and this did not mesh with my changing ideas and thoughts about church. I have had the opportunity though the small faith group we are committed to, and venturing down the paths of new information sources like Future Church, NCR, Sister Joan Chittister, Network, CTA and finding these to help me evolve from my “baby stage of being told what to believe” to a maturing and growing , progressive leaning person looking for others to help me learn and define a church that reflects what Jesus showed us how to live. Kindness and love for each other.

To walk humbly with all as our brothers and sisters in justice

All are welcome is a lie--what about our BIPOC and LGBTQ sisters and brothers

Sister Jaunita Sheeley. She is a Sister of St Joseph, an African American.

The first nun I ever knew at the age of 8 she was my CCD teacher. As my mother was a widow with a new baby, sister would often have us come after school to the convent to study and play before supper so our mother could have some time “off”. Our mother was amazed when she met Sr “Nativa “ at that time, after months of just talking to her on the phone, that she was Black. We lived in the projects with people of color, so it made no difference to me and my siblings what her color was. She loved us and we loved her. To this very day she is my friend. She represented, and to this day represents, so much of what formed me as the Catholic I am today and what goodness, social justice and Gospel values the Catholic Church who welcomes EVERYONE, can be in the world today. She has always been full of joy and hope while being the only Black nun living in a somewhat conservative white middle class convent world. She held and still

does “hold her own.” She truly has inspired not only me but many.

Sister Jean Prejean in her activism on social justice issues.

Sister Joan Chittister, Father John Cusick

Sisters of Loretta

Michelle Madigan, a catholic sister engaged in supporting Indigenous communities protesting the threatened acquisition and abuse of their land.

Sisters of Charity and Associates who make casseroles once a month for the needy. The Associates visit the elderly sisters and make and send cards to them on special occasions.

I find the nonprofit Network to be helpful for me in engaging in public life with catholic values. I find a global Sisters helpful in sharing how they are engaging in the work /. I find the clergy in general to be uninformed/ inactive/ and untrained in the world in which we live regarding peace and justice issues. I have no interest in priests or bishops as leaders in these areas of life which impact our everyday.

The Nuns on the Bus as an organization

Network - the Nuns on the Bus

the Nuns on the Bus have done good groundwork in social justice. Priests like Henry Nouwen whom I took a course with & who worked with kids with disabilities like I have & Gustavo Gutierrez whom I have met as a teacher at B.C. they have been an inspiration. A lay doctor, Paul Farmer has been a real dedicated inspirational doctor who honored the people of Haiti, Rwanda, etc.

My religious congregation

Sr. Christine Kresho, CSJ who maintains a weekly Zoom Prayer group for many marginalized Catholics.

Greg Boyle, SJ, Sr. Helen Prejean, SCJ, Chris Schenk, CSJ, and many of my professors in Grad School

My Spiritual Director - he helps me to sense God's presence in my actions. He also challenges me to find out why if I am not feeling God's presence. Sr. Maureen Sullivan, OP from the session of synodality. I feel that she has open my eyes into the Vatican II history.

Sr. Patrice Sullivan, CDP who is now deceased. Back in the 60's she had me boycotting grocery stores to support the farm workers union. She taught me that speaking up and demonstrating publicly is the only way to live the Gospel. She taught me the importance of praying always and acting justly out of the prayer.

Pope Francis

Pope Francis, Father Richard Rohr, Sister Joan Chittister

Pope Francis

Pope Francis. Brian Stephenson (Equal Justice Initiative based in Montgomery, Alabama).

Pope Francis

Dorothy Day, Joan Chittister (spelling?), Pope Francis, Richard Rohr.

Pope Francis with his going out to others, listening to others, responding to suggestions.

I am constantly inspired by Pope Francis; I also find Richard Rohr and Dan Horan helpful with current social justice issues.

Pope Francis and Archbishop Blase Cupich...all my Jesuit friends and priests who I have learned from at Creighton CSP program

Pope Francis

Pope Francis

Pope Francis, the Dahi Lama

Pope Francis

Pope Francis Father Tony Rigoli both embrace a church that is community of and for all, both speak to and live a non-hierarchical view. They want to listen, so their love deepens

Pope Francis, Joe Biden, Joan Chittister, Richard Rohr,

Pope Francis

Pope Francis--I recently read a biography where I learned about the very delicate line he walked while he was a Bishop in Argentina

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM; Fr. James Martin, SJ; Pope Francis; Bishop Barber (the Poor People's Campaign); SOJOURNERS;

Richard Rohr, Pope Francis, Fr. Bryan Massingale, Maximo Faggioli, President Zelenskyy, Greta Thunberg

Pope Francis

Pope Francis

-Pope Francis

Pope Francis

Pope Francis

Marianne Duddy-Burke, Joan Chittister, Chris Schenk, John Stowe those along the border welcoming immigrants, BREAD, DignityUSA, Pax Christi, Future Church, IEC's, Sean

O'Malley, PP Francis, Fr. Joe Mitchell
(Passionist doing eco-theology in Louisville,
KY), Spiritan priests

Pope Francis for all the obvious reasons.

Thomas Berry, Richard Rohr, Pope Francis,
Dorothy Day, Teilhard de Chardin

Sister Elizabeth Johnson, Dorothy Day, Thomas
Merton, Pope Francis, Cardinal Merton
Gregory, (of Archdiocese of Washington), My
Religious Community, the Sisters of the Holy
Names of Jesus and Mary, etc.

Future Church. Biagio Mazza. Sr. Helen
Prejean. Sr. Thea Bowman. Sr. Antona Ebo.
Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Fr. James Martin.
Pope Francis.

I read Pope Francis. I think he is a gift from the
Holy Spirit. I also read Louise Erdrich. She is a
powerful voice for indigenous people and gives
me new ways of looking at things.

Pope Francis and Cardinal Cupich in Chicago.

Pope Francis for all the ways he has called the
faithful to respond to those who are forced to
leave their homes, those in areas of war and
destruction, a synodal Church

Cardinal Cupich has called those who are
supportive of Pope Francis vision to come
together to find ways to collectively work
together to build a Church responsive to the
poor.

Pope Francis

See names of Bishops mentioned above - and
of course Francis encouraging us to get out
there with the stinking sheep.

Pope Francis - Laudato Si - encyclical on the
care of the earth and how climate change
impacts the world.

President Biden seems to do his best to live by
Gospel values. Pope Francis, Joan Chittister are
other examples.

Pope Francis, Pierre de Chardin

Pope Francis

Pope Francis

Pope Francis definitely in trying to engage the
whole world church. Bishop Untener in his
care for the poor.

Pope Francis - Fr. Bryan Massingale - Fr
James Martin -

First and foremost, Pope Francis. Also Dorothy
Day and Martin Luther King; Also those brave
women who have been missionaries and were
murdered. Our own native Americans in
Wisconsin and Michigan have been wonderful
examples.

