

ST. MARY'S PARISH



8909 Mary St, Chilliwack, BC V2P 4J4
 Phone 604.792.2764 Fax 604.792.3013
Pastor: Rev. Wilfred Gomes: wgomess@rcav.org
Assistant Pastor: Rev. Giovanni Schiesari: gschiesari@rcav.org
 New Website: www.stmarysparish.ca
 Email: office@stmarysparish.ca
Office Hours: Mon. to Fri. 8am - 12pm, 1pm - 4pm
 Parish secretary: Chris Gillespie

St. Mary's Elementary School

Principal: Mrs. Jeanine Sallos
 Phone: 604.792.7715 Fax 604.792.7031
 Email: jsallos@saintmarysschool.ca
 St. Mary's School Website: www.saintmarysschool.ca

St. John Brebeuf High School

Website: www.stjohnbrebeuf.ca
 Phone: 604.855.0571

PARISH MINISTRIES AND GROUPS

Altar Servers	Sara Lindenhoff	stmarysparshaltarserving@gmail.com
Bible Study Groups	Sandra Melville	604-792-7049
Good News Bible Study	Lynda Gillespie	604-795-5998
Tuesday Book Study		
Catholic Women's League (CWL)	Helen Murray	hmurray795@hotmail.com
Funeral Receptions	Helen Murray	hmurray795@hotmail.com
Domestic Abuse Services	C. Cranley	charleneliasondomesticabuse@gmail.com
CCJS Prison Ministry	Peter Li & Miriam Liem	604-910-5067
CCODP	Peter Li	604-910-5067
Cenacle/Rosary	Breanne Holitzki	604-837-8557
Children's Liturgy	Lynda Gillespie	604-795-5998
Choirs	Myrt Armstrong	604-795-5304
Good News Choir	Jeanine Sallos	604-824-1053
New Life Choir	Renee Hamilton-Clark	604-824-6280
Friends in Song	Alivia Weston	604-799-4001
Alleluia Choir	Jeanine Sallos	604-824-1053
Youth Choir	Henry Waldock	htwaldock@gmail.com
School Choir	Jonathon Vogel	604-316 9029
Faith Choir	Laura Vogel	613-898-2111
Massive Worship Team	Susan Kranabetter	
Church Cleaning	Chrystal Netzlaw	604-866-5663
Community Outreach	Parish office	604-792-2764
Extra-Ordinary Ministers of H.C.	Peter Prost, G.K.	gk.kofc3478@gmail.com
Hospitality (9:30 Sunday Coffee)	Ken Claridge	604-858-4044
Knights of Columbus Council 3478	Miriam Liem	604-910-5067
Assembly 2256	Ana Macedo Lindenhoff	604-798-1785
Lay Religious Orders Secular Franciscans	Fe Balo	604-795-4388
Lectors	Jennifer Bourke	604-316-6433
Legion of Mary	Lise Tetreault	604-795-9199
Meals for Moms	Mary Wagner	604-799-1283
Migrant Workers Ministry	Darren Ollinger	604-799-2771
Mom's Group	Marta Cecchi	604-795-7311
Parish Library	Joan Strueby	604-795-7527
Parish Outreach for the sick/homebound	Keith & Helen Lilley	604-705-2505
Parish Care Homes	Sheila Giolito	604-858-3664
Waverley	Jane & Sonny Dampier	604-792-0702
Heritage	Fe Balo	604-795-4388
Cascade	Sheila Giolito	604-858-3664
Valleyhaven	Hydee McMillan	604-880-1222
Eden	Steve Ralphs	sralphs@hotmail.com
Bradley Centre	Pastor	604-792-2764
Hospital Contact		
Parish Finance Council	Sara Lindenhoff	stmarysparshprep@gmail.com
Parish Pastoral Council	Dale Wagner	peccchair@saintmarysschool.com
Parish Religious Education Program (PREP)	Nicole Poudrier	604-824-0509
PEC: St. Mary's Elementary (Education Committee)	Hugh Robins	604-402-0215
Prayer Groups	Lori Lollar	604-792-2764
Divine Mercy Chaplet	Sheila Giolito	604-858-3664
Charismatic Prayer group	Carol Gray	604-792-5267
Christian Meditation	Maggie Reimer	604-751-1950
Preschool Committee	Cindy Duralia	604-792-2764
Pro-Life	Pat & Lynda Gillespie	604-795-5998
Project Advance Chair	Maggie Reimer	se.marc@rcav.org
REC: Saint John Brebeuf Regional (Ed. Committee)	Sandra Otsuka	604-769-3388
Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)	Johanna Chiappetta	604-792-7715
Safe Environment	Maureen Bliault	604-997-6641
Sacristans	Peter Lindenhoff	604-798-4237
Saint Mary's Preschool	Bill Casey	778-898-9304
Saturday Mana Soup Kitchen	Maggie Webster	604-392-5229
Ushers	Brittney Grimard	604-621-7663
Webmaster / Audio / Video	Alexis Vilan	604-845-9871
Young at Heart (Seniors Group) Cards: Wednesdays		
Young Adults Group		
Youth Ministry		

