

Pope Francis Forum – Discussion Summary

Church of the Ascension – October 11, 2015

Participant Discussion Items

- Pope spoke of the “People of God”; a broader family than just the “nuclear” family
- The most affected are the poor and vulnerable
- We should look for ways to expand our ministries (especially in the social justice area) and make our activities work more quickly.
- We (social justice) already work with more than 1,000 families per month
- We have untapped resources in the parish
- As the Pope says, we need to “press forward”
- The Pope wants us to “go!”
- Immigration – each immigrant has something to share (as the Pope said)
- Resettling refugees: Some parishioners are favorable to this idea; some are opposed.

Suggested Action Items

In response to: “How do we show we care? Especially to those outside our community?”

General

- Start with prayer. Ask God what we should be doing
- Do what we already do in many ministries, only with more enthusiasm and prayer
- Learn from other faith communities about how they welcome and support people

Liturgy

- Do more individually to welcome newcomers to the parish
 - E.g. Smile and introduce oneself before Liturgy
 - Guests can be impressed by relationships they see
- Consider restoring gathering and welcoming activities in the Commons before Liturgy
- Expand / restore youth music ministry at Liturgy

Family Life

- Smile more to each other; embrace each other more; reduce electronic distractions
- Have family dinners, together; more often; make it a priority
- Guests can be impressed by relationships they see
- Bring back people for reunions

Immigration and Refugees

- Contact our legislators supporting assistance
- Resettle a refugee family (some parishioners in favor; some opposed)
 - 4,000 refugees going to South Carolina
- Contact Catholic Charities re resettlement activities
- Further dialogue and formation in the parish
 - A subcommittee of the Justice and Peace Committee is creating education and opportunities in relation the upcoming Year of Mercy.

Environment

- Contact legislators
- Write articles for newspaper
- I-264 entrance / exit ramps are a mess. Can we get Churches together to clean up the trash regularly?