Pope Francis, Mother Teresa, Dorothy Day

Brian Massingale, Pope Francis, women
religious

Pope Francis, - he has gone to areas that need
some attention and spoken on behalf of the
people such as the Amazon

Mother Theresa, Pope Francis

Pope Francis, Fr. James Martin, S.J. Sister Joan
Chittister, Sister Helen Prejean, Bishop of
Chicago, Fr. Richard Rohr,

Pope Francis

Pope Francis. Sr. Simone.

Pope Francis

I'll start with Pope Francis and his ongoing
work with the whole world. I am also impressed
with Bishop Barber and Rev. Liz and the Poor

Peoples Campaign for Moral Reformation in our country. They continue to work hard to get justice for the poor and low-income folks - no matter what color, creed, orientation.

Pope Francis and the Cardinal Gregory of Washington. When Trump held the Bible up outside the church in Washington, Cardinal Gregory spoke out. The Pope washed the feet of criminals on Holy Thursday.

Pope Francis: encyclicals on the environment/earth:

Pope Francis, Chuck Schumer and various members of the Senate and the house, women religious who stand up publicly for justice

Pope Francis, the top of my list,

Pope Francis because of many of his statements and his authorship of Laudato Si and Fratelli Tutti.

St. Francis

Archbishop Hunthausen, Thea Bowman Mother Theresa, the current president of Ukraine Pope Francis Gandhi Bishop Tutu (You people at Future Church, who put us in contact with lovely people and each other)

Pope Francis. Fr rich Rohr, Fr James Martin. Fr Massingale all of the religious sisters

Pope Francis, The Co-Directors of Future Church, Many of my Religious Sisters and Friends.

The members of the Companions of Francis and Clare Franciscan fraternity.

Pope Francis, Sr. Norma Pimentel. Sr. Simone Campbell, Sr. Helen Prejean, Fr. James Martin, Fr. Richard Rohr

Martin Luther King comes to mind. Anthony Ray Hinton (?), founder of the Death Row

Book Club. Even Pope Francis - not taking the extravagances when he took office, more recently recognizing the richness of the Indigenous peoples.

Pope Francis, Fr. James Martin, Sr. Joan Chittister

Pope Francis-the environment and the poor

Our former parish pastor Fr. Jim Henke preached regularly on social justice issues. Pope Francis is a most inspiring leader in our world today; I was most impressed when, after becoming Pope, he showed humility, love and inclusion by washing the feet of Muslims.

Pope Francis has been more effective in teaching and leading on social justice than he has been in getting reforms within the Church, broadening women's rights, or reining in clericalism. Encyclicals like Laudato Si and Fratelli Tutti, are important, and have let the world beyond the Catholic Church see what Catholics are supposed to believe. He has consistently led by example, and that has been noticed by non-Catholics around the world.

Pope Francis

Pope Francis

Pope Francis

Pope Francis, Cardinal Cupich

Late Bishop Stephen Blaire (formerly of Stockton California), who was passionate about the environment, and pushed the California Bishops to do something. Pope Francis.

Pope Francis. By calling this Synod and asking to hear from all the people of God including people who no longer feel welcome in the Church. It is a hopeful sign for me that the Church can possibly listen to the Holy Spirit calling us to return to being people living in God's love together.

Pope Francis

Franciscan Richard Rohr - his reflections are helpful in my contemplative and action journey.

Pope Francis, my Franciscan pastor, Bryan Massingale, Jeanine Grammick, S.L., the editor of the National Catholic Reporter- Heidi Schlumpf, Nancy Sylvester, IHM

Pope Francis

Pope Francis Sister Joan Chittister

Pope Francis & Sr. Simone Campbell.

Pope Francis, especially with Fratelli tutti.

Pope Francis, Dalai Lama, Desmond Tutu

Pope Francis in his efforts to reach out to people on the margins and his advocacy for immigrants. Bishop Madden, our former urban vicar who in his humble way engages with those struggling with urban decay, poverty, and violence and has led public prayer walks in those communities.

Pope Francis inspires me with his vast knowledge and deep understanding of the issues of our world and our lives and his well-articulated writings about them and the ways to confront them.

James Martin, Pope Francis, Joan Chittister, Patrick Hoare

Pope Francis - always for the people. Richard Rohr's works always inspire me.

Pope Francis

Pope Francis

Pope Francis

Pope Francis by his persistent calls about immigration and climate change

Pope Francis. Dorothy Day. John Dear. Greg Boyle, S.J. Fr. Bryan Massingale. Sr. Thea Bowman

Pope Francis, Dorothy Day, James Martin, Br. Mickey McGrath.

Francis of Assisi + Dominic de Guzman + Vincent de Paul+ Elizabeth Seton + Dorothy Day + Oscar Romero+

Pope Francis, Fr. James Martin, Fr. Richard Rohr, Fr. Joseph Girzone (dec.), some parish priests I have encountered through Zoom Liturgies during the Covid Pandemic, all of the people I have had the pleasure of "meeting" through Future Church (Thank you.)

Pope Francis, so many people in the Black Community who are tireless is striving for equality.

Pope Francis -- my local pastor who includes what's happening in his weekly homilies tying it in with the readings

Dorothy Day, Pope Francis, Corita Kent

Pope Francis; S. Joan Chittister

Pope Francis, the Jesuits, individual lay people committed to the community

St. Francis, Mother Teresa, Dorothy Day, anyone willing to break rules in order to honor the Divine, as Jesus did.

Pope Francis - he always sticks with God's teaching!

Pope Francis

Pope Francis 1--his whole life is an inspiration.

Pope Francis, Laudato Si and many other writings, teachings, and actions. Fr Richard

Rohr in his books, emails, the Center for Action and Contemplation. Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. St Francis. Hans Kung. Elizabeth Johnson. Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza. Matthew Fox. So many others. I am so thankful for all of them!

Pope Francis's Fratelli Tutti and Laudato Si

Pope Francis, Letters and Encyclicals.

Pope Francis but nothing in particular jumps out

Pope Francis for gospel living and care of the poor

Pope Francis for his foresight in assembling the experts who wrote "Laudato si" and are organizing the Global Synod on Synodality. Locally, the people who organized Metro New York Climate Action - specifically Nancy Lorence for all of her steadfast devotion to the saving the earth.

Pope Francis, for the most part, is 'stirring the water' and encouraging grassroots participation and voices in our tradition.

Q5. As the People of God, what is God calling us to do at this moment in the political and public life of our communities and country?