END-OF-LIFE EMERGENCY CELL #: 604-378-0482

Please call this number if a priest in Chilliwack is required for end-of-life emergencies outside of regular office hours.

MASS SCHEDULE:

Weekday Mass

Monday- Saturday: 9 am

Weekend Mass

Saturday: 5 pm (Anticipated Mass)

Sunday: 8 am, 9:30 am, 11:30 am

CONFESION TIMES:

Mon-Sat 9:35 am-10:30 am, Sat 4:00-4:45 pm no appointment needed, please enter by the bell tower entrance.

ADORATION - First Fridays

Adoration on First Fridays begins after the morning Mass. Chaplet of Divine Mercy 11:30am, **Benediction 7:50pm - 8pm (NEW EXTENDED HOURS)**

SACRAMENTS

Baptism: One family at a time. Call the office to book. Celebrated at 11:00am on Saturdays. Registration is required and all paperwork must be completed prior to the confirmed baptism date.

Marriage: Six months' notice is required. Please phone the parish office.

Funerals: Funeral Masses are taking place. Please call the parish office.

Anointing of the Sick: If you or a family member are needing anointing at home or at a care home and you wish to have a priest visit, call the parish office.

PARISH LIFE

Lost & Found: Please contact the office.

"Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division; . ." Luke 12:51 (RSVCE)

Many of us like to play it safe, not cause waves with our family and friends, especially when it comes to politics and religion. We don't want to cause any turmoil. However, many times this is at the expense of the truth. The truth being Jesus Christ. Too many people are misguided because they rely on their own limited human ability to reason and are not allowing faith in God to guide them. Form your conscience; take a stance for life, marriage and religious liberty. Copyright © 2022 Archdiocese of St. Louis

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon	Aug 15	9:00 am	Pietro Bittante RIP
Tue	Aug 16	9:00 am	Marie Paule Hamel RIP
Wed	Aug 17	9:00 am	Bev Gardner RIP
Thu	Aug 18	9:00 am	Bob Blanchette RIP
Fri	Aug 19	9:00 am	Kieran Gillespie
Sat	Aug 20	9:00 am	Pietro Bittante RIP
Sat	Aug 20	5:00 pm	Kaay Family, living and deceased
Sun	Aug 21	8:00 am	Pietro Bittante RIP
Sun	Aug 21	9:30 am	Our Lady Queen of Peace
Sun	Aug 21	11:30 am	Parishioners

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Josie Treffers	Terry Wallden
Ed Dawdy	Angie Price
Louise Kinney	Ursula Day
Archie Gendron	Tom DiCarlo
Yvonne Hamel	Gerry and Sharon Williams
Bozena Sujka	Blake and Dorothy Baxter
Mona Bradwell	Joseph Rollheiser
Jackie Sprangers-Jones	Henry Lankhorst
Caroline Shankar	Yvon Lauzon

SUPPORTING ST. MARY'S PARISH

1. The Parish Pre-Authorized Debit program. Forms can be picked up from the parish office or emailed.
2. Parish Website: stmarysparish.ca/giving.
3. Archdiocese of Vancouver Website: support.rcav.org/donate-sunday-offering/.
4. Your donation envelopes can also be mailed, dropped off at the parish office, or placed in a collection basket at Mass.

FR. WILFRED will be taking time off from August 15 to 28. Fr. Gio will be celebrating Mass and available for parish support.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR 2023 are now being accepted. Please stop by the parish office if you wish to schedule an intention.

YOUTH MASS - At the request of youth, the Parish Pastoral Council has decided to schedule a **Youth Mass every Saturday at 6:30 pm** (Anticipated Mass) **starting September 10th**. All are welcome!

