

Question 9: Other comments about the parishes:

What they do well:

Fr. Sparling has been great for us and has worked really hard to try and push us out of ourselves and to dive into our faith. His homilies are such a breath of fresh air and offer a lot to reflect on.

Repair and replace when the need comes

treat all individuals with respect

invite parishoners to participate with activities

Volunteer, but people get burned out

We are proud of father for him bringing in new families and bringing in a number of people in RCIA.

Strong dedicated parishioners who have devoted their lives and made sacrifices for their parish.

We are a family. The parish is the center of our lives and we are always there for each other.

We have a group of genuine persons whom care for one another.

In the last year we have started to maintain and take care of our parish infrastructure more.

We attend mass frequently and likely having mass at different times so we have options. I like Facebook and website. We have a young family and live in the rural area outside of town so we are not connect to either town, when we attend community events we see father and I think that is AWESOME. Father is really connected with all the communities and is out and about.

Uplifting services & good homilies

Few do too much

Great Masses, love RCIA & CCD

Great Mass

Very easy to meet others.

Caring about each other, funerals.

answer our questions; sermons are awesome and can relate to them and agree with them

Father's Message, love Father Sparling

Holy Days

I love my Church and Priest; not much needs

We are new to the parish community and what we've experienced so far is wonderful and welcoming. Some questions, as usual, due to unknowns.

People could spend less time being so critical of everything and more time contributing to growing in our faith. I know some who feel we this process is stupid but I think it's great because it might actually lead us to growing in our faith and community which we desperately need. People need to get over themselves and led father actually lead us rather than being so critical of him. There are a few very vocal parishioners who it seems to be making it their personal mission to get people against father and blame him for dividing the parish and refuse to see it was divided long before he got here. Our priests bring us Jesus we should support them.

My son has suggested that the CCD teachers "make kids know their prayers and practice them often"

Raise funds. And work to accomplish a parish wide goal

stewardship

offer mini couple retreats, day pilgrimages, don't focus so much on donations, etc.

Decision making could be less dictatorial and involve diverse views of others

We do well at calling ourselves catholic but it tends to be superficial and when it comes to us being challenged we have a few of the parish who dramatically push back. They believe it's "their" parish and will attack anyone who challenges them. We have been told that by strong willed long time parishioners when we have attempted to be involved at both parishes. We are hoping this process will help them recognize their unwelcoming ways otherwise we will start going to another parish that is more inviting to us.

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I have never witnessed as much division among parishioners as in the few years. We have flailed and flounder without strong leadership or a vision for the future for at least 5 years.

Some could be better Catholics and support their church. They are not hurting their pastor when they don't give & don't come to church. They are hurting their church community.

We are great about the functioning of the parish, but I wish there were more people that worked harder on spiritual formation.

The parishes have a rich history but death, movement of persons, the reduced # of farms, the high turnover of priests, lack of vision by the Dioceses and various levels of apathy

I think we could recognize how blessed we are to have a parish our size in this day and age. Because of that we could support our pastor more rather than finding ways to complain about him and tear him down. Our priest brings us Jesus and without him we wouldn't even be a parish or have the sacraments. Unfortunately it seems people take a lot for granted. We have lost the focus that when we care for the needs of our pastor we are caring for the heart of Christ. Whether we like it or not the PASTOR is the leader of the parish NOT us, we are catholic not protestant. I think there is a small group of parishioners who want to control things and yell and scream when things don't go their way and sadly they will attack, rally against, gossip and spread lies about anyone who has a different opinion to get their way and put people in fear which has been happening for many years. They also like to manipulate by saying they are the victim of injustice when they are the biggest cause of division in our parishes and community as a whole. It has reached an absurd level in the past year or so as they now are attacking our pastor for trying to do good by trying to help us grow in faith and get us to take care of our parishes buildings and plan for the future.

Nothing I can think of (2)

Upkeep on Rectory

It does seem like a lot of some parishioners do the upkeep/altar society offices, etc.

More unity between parishes

I am very satisfied

A divide has been created in the last 18 months, satisfied with parish = yes; priest=no

I know father Sparling would like to do more spiritual things but people just don't want to commit the time to go. I think if given the opportunity people might grow deeper in their faith.

Fish fry, pitch tournament, bake sales community outreach.

In addition to above, we need a environmental sustainability plan - "Laudato Si"

Our family attends both St. Leo and St. Martin; therefore I marked other on question 10.

We chose "other" for the #10 b/c we do not separate each parish but participate equally in each parish. The website, gmail address and general communication have St. Leo listed first. Four persons were placed on the St. Leo Council vs. 3 persons for St. Martin. Whether real or perceived, these areas indicate that St. Leo is the main person in decision-making. This is not right and we are parishioners of St. Leo.

I am completing this because I was asked to. It feels very protestant, which I used to be. We need to focus on the sacramental life, the Rosary, stations of the cross, First Friday, adoration, etc.. Stewardship and financial giving come from an active faith life. It doesn't matter how I feel about the parish, feelings are fleeting. I need to serve my parish and faith family, and love those that cross my path. I would encourage someone within the parish boundaries to attend but if we ignored boundaries I love St. Michaels and next St. Paulinus. There the lights are on, the church is warm and filled with people and it is easy to pray. It's depressing morning after morning to walk into a dark, empty Church but it is "My Church" and God is waiting so I go.

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I find it upsetting that there were no questions about the spiritual/devotional health of the parish other than educational. Is this not the main reason our parishes exist? If I were to rate this question, I would say we need improvement. Coming from other parishes, I find it very difficult here. I miss the spiritual fervor I have experienced elsewhere. I miss experiencing a real living devotion to Our Lady, adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament with benediction. I miss devotions such as First Friday's, First Saturday. I am glad we have Divine Mercy Sunday. I deeply believe that if we put the Eucharist and Our Lady first along with a deep spiritual life many of these other problems would resolve. Much emphasis has been put on renovation, finances, etc. but we have neglected holy hours, devotions, daily Mass. I pray that Our Lady will guide all of you in this endeavor to bring us all closer to Her Son.

Again, we don't need "programs" other than what the Church, has already given to us...provide a strong sacramental life for the parishes...including the many different traditions and everything else will follow.

Continue to work on maintaining and updating our church and the rectory. We are getting too lukewarm! We should take care of those things more than we do our own homes! We need to get the rectory remodel done and shame on us for ever letting it get to the point it has. We need to do better at being proactive in maintenance. How we care for our pastor to me is a reflection of how we care for Christ and we are failing miserably and if we were to express that out loud other parishioners would attack us and not speak to us!

our kids are really little but I am sure in a few years we will have suggestions

Encourage more involvement and to come to coffee & rolls, meet & greet, parties, meetings

Young children's activities

CCD that doesn't start at 7 for little kids or isn't weekly

Religious Bible study