Work toward forging public policies that create public housing, - humane reception of immigrants, new paths to citizenship, - care of the air the land, the planet -

Work for peace and justice for all

Work for justice - there are SO MANY issues to be undertaken

work for antiracism
advocate for the poor
speak up for women's rights in the Roman Catholic Church

Work against racism in ourselves and in our church. Work for justice for all people, especially the marginalized which is a mighty broad category. Listen to the Gospel and do what Jesus is calling us to.

Witness a strong stance for peace and justice.

Whatever we can to advance people and justice. To turn hearts away from greed, selfishness, violence. To recognize the connection of all people and all of creation. To work to ensure the dignity of all. I probably should have said this in another spot, but I forgot: the Church needs to be more open to other religions; it needs to be less exclusive and to accept that there can be salvation outside the church - the Universal Christ can reach all. We need to grow up, open windows and doors and stop building walls.

Well, I am currently meeting with a small group of people studying Laudato Si and trying to answer that very question. While we've been doing many of the things mentioned previously, I know there must be more which is what led us to begin this study. I must say we have a new priest in our parish who is encouraging us to make this search and seems willing to try to support us with our decisions as they develop. These are new questions for us and I might add we have had no particular guidance from our Bishop. Realizing that this was published 7 years ago I'm just grateful that it has come to our attention. I can only say that I am sure God is calling us to accept and love those with whom we probably don't agree politically and should use some of our God connection to better understand each other for starters.

We want to do the great, big things, but really, we need to notice the "burning bush" in our backyard and approach it just as Moses did. That is where God is found.

We need to stop attempted to fix communities to be like others and provide the fertile love and caring to become their own righteous owners of their destinies. We need to push the social and political structures to see what the results of a more just community can achieve.

We need to reach out to and listen to the marginalized people in our communities. We need to more passionately preach and act on the social justice message in the Gospel.

We need to get money out of politics. We are now selling out our democracy to the highest bidder. Corporations are not persons & should not be allowed to donate vast sums without transparency as "persons." The People of God should be more informed about how democracies die & autocracies take over.

We need to come together in love and compassion with ALL people. There is so much

division and mistrust. We need to respect all faiths and all peoples. We need not worry about numbers or sizes of churches or even strictness of language and texts. We are called to be sister and brother with one another. We are called to love one another.

We need to call out those policies that exclude and oppress any of God's creations. God created and thus loves everyone. We need to try our best to do the same.

We need to be the voice of the Catholic church and stop the clergy from being our representatives. We need to stop being intimidated.

We need to be in dialogue with the world, i.e. the people searching and working for justice in every area of our society.

We need lots of LAMENT so the cries of the excluded can be heard and seen.

We need courage to speak out about our outrage in how many of those involved in politics are seemingly only concerned about staying in office. Why are we not working for the Common Good and the general benefit of all.

We must stand up for the oppressed, not put them down. We need to have separation of church and state. We should take in the poor, refugees, etc., and use our buildings to assist the needy, the poor, the abused.

We have a unique opportunity, coming out of this isolating pandemic, to listen to how people informally met each other's needs in the past few years when we could not gather. We are all called.

We are called to Listen, Listen, Listen to try not to shred each other apart. After working on the Synod for my parish, Listening has become close to a Sacrament for me. We are called to Love even if cannot bear the political choices

others make. Does not mean I would be persuaded to make abhorrent political choices, but also, I cannot hate the other or we will shred ourselves apart.

We are called to continue to live in faith, hope and love with growing our virtual global communities as we pray and grow our mycelium like web, pulling inward, as extending outward towards unknown entanglements, trusting in a Source that is good. Be about engaging our vagus nerve, connecting and be in open spaces of nature, to experience the love of the ultimate lover of all. Be aware. Breath, Prepare for being open to amazing new things because the spirit is a moving all over. We cannot even imagine what God has planned for us. 1 Corinthians 2:9 We are to be new wine skins for the new wine being cultivated. Mark 2:22. This empowers and sustains the engagement in LWV, Network Lobby, PPC, CIW, and so many other wonderful communities doing the justice work, the GREAT WORK, as Father Thomas Berry would name it that is self-regulating and unfolding.

We are called to better understand our relationship to Mother Earth and one another. We are called to care for each.

We are called to be Eucharist for the world in all that implies.

We are called NOT to be silent but to stand up publicly for the rights of the poor and marginalized. God also calls us to find ways to change the way our community addresses those concerns.

We are being called to love God and to love one another.

We are being called to follow the message of Jesus when events/activities in public life call for action. That is to act with love.

We are being called to end the chaos that causes division and form a community worldwide of caring people. This is a wakeup call to our humanity and our very survival.

Wake up!

Wake our hearts, give courage to our voices and both speak and act to help create a world, city, home of the Presence of God's love, peace, inclusion and patience abounds!

Voter suppression is occurring the US with gerrymandering, and Republicans taking over the democratic system to make it autocratic.

Vote in line with church teachings

Vote for the Crucified of today, including our crucified planet.

Forgive and respect those I don't agree with, not fall into cynicism or hatred.

Vote conscientiously. Advocate for end of death penalty and war. Work for basic health care for all. Include women, minorities and LGBTQIA+ at all levels of public and faith life. Live an earth friendly life. Waste nothing, especially food. Avoid using fossil fuels and airplanes. Live and speak nonviolently and listen to others, especially those I don't agree with. Be ready to care for others in my local community and contribute to the care of others in need throughout the world.

Vote and be patient with others. There is little use in talking for most are sure that I am wrong in most of my views. Also pray.

Use our voices. Action. Be courageous. Find others who are searching, acting like the people Jesus showed us to be.

Use our voices, time, and dollars to demonstrate that these issues are important to us as Catholics. Tie our actions to the teachings of Jesus and to the mission of the Church. But

do all this with love and respect for others who don't share our views. Seek to understand.

Use our God-given voices to express our ideas for restorative justice and other issues needing attention.

Try to bring unity rather than division. Honor the dignity of all people including LGBTQ+ people. Give more leadership roles to women.

to work with and serve those who are hurting and those who have been marginalize.

To work for peace, acceptance, compassion, Stop the polarization- be a community of sharing- there for one another

To walk together in the footsteps of Jesus

To walk humbly with all as our brothers and sisters in justice

to understand the call for sisterhood/ brotherhood of all, regardless of social, cultural, political, geographical, etc., differences. We are all children of God and custodians of the Earth.

To talk with each other with respect and pray we can become through dialog one nation and keep our democracy alive.

To take a stand for justice and solidarity with the poor and oppressed

To step up and put others' needs before our own; to reach out to one another to be of service

To stand with those who are poor, oppressed, marginalized. To live within the constraints of our beleaguered earth. To stand apart from capitalism which tramples people and God's creation. To be unafraid in speaking the truth to power, whether that is political or religious power. It's exactly the same stuff that Jesus taught 2000 years ago.