St. Mary's Parish Mission

Spiritual reboot

Sept 5 - 7, 2022

refresh / restart / renew

Please mark your calendars for our upcoming Parish Mission from September 5 to 7. Talks will be given by Deacon Greg Barcelon, PhD, after the 9 am and 7 pm Masses in preparation for the Parish Feast Day on September 8. The post pandemic *new normal* is getting to be a challenge to many and a continuing stumbling block to some. Join us as we explore the timeless treasures of the Good News of Jesus, in preparation for the Feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

SYNOD REPORT - Our Parish's Synod Conversation Circles

Report is available at the entrance of the church for parishioners. Digital copies of this report, as well as the original Synod Conversation Circles Report as sent by St. Mary's to the Archdiocese, are available as attachments with the bulletin on our website and as links for those who receive our bulletin by email.

REGISTRATION FOR PREP CLASSES ARE AVAILABLE! - We offer religious education for students attending public school or for those who are homeschooled. PREP classes are open for grades 1 to 7. Classes are **every Tuesday from 6 pm-7:30 pm** and we begin the PREP school year on **September 20th**. If you would like to learn more or are interested in registering your children, please contact either the parish office or the PREP coordinator at stmarysparishprep@gmail.com. God bless!

ARCHDIOCESAN SHRINE OF STO. NIÑO DE CEBU BLESSING & ENTHRONEMENT - SATURDAY, AUGUST 20TH AT 4 PM. There was a dream that the 500th Anniversary of Christianity in the Philippines could be commemorated in a permanent fashion in our Archdiocese, and it is now reality! A Shrine, dedicated to the Sto. Niño has been built on the property of St. Anthony of Padua in Agassiz, and thanks to the generosity of so many people, is now complete! The Blessing of the Shrine and Enthronement of the Holy Image of Sto. Niño will take place on Saturday, August 20th at 4 pm with Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB as the main celebrant. You are invited to share in this momentous occasion. You are welcome to bring your own food for refreshments for after the celebration. Food vendors will also be on site. Please bring your own chair for the outdoor Mass.



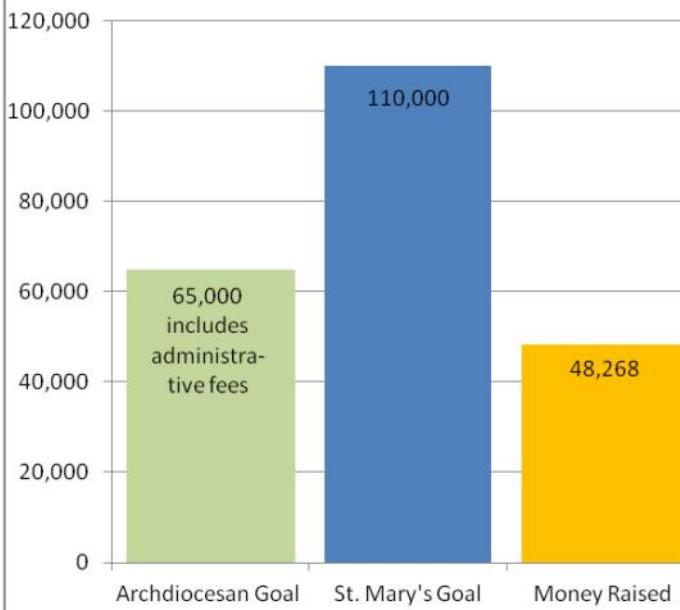
Project Advance 2022: Gather Us, Lord

PROJECT ADVANCE IS NOW UNDERWAY AT OUR PARISH!

We are grateful to all those who have supported Project Advance. Each and every gift is important. Our parish goal is \$110,000 and we hope to have 100% participation. You can give online at projectadvance.ca, by phone at 604-683-0281 ext. 50323, by using the QR code in this notice, or in-person at our parish's office. Thank you so much for your support.



PROJECT ADVANCE 2022



FUNDRAISER THANK YOU - On behalf of Domestic Abuse Services, I would like to thank everyone who sponsored me in the walk-a-thon held in late June. We raised \$800.00! Thank you and God Bless! - *Charlene Cranley*

THE CALIX SOCIETY: HELP IS ONE CALL AWAY - CALIX is an association of Catholic alcoholics, drug addicts, and family members and friends affected by addiction, who are maintaining their sobriety through participation in their Catholic faith and a 12 Step program. Phone: (1) [651-779-6828](tel:6517796828). To learn more: calixsociety.org/

RETROUVAILLE WEEKEND - Retrouvaille is a marriage program that has helped hundreds of BC couples. Oct. 14 - 16, phone: 604-530-6710 or visit www.helpmymarriage.ca.

RUTH AND NAOMI'S is looking for **volunteers**. Please contact Selena Smith, Community Resource Navigator, at 604-795-2322 ext.100.



