

May 8, 2002

This is the memory from the second gathering of what is now called the May Day Catholic Faithful.

Dear May Day Faithful,

Following is the memory for our second gathering on May 8th. About 30 people attended, many for the first time. At this moment we have 82 names on our site. (At this time, Friday AM, we have 30 who said to use their names on our letter.)

Again we began with the lighting of our candle, honoring the Spirit that exists in the Church, the Spirit of those who have gathered like us before us, and for the Spirit breathing within us right now. After a prayer, we moved into the "voicing" ritual of our time together -- placing a stone in our basket and holding each other in the sharing of our pain and sorrow.

After the "voicing" and blessing we moved into discussing the purpose, action and organization of this gathering.

Here are some of the thoughts shared:

Purpose/Statement of who we are:

- Through Baptism it is our birthright to be full participants in the Church
- To create a safe environment for voicing our pain, sorrow and frustration
- To be a catalyst for change
- To remember that the Church is a mystery/sacrament, not just another organization
- To be inclusive
- We are a Pilgrim Church
- To be steadfast in support for each other and the victims
- We are a prayerful and discerning community
- We are a gathering of the people of God
- To create openness in ourselves and our Church
- To be a gathering of the people of God
- To remember to act and organize out of respect, peace and love
- To feel the movement of the Spirit
- To remember that the Spirit speaks to all God's people

Action:

- To educate ourselves, reading as much as we can, read Hans Kung's book: "The Catholic Church: a Short History."
- To create an environment where we can acknowledge our fear and embrace it.
- To assist in the creation of listening sessions in the AD.

- To give support for the Church organization to be transparent, accountable, meaningfully participatory
- To write a statement to the AB before his trip to Dallas.
- To make a statement to the People of God.
- To empower our priests to speak up, what kind of support do they need
- To encourage individuals to write their own statements to the AB and other bishops
- To reach out to other groups, who else is meeting
- We need to accept our own power – “We are the Church”
- Questions arose as to how to speak with the press
- To give support to those who have been abused: physically, emotionally
- To create an environment to share ideas of possibility and action and change for us in the Church
- A caution was voiced to have us remember that the Church organization is not a democracy but more of a monarchy. How does that reality affect our actions and thinking?

Organizational Questions:

- How do we connect with other groups and decide how we relate to them, (including clergy, sisters, etc.)
- Questions of inclusively
- When, where do we meet
- How do we act with transparency
- Should we have meetings in churches
- What are our relationships to parishes
- Are we looking at this gathering being a long-term or short term organization

Those gathered decided on short-term action:

After brainstorming and some discussion, it was decided that a statement should be written to the AB before he departed on his trip to Dallas for the Conference with the American Bishops. There was some concern that we seemed to be putting out our action before we really knew who we are. Overwhelmingly, we decided to move ahead with a statement. A drafting group formed which was also opened to others who might want to attend our work sessions. Questions arose as to whether we were going to send this to the AB and at the same time present this letter to the press. The larger group decided that we could send the letter to the AB, but we were not ready for the press.

We closed with singing: "Come Holy Spirit." Next gathering will be Wednesday at 6:30, May 22nd at the Flahive home (624 Lafayette St. 303-832-4188). Please RSVP and invite others to join us.

In peace and possibility:
Diana Flahive