To stand up, to be vocal, to fear not, and to speak the truth of the Gospel without vilifying those who are trying to silence us. To see the interconnections of Jesus' teaching, faith, the poor and marginalized, women, LGBTQI, immigrants, white supremacy and devise strategies to respond regardless of what the hierarchy does or doesn't say about them.

To stand up for the Gospel. To LOVE. To stop adding to the divisiveness in our country and world.

If the Church were united, clergy and laity working together, perhaps we would not have such a toxic environment in our country. Perhaps, if we as Church truly lived the Gospel, we would be the persecuted Church.

To stand up and become an active member of our baptism imperative that we are priests prophets kings

To stand together as ONE and speak our truth. This opportunity for sharing has truly unified us. Thank you.

To stand for justice, to pray and help Ukraine, to reach out to welcome refugees from all countries, to fight to end the death penalty. To help all marginalized people, to provide education, food and shelter for ALL children, to help the elderly. (A Phila diocese recently sold 6 Catholic nursing homes recently to a for-profit corporation, so the care of the elderly is nonexistent there.).

Perhaps someone with strong Catholic Social Teaching could consider running for office - locally, regionally or statewide to bring equity to people. For now, I hang the Ukrainian flag from my front balcony and give to charities.

To speak up and to be involved in influencing the community

To speak the truth. To have courage. To live the Good News. To be open to the many expressions of faith

To recognize that we are all God's people and, as such, we all deserve to be respected and treated with dignity.

To reach out to the marginalized.

To reach out and care for one another

To put others in need before ourselves and to do what is just. The verse from Micah comes to mind, "This is what Yahweh asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God."

To put aside our differences and seek the common good. We need to change policies in order to guarantee a future for the next generations. Ecological conversion should be a priority, we need to influence politicians to take big steps toward combating climate change, this is affecting people worldwide and have rippling effects. Many people are migrating because of climate change, and we will see more of these migrations in the future.

To pay attention to what the Gospel is calling us.

To not be silent. To not allow our earth to continue to be ravaged while we turn our eyes. To not continue to believe that going to mass and taking communion once a week is a good Catholic. To begin to take real action, everything from organized protests to being aware of how we spend our money.

To love one another

To live with integrity and justice, respect people, be committed to the truth, be kind, patient, and tolerant

To live the word of God through a life of good example. Talk is cheap, actions are what convey the true message.

To live the faith in our world by engaging with all the challenges in our culture. To work for the human dignity of each person.

To live our faith, one must pray first, asking the Holy Spirit for guidance, then act in your small universe to improve every situation you come in contact with where there is injustice. Starting in our own community and then spreading to the national level. There is so much injustice in our own neighborhood

To listen to those who feel they have no voice. To set an environment where they can speak and be listened to. Political leaders need to be more responsible to the Gospel rather than how to get reelected.

To listen to the Gospel.

To listen to God's voice in every event and moment with all people and the universe.

To listen to each other, to end hatred and divisiveness, to work toward peace, care for the climate/world, work toward respect and equality for all.

To listen to each other and to work for the rights and inclusion of all.

To listen deeply personally in prayer to reading the signs of the times and to respond with truth and mercy.

To listen carefully and study all the issues. I am not called to be a "one issue" voter. If I say I am pro-life, I must realize that means all life in its many aspects.

To leave our comfortable lifestyles and become more attentive to the cries of the people who have no voice or whose voices are disregarded because of their race, religion, life stance. To

daily find a way to reach out and be the very presence of Jesus.

To keep those out of office who claim to be Christians but have little regard for the disenfranchised.

To keep our eyes, ears and hearts open to our community and also to the greater part of our country and work in terms of injustice for people especially the poor and also our Mother Earth.

To follow the Word of the Gospel, Ask for Grace to Do what the Spirit Say do

To follow in the footsteps of Jesus: heal the sick, release the imprisoned, feed the hungry, etc. As long as we do it to these, we do it in the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus

To ensure that voting rights are protected. Demand training of the police by organizations that foster de-escalation techniques & get guns off the streets & out of homes. Immigrants are granted a reasonable path to citizenship.

To do justice in the most loving respectful way possible.

To direct attention to societal sin and engagement, rather than just private salvation. Solidarity, human rights

To create a world in which all can live in peace and have what is needed to grow and thrive

To courageously speak out and work for peace and justice in so many ways, including working to elect honest, wise politicians devoted to the greater public good over their personal and partisan interests. We're also called to work more fervently than ever on existential issues-- climate change, against nuclear arms proliferation, terrorism, authoritarianism, etc.

To come together by leading thru our values, instead of self-interest. We are so divided now.

To care for the poor and vulnerable, and to work for true, gender equality. to save our planet.

To Calm down and be kind. To be humble, to seek forgiveness and reconciliation with each other. To learn how to and practice listening in love to one another. “Transparency” with ourselves and each other. And as noted above to become the healers we are called by the Trinity to be in this wonderful world that needs so much care and healing. We are also being called to bring beauty and Joy into this world which transforms the suffering and “mistakes “ we make. We can help the world feel safe enough to admit mistakes (Racism, taking over Native American lands. and promoting slavery, excluding others for a myriad of reasons and many other “ systemic sins)) and ask forgiveness.

To build the kingdom of God, we need to revamp the system so that the basic needs of everyone are met. Economic injustice is the root of evil in this country.

To become more welcoming and inclusive of ALL people. To speak out and act against the many injustices consuming our society. To be tolerant and less judgmental.

To become more active in educating our parishioners about the need to send written communications to elected officials, to leaning more about pending legislation and it impacts citizens.

To be the people of God, not the people of an organized religion that is trying to stay afloat in their sinking ship.

To be more aware of what it is I can do, because just support monetarily. I have a friend who said she always gives to St Vincent’s in thanks for having to be there waiting for a meal.

To be listeners and accepting all peoples as children of God with so much to offer each other That we all may be one body in love. To live Gods kingdom now as Jesus asked us to.

To be informed and to pray. To be suspicious of any person or group who claims to have all the answers. Including the Catholic Church

To be inclusive and relational and accepting of differences

To be honest and select our best leaders.

To act justly. Love tenderly. Serve one another. To be fill our hearts with love and gratitude for the diversity of all God’s creation. To be good stewards and to honor and care for Mother Earth and to

To accept everyone men women matter what color and hopefully get them to know God in a good way and not someone who doesn’t accept people as he’s the only one that can judge us

The People of God are being called to advise the less worldly clergy as to what is necessary to include everyone in Catholic rituals. With arrogance, they make decisions that are not in the interest of the People of God. Ask the People!! Men and women “bring home the bacon” but it’s usually the women who know how to prepare it, how to serve it, and when. Include the women in the work of the clergy.

Our parish has a number of clergy, but I don’t think there are any ministerial bones in their bodies. “Shy” isn’t a good excuse for that!