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL NEWS

PARISH EDUCATION COMMITTEE - Dear St. Mary's Parish Families, we invite you to consider enrolling your child, or children, in our parish school. Visit: saintmarysschool.ca

OUR BLESSED MOTHER VISITS HOMES - Welcome the Pilgrim Virgin Statue into your home for one week and pray the Holy Rosary daily during that week. Through her intercessions are God's gracious blessings. Those families who would like a visit from the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima, please call Rita Sales at 604-795-0044.

DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE TO THE GROTTO OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES - Saturday, August 20th. St. Joseph's Parish, Mission invites you to the historic Fraser River Heritage Park to celebrate the Holy Eucharist and honour Our Lady on Saturday, Aug. 20 at 1 p.m. The main celebrant will be the Very Rev. Fr. Gary Franken, Vicar General, Archdiocese of Vancouver. Confessions will be heard on-site starting at 10 a.m. After the Mass, there will be a procession to the Grotto where the Rosary will be prayed, followed by the Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. The event will conclude with a picnic and fellowship. For bus service information, please contact 604-329-8635 or info@aquinasinstitute.ca. Learn more at beholdvancouver.org/events

THE BIBLE IN A YEAR FAMILY GUIDE - Developed to help Catholics involve children in learning the Bible with the whole family!. To learn more and download your free guide, search online with the words [BIY Family Guide - Ascension](#) (use Chrome or Explorer.)



MUSIC / GAMES / FOOD / DRINKS / FUN

FOOD WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE OR YOU CAN BRING YOUR OWN!

Saturday, August 13, 2022

11 AM Until 3 PM

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ELECTRONICS

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St. Mary's Chilliwack **PARISH MISSION**

The post pandemic *new normal*/is getting to be a challenge to many and a continuing stumbling block to some. Join us as we explore the timeless treasures of the Good News of Jesus, in preparation for the Feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

TALKS AFTER 9:00 AM & 7:00 PM MASSES

- Sept 5 | *Finding Meaning & Fulfillment in Life*
- Sept 6 | *Living the Eucharistic Lifestyle*
- Sept 7 | *With Mary our Model*



Spiritual
reboot
refresh | restart | renew



Deacon Greg Barcelon, Ph.D.
Archdiocese of Vancouver

FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH -----SYNOD (2021 – 2023)

(Conversation Circles Report Submitted by St. Mary's Parish to the Archdiocese on March 29, 2022)

Liturgy

1.1 People really appreciate the church being open seven days a week ready to serve. Attending Mass and hearing inspiring homilies delivered clearly. The liturgy and Eucharist nourish us, and we recognize faith is a gift which motivates us to share the good news with people from all walks of life.

1.11 There is also an awareness and appreciation for the beauty of the Latin vernacular in hymns to help us elevate our hearts and souls to the divine.

2.2 We could invest more time in making the Liturgy beautiful and meaningful perhaps through familiar songs and hymns for more participation.

Adult Formation (committee needed....)

1.2.1 Adult formation does not end with the RCIA. Learning and understanding our faith must continue in order to be actively engaged in ministries.

3.4.1 RCIA should be more a process with follow through, rather than a program for the candidate entering the church.

Guideline for Priests (attention: Pastor & Assistant Pastor)

1.2.4 Having strong role models in clergy, laity and saints.

1.3 Some sermons would benefit by being more robust and challenging, going through scripture and exploring the richness of our theological heritage.

1.4 Our Clergy should have a willingness to listen and counsel in our times of need. We ask that those in the church, in positions of authority, recognize our involvement and provide good instruction/direction. In this way a sense of community is welcomed, invited and appreciated.

2.3 The homilies should stay on topic and be related to the gospel readings.

2.11 We recognize the heavy load of daily business in running the parish that is put on the shoulders of our priests. We have compassion for them and would advocate that they get more professional help in the administration of the parish so that they are free to serve the people in the way they have been trained.

2.12 We also ask that screening for the priesthood in seminaries should include psychological screening and that the rule of law is applied to priests who violate any criminal laws.

2.14 We would love to hear inspiring personal stories witnessing to the power of the Holy Spirit from our clergy and laity.

3.4.2 Improved education of priests in counselling and preaching abilities.

3.4.3 Matching priests to schools who want to be involved with youth and teens and designing their training around that.

3.6 Homilies can be a strong teaching moment to reflect on how God is speaking to us. Guidance from the pulpit on major social issues previously listed.

5.6 Cross cultural training for priests might be helpful to integrate better with indigenous people.

Community Outreach (added to existing committee....)

2.17 Outreach such as “kindness days” whereby parishioners can stand and give out water, juice, chips, chocolate bars, with the St. Mary’s logo and running youth camps so that we can reach our young people early.

