

August 20, 2017 Communiqué

## **Approach of the Parish reflection**

“Lord, you who makes all things new, give us the audacity to dare ambitious projects and patience in the planning. Remove our instinct of ownership of the projects. This we can only receive from you Lord. Amen.”

We are continuing with our communiqués, which will be available as a handout at the end of Mass and on the Parish Webpage and Facebook page.

Last week, we examined the actual changes being considered by the Diocesan commission. Today we will look at the reflection of our Parishes so that we may react to this hypothesis of change in a constructive fashion, respecting our communities.

In its history, the Church has encountered many periods of upheavals where it has had to reflect to be able to renew itself. Our Church is currently at such a turning point, and we must take the time to reflect on our future and be prepared for action. It is important to remember that if you know where you are headed, a fork in the road is not the end of the road.

For more than a year, Msgr. Pierre Morissette has presided over a Diocesan Commission to inform of us the gravity of the situation we face as a community. The goal of this commission was to help us to get involved in a different way so that the Church can pursue its mission with energy. It is important that we live this renewal in a prayer. The transformation of our role as the Baptised must be accomplished with the help of the Holy Spirit.

The pastoral teams, boards of wardens and representatives of diverse committees feel it is important that each community be aware of this call to change. That is the reason why a committee was created: to disseminate information in the Parishes and through public meetings. The aim is to promote a reflection on the future of our parishes, the relevance of our places of worship, and on the ways in which we can “do Church differently” all while re-centering ourselves on the mission Christ gave us.

The parish reflections aim to:

- Re-center and reinforce Church unity around its mission
- Initiate and maintain a greater participation of God’s people in the St. Eustache zone to reflect and realize the mission of the Church. This must be done while appreciating the many changes made necessary in the context of the current society
- Give a place to those who are not usually consulted: the base of our Church
- Present the results of these reflections and recommendations

This reflection is for the entire population of our parishes: those who have distanced themselves from the Church, believers and non-believers, groups in our communities, elected officials at all

levels of government, religious communities, volunteer lay people involved in our parishes, pastoral and administrative personnel, people participating in various religious celebrations; the objective is to be as inclusive as possible.

The approach centered on the following:

1. Preparing a communication plan,
2. Preliminary gathering of information on the present situation in each parish,
3. Establishing criteria to guide the working hypothesis,
4. Analyzing the diocesan hypothesis in the light of the criteria and adjusting where necessary,
5. Presenting to the Diocesan Commission.

Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will inspire us and guide us so that we will have the courage and daring to open our hearts to God's invitation to "do Church differently".

This passage from the gospel of John 21:15-19 may inspire us

*Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"*

*"Yes Lord, you know that I love you," he said.*

*Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."*

*Again Jesus said, "'Simon son of John, do you love me?"*

*He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."*

*The third time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"*

*He answered, "Lord, you know all things. You know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go"*

*Then he said to him. "Follow me!"*

Like Peter, we are invited to confidently follow Jesus on an unknown path.

Our first meeting will be held at our Parish on Sunday, October 1, 2017 in the parish hall after Mass.

Although you do not have to register to attend, we will be preparing some material in advance, so if you know you are coming, it would be helpful if you let us know by writing your name on the sign-up sheet at the doors of the Church.

The presentation to the Diocese will be created in large part based on the reflections shared and gathered at this meeting and on those in our sister churches in the St. Eustache zone.