Tell the truth. Do not believe of promulgate lies. Expose the truth always. Call out lies and liars for exactly what they are.

Take a stance supporting love for our fellow citizens and inhabitants of the world.

Stay the course.

Start at local level/engage and vote for people of truth and principles ---then ask those people to allow themselves to be voted to higher office (school boards mayors, etc.)

Stand with the poor and marginalized who suffered disproportionately in the pandemic.

Stand with the marginalized, as Jesus did.

Stand up, speak out!

Stand up for the rights of the poor and marginalized (including LGBTQ), insure care of creation, educate the faithful to correct misinformation being fed them by right wing parties, insure equal access to justice, health, and education.

Stand up for the poor, the disenfranchised, the mistreated.

Stand up for the marginalized. Be honest, fair, considerate, unselfish.

Stand up for our neighbors (refugees, migrants); being inclusive on all levels, trafficked peoples

Stand up and speak when and where needed.

Stand up and inform transformation of the Church.

Stand up and be the voice for the voiceless and those oppressed and suffering.

Stand up and be counted! Mobilize either with our faith community or without it! We are on the brink of climate catastrophe and nuclear war. We MUST ACT NOW and be loud and noisy and protest, write Letters to the Editor, call our congress people daily, get INVOLVED in the political movements/PROTESTS/BOYCOTTS/UNION ORGANIZING that most reflect our faith. NEVER GIVE UP.

Stand for social justice.

Stand firm in working for the Common Good

Speak with a strong voice and put our bodies on the line. Vote.

Speak up! Let bishops know we want them and priests to teach the implications of Catholic theology in our daily lives beyond the issue of abortion. Stop being wimps and trying to court the political right. Listen to Jesus. Listen to different voices. Stop trying to maximize the collection plate by speaking in platitudes on Sunday and telling us to vote for Trump.

Speak Up!

Speak up, demonstrate

Speak up to our own truth.

Speak up and not allow those in power to abuse it any longer. The Church has become GOD to too many, and thus they are doing terrible things to protect their "CHURCH", and not listening to the will of God, who loves ALL creation - not just the Catholics. It is shameful how far the church has gone from Jesus's message to love and care for one another. They have cared more for power and wealth than for the people of God and all of God's creation. Those who have put themselves above others in this Institution, will be last. The Hypocrisy of the Institution kills the good it is supposed to be doing.

Speak truth to power (within the church -to the hierarchy and to government officials)

Stop judging - listen deeply and love without fear

Root out clericalism (especially in the seminaries and in the hierarchy).

Speak out/show up in the marketplace to take a stand against racism. Understand how the church leadership in America and Europe benefits greatly from white privilege and clericalism

Speak to our parish communities & to our church about following gospel values rather than church laws

Speak out, join small social justice communities, help the poor, work in our communities, etc. Write a book. We recently wrote and published a book: A New Pentecost in the Time of Zoom by David and Mary Emmick

Speak out with honesty when we see injustice.

Speak out on our views in whatever context we believe it might have an impact.

Speak out for justice - equality, inclusion and no more war and disarmament of nuclear weapons

Speak on behalf of truth, justice and inclusivity with respect, integrity and contemplative action on behalf of the marginalized and the common good.

Speak for the weak among us

Call out the USCCB when they are off track of the Way of Jesus

Use our financial resources to let some church leaders know they do not have our blind support

Prayer, prayer, prayer

Speak for the voiceless, including all sentient beings (animals).

Speak

Solidarity and stewardship

Social and economic justice.

Simplicity of living, a life of continual giving to the poor and marginalized, a sense of overall mission.

Show compassion....anti-racist....kind.... honest and truthful... just and merciful.... inclusive....non-judgmental.....Listen and respond with Love.

Share our resources

Treat all people as equals. Be inclusive and diverse and respectful of all

Serve the poor and those on the periphery.

Seek those on the margins of society (like Jesus did) and do not condemn them but find permanent ways to help them.

Sean's talk was inspiring and his ideas on direct action were so good and simple.

Scripture says it best and most succinctly.

“Love justice”--Wisdom 1:1

The promotion of justice is the prophetic role of the Church.

Scream out for justice and love

Save the planet, unselfishly. Think of one another and not the almighty dollar. Share the world's bounty--there should be no “others.”

Safe the world, safe creation.

Rethink the parish model which is hierarchical and form a model that is communitarian.

Respond to the environmental challenges of climate change, end racial disparities, provide for affordable housing

Renew and become transformed individuals

Remember who you are...it was because Jesus' teaching and how the “authorities” perceived him, that he was crucified.

Remain positive and hopeful and do whatever small part I can to unify our world.

Remain informed. Speak out. Call out racism and sexism for what they are.

Recognize the internal systems within the church that promote racism, sexism, homophobia and xenophobia, tied to militarism that maintain white supremacy in the name of God. Recognize those who join the hierarchy are found “acceptable” because they align with the authoritarian forms of governance and are appointed accordingly. Address all structures that promoted the return of this illness and create structures that offer alternatives for redress.

Read Laudato Si’ and become Laudato Si communities led by the laity; become green churches

Reach out to the poor

Work to protect our environment

Reeducate ourselves without a Catholic prospective

Rail against the injustice of the marginalization of women in the Sacramental and administrative life of the church.

To act our Baptisms and get out and do things for the poor and marginalized and to fight injustice everywhere

Push ourselves into dialogue and uncomfortable choices about our entrenchment with oppressive systems like capitalism.

Protect the earth and vulnerable people, because they are sacred and part of God’s creation.

Protect our planet so that it will continue to support human life.
Save our nation from White Extremism!

Promote inclusion, compassion, listening.

Produce a harmonized world of just for all humans.

Priests need to tell us in homilies about how we should be making social change to help the poor. What about jobs, housing, education, and healthcare -- real current issues. How about saying we should work to have Congress make laws to help the poor. How about supporting low-income housing in our communities? How about supporting Black and Latinx businesses? How about being taxed more so we can spend more money on our schools? How about Medicare for All? As it stands, priests do not mention real issues because their audience will be mad and not give money. Then we can’t pay the light bill, so to speak. It would be better to have a store-front church building and speak up for social justice. Priests could also have organizations within the Church that work for social justice and themselves (especially if there were more priests because of ordaining women and allowing priests to marry) “hit the streets” to support these things.

Preach the Gospel and serve anyone who needs us...strive to be servants.

Prayer and openness to listening to others. I am no longer funding the diocese and parish that I use to attend but have been funding lay organizations and groups that are actively working for a better world.

Pray, conversion.

Turn our swords into ploughshares.