2.18 Dialogue with the homeless and people with addictions is key to connectivity.

3.8 Putting God out front and returning to grassroots that is to feed the hungry, care for the sick, offer shelter.

4.9 Immigration.... working with immigrants for better integration.

Parish Registration & Use of Bulletin (attention: Parish Office)

1.6 Easy access to information for those seeking spiritual support. Catholic counselling and therapy should be made more available, perhaps indicating appropriate sources in the bulletin would be helpful.

2.7 More use could be made of the bulletin insert to help in adult formation in educating us on topics such as the liturgy, baptism, penance, Eucharist etc.

2.15 Keeping our list of registered families up-to-date in the parish means that we could reach out in practical concrete ways if they are in need of help or assistance. This help would include reaching out to our indigenous members asking them what their needs are, if there are repairs, yard work, beautification projectsin many areas we could be of assistance thereby fostering real relationships.

Parish Ministries (attention: Parish Pastoral Council)

1.5 Creation of small informal groups, perhaps in social settings. We mirror other churches who have such groups and are involved in the soup kitchen or with the homeless and in this way we can support each other and grow as a community.

1.8 Reinstatement of parish ministries e.g. coffee after Mass, children's liturgy, senior outreach etc. Through these groups a sense of community is encouraged.

2.1 In terms of Mass, we should advocate for Catholic chaplain's within the prisons to serve Mass for the inmates. (Prison Ministry)

Indigenous People: First Nations/Métis/Inuit (committee needed)

1.12 On the minds of most Catholics is the betrayal by our church to it's members through the residential school era, the lack of transparency, the slowness in reaction to sexual and other abuses. It is wrong for us to minimize what happened and we realize we have much healing work to do with our indigenous brothers and sisters. We need to learn more about their customs, understand their culture, immerse ourselves in their lives, ponder their history, invite them most strongly into our church, love and respect them with the dignity they deserve.

2.4 Perhaps we could arrange to have more indigenous Mass's in Saint Mary's and allow our brothers and sisters to share their songs with their drums.

3.10 Our efforts to have our indigenous brothers and sisters more involved in the church need to be stronger. Invite them to sit on committees or councils, as valued members of the church.

5.1 Starts with love, respect, sympathy, empathy and understanding.

5.2 The church should confess it's sins, ensure transparency and express true contrition, learn from past mistakes.

5.3 Release funds as promised to better the lives of our Indigenous people.

5.4 Humility and reconciliation versus defensiveness and denial. Follow the lead of Bishop Joseph Nguyen in Kamloops. Be attentive and patient and endeavour to learn from the Indigenous people rather than teach them. Recommend the book "Listening to Indigenous voices"

5.5 Indulge in research of Indigenous, Inuit and Metis people to understand their history and their contributions to society.

5.7 Invite our indigenous brothers and sisters to serve on committees while at the same time updating school curriculum to reveal truths.

5.8 Allow Indigenous students to bring their drums to school to do the opening prayer in their own way. Renewed efforts around action and impact: for example, orange shirts, hearts or ribbons on the fences. Consider an Indigenous logo to the school uniform. Place a statue of Saint Kateri in the church or on church property.

5.9 Promote the work that has been done already by the church towards reconciliation. Recognizing that part of the history includes people who lovingly cared for Indigenous children.

5.10 Embrace the humility to admit the failure of the flock.

5.11 Dedicate a prayer service for reconciliation and personally invite elders and the people of the Indigenous communities in our area to join us.

Coming to Church/Sacraments (committee needed....)

2.6.1 Getting back to basics with regular reception of the sacraments.

2.8 Focusing on children and families and bringing them in, in a very positive way, to our church celebration.

2.9 A large number of people have left the church and we could make a concerted effort to reach out to them, try to understand why, and bring them back into the fold.

3.7 Our physical health seemed to take precedence over our spiritual health during the pandemic. Sacraments are not optional but the source and summit of our faith.

Youth

1.2.3 Through a community of peers, we encourage our teens to participate.

1.10 We would like to see more focus on the youth bringing their energy, music and ideas to the Church.

3.15 Explore and focus on opportunities for our youth to be excited and engaged and surround them with good role models. Perhaps consider professionally trained paid youth leaders to guide and direct.

Open to Different Cultures, Races & Sexual Orientation (committee needed....)

2.16 Our church needs to be open to many different cultures, races and sexual orientation to be a welcoming church and a loving church. The LGBTQ community needs to find a home in our church where they can be welcomed as God's children.

