Name of parish(es): St. Benedict’s Parish

Number of sessions held: 7

Date(s) of session(s): 2/12, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 3/24, 3/31, 4/20

Number of parishioners engaged (total): 80

Sessions facilitated by: Fr. Paschal, Deacon Cliff Britton, Joan Eck

This summary completed by: Joan Eck

Please list each question asked and summarize the overall response. Attach additional pages if needed.

The question we chose to ask our parish community was:

**If you could change one thing in your parish, neighborhood, or community, what would you change and why?**

Please see attached for full responses.

Based on the discussion, please summarize your estimation of the attitude of these parishioners regarding Seek the City to Come:

The overall response from parishioners was that they were very pleased by St. Benedict’s Parish and how much hope it brings to the community. There was great love toward Fr. Paschal and his direct connection and dedication to the outside neighborhood surrounding the church. What was very clear, was how dissatisfied people were with city leaders. Most of the concerns were regarding safety, open air drug using/dealing, murder, and overall demise of the neighborhood. Again, stating that St. Benedict’s Church was the only light in a dismal area.

Based on the discussion, please describe how prepared you believe these parishioners are for changes in the Catholic presence in Baltimore City and the surrounding area:

Most parishioners felt that the Archdiocese has already made their decisions and this process is smoke and mirrors. They also feel that we should have MORE presence in the city that needs us. A couple of comments thought that the Archdiocese was not standing up to city leaders regarding our Catholic faith. The city was built by Catholics and is the “Gateway” to Catholicism and has lost sight of that.

Thank you for completing this summary. Did individual parishioners share compelling testimonies they might be willing to share more broadly? If so, please use extra pages to summarize and provide contact information. We are especially interested in testimonies related to themes of Seek the City to Come, including evangelization, navigating change, and creating vibrant, faith-filled communities.

All the responses were anonymous.

St. Benedict’s is a much loved, vibrant community. You could visit St. Benedict any day of the week and find some activity going on. We have at least 3 public prayer services every day during the week. We have adoration every Wednesday with a Miraculous Medal Novena after and again on Thursday morning. We have a homeschool program, St. Philomena, that we rent space to along with the neighborhood head start program. We rent our gym to a basketball league, which has 200 or more attendees. We also have Lumina Theatre which is working on a grant to transform our convent into a 100 seat theater. We are home to one of the oldest NA meetings in the city with over 80 people meeting on Friday nights, and AA meeting on Monday nights. These are just some of the things we have going on throughout the week. I have attached a full list to this form. The weekends are equally busy with 3 Masses and confession. Parishioners don’t often leave directly after Mass. You will find many meeting after mass in the hall for donuts hosted by the Knights of Columbus or one of our many social activities, all extremely well attended, such as our Spaghetti dinner and bingo, the Oyster Bull Roast, the Crab Cake dinner, not to mention breakfast with the Easter Bunny and Santa to name just a few. We are blessed with an excellent Evangelization team, always asking and striving to connect with people in the parish or outside the parish. We keep the boxes in front of St. Benedict’s well stocked with medals, novenas, and religious books and pamphlets. These go quickly and remind us that we are planting the mustard seeds of hope for the people. We also host family movie nights as another more casual way to bring the community together. Again, this is all listed on this attachment. I cannot say enough how important St. Benedict Church is to the community. Our radio station is on-site from our Bell Tower, broadcasting hope throughout the area. We feel we are a shining example of how to bring Catholicism back to the city of Baltimore! We are seen. We process around the neighborhood singing and praying during Holy Days. We are heard by the tolling of the bells throughout the day. We speak when we offer a smile of kindness and a welcome into our pantry doors every month or anytime there is a need. The parishioners at St. Benedict make it very clear that they love this parish, this neighborhood, this family. They invite anyone to come and take note of what we are doing to bring the love of Jesus Christ to hopeless, lonely, and sometimes just down on their luck, souls.