Grasp the implication of being ONE

Pray for peace in Ukraine, teach nonviolence in all dimensions, language and behavior; empower peace and role of women

Pray for peace and unity. Our Congress has become so partisan instead of working for the common good. Pray for peace in Ukraine

Practice the corporal works of mercy whenever possible.

Participate in social justice action and prayer. Parishes could enter into social justice, politics, the works of mercy and work not only individually but join with other parishes. Information could be included in Parish Bulletins. Bishops and priests could make statements and speak to and write to issues of all those in need--the poor, an inclusive church.

Opens to the spirit leading to acceptance

Open our own hearts to God's compassion & taking the log out of our own eyes instead of being judgmental towards others.

Open our eyes to the part the structural church has played in unjust systems---in spite of what the bishops say. Small faith communities need to develop, educate themselves, and be the church. The hierarchy is not leading us.

Open our eyes to the needs of our neighbors and reach out to help in a way we are able.

Open our eyes to the bigger picture for encouraging a healthy existence for all.

Oh, I hope and pray that God is calling us to support peace in the world, to care seriously for our corner of the universe, to be responsible and demand that corporations be responsible for the good of all. I also hope that God will help us evolve into more generous, more tolerant and more forward-thinking members of the human race.

Not to be afraid to speak out. Pastors not afraid to speak out even if the collection basket will get smaller. Die for what you believe.

Not sure, but I don't think we are called to spend 28 million dollars on a Eucharistic conference, especially since most bishops in the US haven't done much about the synod.

Not be afraid to get involved in politics.

Many Catholics no longer pay attention to Church leadership. These people, like myself, view the Church as the people of God and not an emphasis on hierarchy. God is calling for a change of direction in the Church under Pope Francis, but US hierarchy is resisting.

Make the Church a better representative of what God is calling for at this moment in the political and public life of our country.

Make sure the formation of all: seminarians, adults and young people is focused on how Jesus lived his Gospel message. Formation of personal conscience is very important because it speaks to how each one is responsible to become a disciple -it is not about rules and regs but about love, compassion, hope, seeing, listening, embracing

Make our voices heard on behalf of the victims of war, sexual abuse, racism, etc.

Make our decisions based on love, justice, equality and inclusivity.

Make me an instrument of your peace.....

Make decisions carefully — without judgment. Recognize our own responsibility. Pray.

Make art.

Love thy neighbor as thyself. We have become complacent, taking shelter in our churches, where we are insulated from the plights of the needy, where we dribble out charity in the form of money simply passed on to people we never meet. I feel we are called to go out of the church, to meet Jesus in every person, and to

help whomever we find in whatever ways we can.

Love the gospel values

Love our neighbor in action and faith

Love each other well!!

Love all people, regardless of race, religion, sexual affiliation, gender, or whatever. We are all one, everyone and everything is connected, and God loves each and every one intimately and eternally, therefore we need to treat everyone and the earth itself justly.

Look at the gospels and the principals of Catholic Social Justice. Let's use these as a tool to help in charity, justice and reconciliation within our communities, church and nations.

Living by the Gospel message to become more vocal and involved to end violence and injustices.

Live the Gospel message of mercy compassion. Forgiveness inclusion

Live our Catholic heritage as expressed in Scripture, Pope Francis' recent encyclicals.

Live like we believe God loves us.

Listen. Listen. Listen.

Learn more.

Boots on the ground - speak up speak out.

Listen! Hear the cries of the poor. Remember that the "Least of these" are my sisters and brothers. Help in the way I am able.

Listen, be informed, speak up, be responsible

listen, be open, forgive

Listen to the Spirit ongoingly to learn how to deal with the opposition to try to come to understanding. Pray for strength to not give up, to stand firm, to be creative, to see the full extent of danger, to believe in the power of Truth and Love, for Wisdom.

Listen to others. Don't be so quick to judge

Listen to one another and then work together to figure out ways to solve the problems that confront us -- especially war, poverty, failing to treat all people with dignity.

Listen to one another and learn together how to apply Gospel values to our times.

LISTEN to one another and form our own educated opinions. There is **TOO** much division in our world, our church, our politics...

Listen to each other, stand up for what we believe.

Listen to each other especially to those who are different from us. Being sure everyone's views are included when decisions are made.

Listen to each other and behave like Jesus would

Listen and pray.

Listen and compromise, prioritize created being over profit

Let's try listening and witnessing and caring, making space for the whoever is on the margins. when it comes to self-defense, whether personal or communal or national, I am less confident, inexperienced.

Let us put God back into our daily lives and not be afraid to profess our faith by reaching out to those who need us most! I believe what the Synod will do is bring us back to God a special way.

Keep the bishops from trying to kill us!

As I told the driver of the big lit up advertising truck with “Save the Latin Mass,” “I don’t care if the mass is in KLINGON as long as it is SAFE TO SET FOOT IN A CATHOLIC CHURCH!” The driver agreed with me & I didn’t see him the next day. I was telling the bishops the same thing in the elevators.

Where are we getting all these young priests who are trying to bring back the Tridentine Mass? The teachers in the seminaries have said they are literally AFRAID of some of the candidates, but since the bishops are desperate for warm bodies behind the altar, THEY ARE ORDAINED ANYWAY!

Just be open to love and accept all

Stop being divisive

Join the Synod movement and teach lay persons how to listen to one another and share their ideas and act on the good that comes from their hearts

It is quite overwhelming, but the issues include climate change, gun violence in the US, war, poverty, hunger, IMMIGRATION, inclusion of women, gays, marginalized in church life.

Integrate our faith with the needs that cry out to us in need in the world.

Inclusiveness, compassion, reconciliation

Inclusion for LGBTQ, Divorced and Remarried, Women.

If we wish to live in peace within our communities, our country, and our world, we must work for justice within our communities, our country, and our world. And to work for justice, we must listen to and engage ALL people within our communities, our country, and our world.

I think we are being called to listen to a wide variety of people, to learn to understand their views and to remember that each person is God’s beloved. We are all loved by God, and he wants the best for each of us. Let’s concentrate on the common good and put down the things that keep us from doing that. Let’s learn to get outside of ourselves and see with new eyes.

I think that God is calling us to speak up both as individuals and as a church. Ukraine is calling for a plea for peace from the top leadership in the church. Why

I think it is very important for people to get involved (even if it is just voting) in the political and public life. Our representatives make decisions that affect how our world runs and how the people of the world are treated.

I think God is calling us, laity and clergy, to become more informed about the social and political ramifications of Jesus’ teaching and the development of the Church’s social teaching; to look at the issues confronting our society and our world through the lens of scripture and Catholic social teaching. I think God is calling us to acknowledge that we are all sinners and have been complicit in the evils of racism and exclusion, and to trust that God is with us and will guide us to a place of wholeness and holiness, if we let God.