4.1 Suffering in all its dimensions. Assisting charitable organizations such as the Salvation Army, Ruth and Naomi's etc. working with gender identity, addiction, depression, anxiety, helping those people discover their true worth as children of God. With drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, the opioid crisis, elder abuse, the church could be a leader in providing a safe haven of support and safety for people.

Holiness and Prayer (attention: Parish Pastoral Council)

1.2.2 Through a solid prayer life, we give our children a spiritual connection and purpose.

2.6.2 meditation and knowledge of scripture should be emphasized.

2.10 The health mandates and lack of attendance due to same, where we were denied the sacraments for a very long time, lent itself to people slipping away from church and we now need to deepen our holiness through prayer and adoration.

2.19 Education, education, education.

3.1 Growing in holiness in the church involves a broad area of knowledge and prayer.

3.2 Hosea: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge"

3.3 To be a better evangelist, every Catholic needs to be a better apologist. We need more education about our faith, the catechism, the history of the church, bringing us closer to God. His Sacraments, His word.

4.2.1 We could make Catholic teaching more comprehensible to Catholics and non-Catholics.

Helping Single Parents & Broken Families (committee needed....)

1.7 We need practical help for those going through separation or divorce. Who do they talk to about getting the annulment process started? Could this number be included in the bulletin?

3.9 There are more single parents, broken families and people with addictions. How do we, as a community, reach out? Why are more and more people leaving the church?

4.7 Division between family members and in society due to pandemic. Supporting broken families.

Pro Life/Natural Family Planning/MAID (added to existing committee....)

3.12 Supporting pro life, encouragement and education on Natural Family Planning.

3.14 As Catholics opposed to medical assistance in dying (MAID) and abortion, we need to pay more attention to the lawmakers and the consequences of bad laws.

4.2.2 We must also engage in public discourse and explain what and why our church adopts certain precepts and an understanding around abortion, birth control, male only priest hood, SSA and marriage.

4.4 Advocate for more funding towards palliative care.

4.6 Support the Doctors in their fight for Freedom of Conscience when it comes to referrals for Euthanasia.

Welcoming Church (committee needed)

2.5 We wish to be a joyful optimistic church.

Miscellaneous

1.9 Yearly reflections and events at a local level would be much appreciated.

2.13 Are there more leadership roles for women in the church? Could priests be married?

3.5 Immorality of the Bishops who allowed the scandal coverups around sexual abuse.

3.11 We ask for deeper examination as to the disbursement of funds from Project Advance and also from the source of some donated funds. Are gaming and casinos involved?

3.13 Addressing bullying in society.

3.16 We feel a lack of transparency is ongoing. Explanations as to the sudden departure of priests have been veiled and unclear. This leads to gossip and suspicion and eventually loss of trust.

4.3 News feeds are untrustworthy. Which ones do we listen to? Our Catholic media needs to fortify itself and defend itself more rigorously.

4.5 Hold elected Catholic leaders accountable to Catholic teaching.

4.8 Protecting the earth. Encouraging good stewardship of same.

St. Mary's Parish welcomes very warmly it's parishioners wishing to be on any of the above Committees. Let's do our best, as God allows us and inspires us to continue to build HIS KINGDOM on earth.

Dated: July 31, 2022



Synod Conversation Report

March 28, 2022

Our parish, St Mary's of Chilliwack, is home to 1,163 registered families. The parish is made up of a broad spectrum of cultures who are like-minded in asking where the church is today and where is the future leading us.

The purpose of the Synod is to listen to the parishioners and summarize their concerns positive and negative, through a series of discussions.

Our defining themes are: **Communion - Participation - Mission**

A synodal workshop was held in Vancouver and later, made available to all parishioners online. The protocol for the Synod was laid out by the Bishops. Parishioners were invited to partake in conversational circles made up of approximately 6 to 10 parishioners within each circle. These circles were held on church grounds but also in some private homes depending upon the group. Each participant had an opportunity to respond to each question and their responses recorded. The report from each circle, 21 in total, was then forwarded to the coordinators to combine and summarize in a report form.

Initially there was a notable level of shyness in most groups. Participants were hesitant to vocalize their thoughts. This moved into a very positive atmosphere where participants were pleased to have the opportunity to voice their opinions and were encouraged by each other.

This final report will be sent to the pastor of Saint Mary's Fr. Gomes and then on to the Archdiocese of Vancouver to Bishop Miller and ultimately to the Bishop of Rome. The following are the summaries to each question posed.

Question 1: What helps or prevents you from being active in the church's mission?

People really appreciate the church being open seven days a week ready to serve. Attending Mass and hearing inspiring homilies delivered clearly. The liturgy and Eucharist nourish us, and we recognize faith is a gift which motivates us to share the good news with people from all walks of life.

Adult formation does not end with the RCIA. Learning and understanding our faith must continue in order to be actively engaged in ministries. Through a solid prayer life, we give our children a spiritual connection and purpose. Through a community of peers, we encourage our teens to participate. Having strong role models in clergy, laity and saints.

Some sermons would benefit by being more robust and challenging, going through scripture and exploring the richness of our theological heritage.

Our Clergy should have a willingness to listen and counsel in our times of need. We ask that those in the church, in positions of authority, recognize our involvement and provide good instruction/direction. In this way a sense of community is welcomed, invited and appreciated.

Creation of small informal groups, perhaps in social settings. We mirror other churches who have such groups and are involved in the soup kitchen or with the homeless and in this way we can support each other and grow as a community.

Easy access to information for those seeking spiritual support. Catholic counselling and therapy should be made more available, perhaps indicating appropriate sources in the bulletin would be helpful.

We need practical help for those going through separation or divorce. Who do they talk to about getting the annulment process started? Could this number be included in the bulletin?

Reinstatement of parish ministries e.g. coffee after Mass, children's liturgy, senior outreach etc. Through these groups a sense of community is encouraged.

Yearly reflections and events at a local level would be much appreciated.

We would like to see more focus on the youth bringing their energy, music and ideas to the Church.

There is also an awareness and appreciation for the beauty of the Latin vernacular in hymns to help us elevate our hearts and souls to the divine.

On the minds of most Catholics is the betrayal by our church to its members through the residential school era, the lack of transparency, the slowness in reaction to sexual and other abuses. It is wrong for us to minimize what happened and we realize we have much healing work to do with our indigenous brothers and sisters. We need to learn more about their customs, understand their culture, immerse ourselves in their lives, ponder their history, invite them most strongly into our church, love and respect them with the dignity they deserve.

Question 2: What areas of the Church mission are we missing or neglecting?

In terms of Mass, we should advocate for Catholic chaplain's within the prisons to serve Mass for the inmates.

We could invest more time in making the Liturgy beautiful and meaningful perhaps through familiar songs and hymns for more participation.

The homilies should stay on topic and be related to the gospel readings.

Perhaps we could arrange to have more indigenous Mass's in Saint Mary's and allow our brothers and sisters to share their songs with their drums.

We wish to be a joyful optimistic church.

Getting back to basics with regular reception of the sacraments, meditation and knowledge of scripture should be emphasized.

More use could be made of the bulletin insert to help in adult formation in educating us on topics such as the liturgy, baptism, penance, Eucharist etc.

Focusing on children and families and bringing them in, in a very positive way, to our church celebration.

A large number of people have left the church and we could make a concerted effort to reach out to them, try to understand why, and bring them back into the fold.

The health mandates and lack of attendance due to same, where we were denied the sacraments for a very long time, lent itself to people slipping away from church and we now need to deepen our holiness through prayer and adoration.

We recognize the heavy load of daily business in running the parish that is put on the shoulders of our priests. We have compassion for them and would advocate that they get more professional help in the administration of the parish so that they are free to serve the people in the way they have been trained.

We also ask that screening for the priesthood in seminaries should include psychological screening and that the rule of law is applied to priests who violate any criminal laws.

Are there more leadership roles for women in the church? Could priests be married?

We would love to hear inspiring personal stories witnessing to the power of the Holy Spirit from our clergy and laity.

Keeping our list of registered families up-to-date in the parish means that we could reach out in practical concrete ways if they are in need of help or assistance. This help would include reaching out to our indigenous members asking them what their needs are, if there are repairs, yard work, beautification projectsin many areas we could be of assistance thereby fostering real relationships.

Our church needs to be open to many different cultures, races and sexual orientation to be a welcoming church and a loving church. The LGBTQ community needs to find a home in our church where they can be welcomed as God's children.

Outreach such as "kindness days" whereby parishioners can stand and give out water, juice , chips ,chocolate bars, with the St. Mary's logo and running youth camps so that we can reach our young people early.

Dialogue with the homeless and people with addictions is key to connectivity.

Education, education, education.

Question 3: What particular issues in the Church do we need to pay more attention to?

Growing in holiness in the church involves a broad area of knowledge and prayer.

Hosea: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge"

To be a better evangelist, every Catholic needs to be a better apologist. We need more education about our faith, the catechism, the history of the church, bringing us closer to God, His Sacraments, His word.