I think God is calling us, his people, to return and be renewed by the Good News of the Gospels, and particularly by Jesus’ teachings of love and peace, i.e., back to basic Christian teachings. I’ve been disappointed the Church has been focus on form (e.g., when to bow during Mass) and not of substance (e.g., how to enact the teachings of love and peace in the Gospels).

I think God is calling us to do exactly what Jesus has done during his three years of life on earth and more recently we have the life of Romero and so many others. speaking the

truth, attentive to the stranger, the widow and children.

I think God is calling us to be change in the Church. We need to be more inclusive; we need to have equality in ministry, we need to be active in protecting the earth and the poor. We need to speak out to the Church for their lack of proper seminary training for new priests. They are just coming out so conservative and so traditional, and don't have a clue as to how to make a parish a community of believers. Older parishioners are leaving to find communities where they feel more comfortable (which often times is with order priests). I have heard this over and over with many people I have spoken to and have experienced it in my own parish, which was Franciscan, but they had to leave for lack of priests, and now we feel lost and disappointed, as our parish is no longer the same place. We need to engage our political life, to address the problems in our life as a society. Living in New York, the homeless and the poor are beginning to overwhelm us, and there is no affordable housing being built for them, and social services are of marginal help, without a stable place to live.

I only know what God is calling me to do. I can't listen in on what they are calling others to do.

I believe we are called to listen carefully to what is happening, to watch the events (as painful as they are) and to ask "What would Jesus do in this case?" We are called to live the Gospel message of one who offered justice, compassion, forgiveness, hope and joy to all people...especially those on the margins. We are called to do the same as best we can --- together.

I believe we are called to end polarization.

I believe we are called to be more involved and not maintain a divide between faith and public life.

I believe we are called to be informed and to assume our responsibility to "speak truth to power" whether in the ecclesial or political arena.

I believe the call is to be church and not depend on the hierarchy to lead the way. If we are truly "The People of God" there's no barrier to our action. Most of the justice actions are done in collaboration with other faith groups or secular activists. Letting the bishops hear about our involvements can help lead them to justice.

I believe God is saying: "Don't panic. Remember what you know to be true. Pay attention to those who are poor and have no voice. Support good work for justice in every way possible. Do what you can. All you can do is all you can do. Sometimes burning up with love is all you can do."

I believe God is inviting us to form small base beloved communities of faith so we can respond locally and globally to address the issues of the poor close to home and abroad. We don't need cathedrals and large parishes and priests to be the only ones in charge to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world!

I believe God is calling us to receive the Holy Spirit into the silence of our hearts. And then to become the heart, hands, eyes and feet of Christ.

I believe God is calling us to really reflect upon the teaching of Jesus--both by his actions and words. and having a church who can help us all navigate the complexity of modern life instead of having an either/or simplistic answer for everything. As is often said "You cannot solve complex problems with simple solutions"

I believe God is calling us to be a people of love and acceptance, that all can have a life of dignity and acceptance and be the person God has designed them to be.

I believe God is always calling us to act in the political and public lives of our communities with a spirit of (Christ's) love for one another and advocacy for those who have the least power in our society.

I am still heartened by the young people in my life, trying to foster change in our world. I'm called to support them

Honestly engage in conversations.

Help the marginalized, save the planet.

He is observing, and he is not happy.

God is encouraging us to read the Gospel.

God is calling us, through the Gospel message, to speak out at injustices and not to be afraid to take action.

God is calling us to use our energies and voices to speak and act on behalf of the poor and neglected, those discriminated against and maligned, and oppose publicly greedy, self-interested, corrupt politicians, big corporations, the military-industrial complex, the big polluting industries, white nationalism and all the economic injustices that keep people in poverty and distress all over the world and which fuel our wars.

God is calling us to stand for the poor. God is calling us to care for the earth. God is calling us to live simply/ consume less/ share more/ reach out farther / engage more/ bring the gospel into our political dealings nationally and in our communities. Care for the vulnerable/ living wages/ medical care for all/ respect for all

God is calling us to speak up when we see political and social injustice God is calling us to pray, to listen to the Holy Spirit and to each other.

God is calling us to persevere in seeking justice for all.

God is calling us to look at the life of Jesus on earth and do what he did.

God is calling us to listen to the cries of the poor and disenfranchised and to engage in respectful listening and dialogue with those with whom we disagree.

God is calling us to end the mandatory priest celibacy political rule from the year 1139 to Finally Open up the Priesthood to called people. God is calling for Holy Women to Ordination.

God is calling us to end racism, hatred against those different from us: LGBTQ+ persons, of different religions, nationalities, ethnicities, colors. God is calling us to be welcoming and inclusive, to work for justice and peace, to care for the earth and to really, truly love everyone.

God is calling us to be alive with the FAITH, seeing all as sister/brother and to work for peace and justice - to not be complicit but to act responsibly -

God is calling us to above all love, and to reunify the Church. We need to move forward and not backward, and we need to listen to the spirit on how we can best serve our communities and the whole world.

God is calling on us to participate more fully in social justice where we are, to love others even when it is difficult and to be more like Him.

God is calling me to learn more about Catholic Social Teaching and how I can contribute.

God is calling all of the people of God to speak out against injustice in political and public life. These last few years have been very trying for the US and other countries, with dictators and wanna-be dictators suppressing the people they have been elected to serve. We must keep

pushing to have our voices heard. It is a very critical time for all.

God is always calling us to Love one and serve one another in any arena, seeking truth and compassion along the way.

God calls each off us to get involved, young and old alike but our parish Church has no leader to make this happen and it is not encouraged by the pastor. There is more to Church than ritual. There is Charity to the marginalized, involving the young and old alike.

Get the vote out. Support candidates who put the poor and marginalized first and not their own self-interest.

Get more involved and have our voices heard in the public arena in favor of justice for all no matter how different they may be from me, from us. What would Jesus response be to some, many, laws passed in many states legislatures at this time? That is where we, as People of God, must make our voices heard.

Get involved, vote, become an activist for a cause walking in the ways of the Gospel.

Get involved in local issues with an organization, like interfaith communities and then present a united commitment asking our politicians to listen and act.

GET INVOLVED and be active participant not just handing out money to grow our communities and country.

Full Inclusion. Non-violence or non-existence. A radical revolution of values.

We have commonality with every human being. We must be open to this.

Forming people with good scientific knowledge on biological issues, and mental health issues to properly inform our spiritual support for those

who are vastly misunderstood and distained due to prejudice from faulty information.

Follow Jesus.

Focus on the critical issues - climate change, refugees, the war in Ukraine, the economy and reform in the church

Focus on helping the most vulnerable and loving the Earth.

Find a way to stop the war in Ukraine.