RCIA should be more a process with follow through, rather than a program for the candidate entering the church. Improved education of priests in counselling and preaching abilities. Matching priests to schools who want to be involved with youth and teens and designing their training around that.

Immorality of the Bishops who allowed the scandal coverups around sexual abuse.

Homilies can be a strong teaching moment to reflect on how God is speaking to us. Guidance from the pulpit on major social issues previously listed.

Our physical health seemed to take precedence over our spiritual health during the pandemic. Sacraments are not optional but the source and summit of our faith.

Putting God out front and returning to grassroots that is to feed the hungry, care for the sick, offer shelter.

There are more single parents, broken families and people with addictions. How do we, as a community, reach out? Why are more and more people leaving the church?

Our efforts to have our indigenous brothers and sisters more involved in the church need to be stronger. Invite them to sit on committees or councils, as valued members of the church.

We ask for deeper examination as to the disbursement of funds from Project Advance and also from the source of some donated funds. Are gaming and casinos involved?

Supporting pro life, encouragement and education on Natural Family Planning,

Addressing bullying in society.

As Catholics opposed to medical assistance in dying (MAID) and abortion, we need to pay more attention to the lawmakers and the consequences of bad laws.

Explore and focus on opportunities for our youth to be excited and engaged and surround them with good role models. Perhaps consider professionally trained paid youth leaders to guide and direct.

We feel a lack of transparency is ongoing. Explanations as to the sudden departure of priests have been veiled and unclear. This leads to gossip and suspicion and eventually loss of trust.

Question 4: What particular issues in society do we need to pay more attention to?

Suffering in all its dimensions. Assisting charitable organizations such as the Salvation Army, Ruth and Naomi's etc. working with gender identity, addiction, depression, anxiety, helping those people discover their true worth as children of God. With drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, the opioid crisis, elder abuse, the church could be a leader in providing a safe haven of support and safety for people.

We could make Catholic teaching more comprehensible to Catholics and non-Catholics, we must also engage in public discourse and explain what and why our church adopts certain precepts and an understanding around abortion, birth control, male only priest hood, SSA and marriage.

News feeds are untrustworthy. Which ones do we listen to? Our Catholic media needs to fortify itself and defend itself more rigorously.

Advocate for more funding towards palliative care.

Hold elected Catholic leaders accountable to Catholic teaching.

Support the Doctors in their fight for Freedom of Conscience when it comes to referrals for Euthanasia.

Division between family members and in society due to pandemic. Supporting broken families.

Protecting the earth. Encouraging good stewardship of same.

Immigration.... working with immigrants for better integration.

Question 5: How can we, the local Church, journey with our Indigenous sisters and brothers in a process of healing and reconciliation?

Starts with love, respect, sympathy, empathy and understanding.

The church should confess it's sins, ensure transparency and express true contrition, learn from past mistakes.

Release funds as promised to better the lives of our Indigenous people.

Humility and reconciliation versus defensiveness and denial. Follow the lead of Bishop Joseph Nguyen in Kamloops. Be attentive and patient and endeavor to learn from the Indigenous people rather than teach them. Recommend the book "Listening to Indigenous voices"

Indulge in research of Indigenous, Inuit and Metis people to understand their history and their contributions to society.

Cross cultural training for priests might be helpful to integrate better with indigenous people.

Invite our indigenous brothers and sisters to serve on committees while at the same time updating school curriculum to reveal truths.

Allow Indigenous students to bring their drums to school to do the opening prayer in their own way.

Renewed efforts around action and impact: for example, orange shirts, hearts or ribbons on the fences. Consider an Indigenous logo to the school uniform. Place a statue of Saint Kateri in the church or on church property.

Promote the work that has been done already by the church towards reconciliation. Recognizing that part of the history includes people who lovingly cared for Indigenous children.

Embrace the humility to admit the failure of the flock.

Dedicate a prayer service for reconciliation and personally invite elders and the people of the Indigenous communities in our area to join us.

Question 6: From this time of listenting, could you sum up, in one or two sentences, how the Holy Spirit is calling us to grow in the journeying together?

For the final question response, a word cloud was created below to offer a visual representation of the data collected. The word size and boldness reflects the number of times each word appeared in the responses.



As we close this report, we would like to finish by thanking all the participants who gave of their time and thoughts to this process of a Synodal journey at St. Mary's.

We are grateful for your input and with the assistance of the Holy Spirit ask that we faithfully conveyed what was most prominent in your hearts.

Thank you for the privilege of serving our parish in this way,

David and Doreen Fitzpatrick



*For information pertaining to First Nations
and the Archdiocese of Vancouver visit: rcav.org/first-nations#xpbq7v*