Fight against the Far Right, Men's Rights Activists, Anti-Feminists, Misogynists, Anti-Gay hatemongers, Conspiracy Theorists, Neo-Nazis and other racists, Hypermasculine Personalities (Putin, etc.), Anti-Democratic forces, Environmental Destroyers, Climate Change Deniers, and Corporations that harm human beings and the environment for their own profit margin. Jesus spoke up against corrupt and unjust systems.

Feeding the hungry, aiding the homeless to get back on their feet, prison reform so that we are rehabilitating them, end Black/Brown being victim of police brutality.

Faith doing Justice in the various issues confounding our world and our church in the world

Equality, justice and diversity.

Engage racism, protect voting rights, support Rev. Barber & the Poor Peoples campaign, commit to Native Peoples protection of water and lands, support climate justice, join with those searching for non-violence and peace, LOVE the Earth (the reflection of the Divine) and all her families, human and more than human!

Engage in helping the large immigrant communities.

Racial Justice is imperative.

Engage in civil dialogue to work toward creating bridges between people and groups with radically different ideas.

End divisiveness. Bring dialogue back. Follow His Son and as the BVM said to those at Cana, "Do as He says." Do as Jesus says. Receive Him in the Eucharist so we can follow God's will - bring unity among the Body of Christ.

End divisiveness, work toward love and inclusion, not just for those with whom we agree, but toward all, including the least of these.

encourage the vote; eliminate anti-vote legislation

Emphasize the obligation to participate in promoting the common good, locally and globally.

Educate ourselves, listen, question and pray.

Ecological justice

Economy/inequality

Ecological issues, racism, and economic issues

Creating a spirit of unity, calling us to find the truth and set aside hypocrisy; to provide avenues of listening, understanding, and responding the needs of the people of our local community, our global community, and creation.

Create a more peaceful and inclusive world with social and economic justice for all.

Continue to work for justice in our world for without justice for all mankind, there can be no peace among us - neither as nations nor as individuals

Continue to support politicians and clergy who are truly Gospel oriented.

Contemplation and action are very important. Finding a community that shares this is difficult.

Come together. Accept Francis as Pope. Accept Vatican II. Catholics need to come together for TRUTH and love of fellow man.

Come together in a loving and generous way. Walk together and listen to each other. We have been offered a way, Synodality. If we as Catholics were able to listen to each other, what an example that would be.

Challenge our bishops to speak out. Have courage to encourage pastors to speak on Social Issues.

Certainly, to stand with the Ukrainians and against the inhumanity being perpetrated against them. Also, our country has got to bring about compassionate, comprehensive immigration reform. A stop to the proliferation of guns. Equity in our communities reaching out to the poor and marginalized.

Care for the poor and vulnerable; challenge the economic system that creates/allows poverty in a land of riches.

Care and be responsive to the issues of Racial Justice, immigration policy, women in the hierarchical structure of the church

Calling us to new world where justice will reign. This needs to happen in our faith communities (Vatican 111 .), in politics and social arena. Peace and Justice issues need to be addressed. Justice is of prime importance, there will be no peace without justice.

Bring the kingdom of God alive in the third millennium

Become more aware of the humanity AND divinity of each person. See each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Become more aware of structures that coddle me and diminish others

Become informed, get involved in something in our community.

become informed and get involved

Be unified! Stand with the poor!

Be the kind of prophet who isn't afraid to speak the truth to power.

Be seen and heard that the Church needs to evolve and be more inclusive!

Be political! Help with voting rights. Engage with congressmen and women. Encourage our Church leadership to take stands on justice issues.

Be more in tune with the needs of all people. Let laity have more leadership to keep the parishes open. Just because men are not joining the priesthood doesn't mean our Church has to close and fall apart. Too many Catholics are leaving church and their faith in God. A BIG percentage of that is the result of priests' scandal. That is SICK!

be more catholic with a small "c"
focus on the bigger message of loving one another

Be kind, listen to all, especially those who disagree with your beliefs, collaborate with others to achieve a consensus on issues.

Be kind to each other. Be less selfish.

Be involved.

Be involved and speak out in regard to saving the planet; our earthly home is in crisis.

Be active in supporting voting rights and eliminating gun violence.

be informed and as engaged as one can be following the example of Jesus -- pray for peace and love among all people

Be informed and act accordingly

Be inclusive of all of the marginalized, not just those who will be able to support a capitalistic agenda.

Be fair and inclusive to all people

Recognize and deal with our prejudices
Become more aware and then act on how we can all influence the Climate Crisis

Be engaged in public life but not entangled in the political divisions and culture wars that are so present among us.

Be aware of and help each other in protection of the earth and people

Be available to God.

Be a voice of reason and reconciliation.

Attend to the poor/oppressed, immigrants.

At times I get discouraged and think prayer is all that is left. Then I am reminded that resurrection follows suffering and perhaps our political system in this country and our church hierarchy in this country needs to reach a breaking point before the people will rise up and demand reform. I have immense gratitude that we've been sent Pope Francis and pray that this Synod will lead to unheard voices being heard.

As Psalm 95 says, 'if today you hear God's voice, open your heart.' As read in John 17 today, God is calling for a unity and oneness among believers that mirrors the unity of the Trinity. and - the love required for that union is

what makes all the world take notice. I believe God is calling us to be one as God is one - and the love that binds that oneness leads to work for all of humanity - especially those on the farthest margins.

As people of God, we are called to not put our head under the sand but to stand up and learn the facts and use our discernment abilities & not be afraid to speak up, either writing a letter or supporting a cause like LGBT youth by including them in our dialogues and reaching out with kindness of spirit.

Always search for truth. Respect differing views. Learn to concede.

Align with the poor and make their lives better because we can. And start to care for this earth by getting off our dependence on oil and gas.

Align and support our values with those of our country. I don't want to live in a theocracy, but I do want to live in a community that honors God's command to love one another. Don't tell me how to vote or whom to vote for. Teach me about love and honor and respect. I'll figure out who to vote for.

Aid every voice to be heard in our community and in our country.

Advocate for the needs of the earth and the people which accord with what Christ taught. Be mindful of my personal stewardship of "time, talent, treasure."

Advocate for immigration policy reform that greatly expands the number of immigrants to be welcomed into the US.

Address the impacts of racism, poverty, role of women in the church

Address climate change, come out against nuclear weapons, welcome the immigrant, stop unbridled capitalism, support healthcare, end

racism and place an emphasis on helping the poor

Add our voices to comments against the conservative bishops.

Active participation in correcting situations that aren't life giving to people.

action and possible establishment of small faith communities for people to be engaged in bringing their faith to everyday life.

Act with thought, compassion and strength of spirit. listen to others in the same manner you would like to be heard.

Act boldly, be inclusive in our activity. We need to further peace , not war.

Act as a global church with so many buildings and so much land to commit with action now for environmental justice.

"Love one another as I have loved you