

**Visioning Working Group -  
Meeting Summary**

Date of Meeting            10.29.2018

*Co-Chairs* Fr. Jack Conley, Mike Cunningham

*Attendees*

Angela Kwasinski, Anne Kemp, Terri Segura, Fr. Pat Brennan, Fr. Mike Higgins, Fr. Jack Conley, Fr. Enno Dango, Fr. Richard Burke, Michael Cunningham

**Agenda:** A review of what the word preaching means to us today. Specifically answering the following questions as a framework for the committee

**What does preaching or receiving the Gospel mean to you personally?  
How would you define preaching to a friend or someone who was not involved with  
the Church?**

**Summary of our Work – Observations and commentary**

**THE WORD PREACHING: What we consider that others think of preaching when we use the word *preaching***

- Identify preaching with a chastising message or the Prosperity Gospel
- Preaching means something different to many people. Much of which is negative.
- The crucified come to us and we preach to them
- Preaching, the word is somewhat off-putting.
- Some have a negative connotation of preaching.

**WHAT IS PREACHING AND WHAT IT MEANS TO ME: What we think preaching actually is**

- The Gospel in a relatable form
- It is the work of the Holy Spirit.
- Preaching should be human, simple easy to digest. Preaching should be something I can think about for the week and apply in my everyday life.
- Preaching needs to be accessible.
- It is not just what I am saying (the words of the preacher) there should always be an intimacy
- I like the question because it is about the Gospel
- They (the audience) are impacting you as much as they are influencing you. Effective preaching is a reciprocal process, with the Holy Spirit as the conductor
- Rarely have the feeling I am just “preaching.” It is communicating God’s word, what matters to people, sharing their hopes and dreams
- For me and in others it is looking for solace or joy or some form of self-knowledge and direction

- I have a traditional understanding of what preaching is. Preaching is a departure and starts with the scripture experience. Something which changes is the way we appropriate the message, how we extend and express the message.
- Seeing God in a lot of different ways
- Looks for words within words. Preaching is about reaching!
- The Gospel in a relatable form
- Power of the Holy Spirit is immeasurable

#### **NEGATIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT PREACHING: What we think preaching is not**

- God is always active in every person's life, whether a believer or not.
- Preaching has to be full of love. Not always the case. Some are angry when preaching.
- Preaching, the word is somewhat off-putting.

#### **WHAT MIGHT CHANGE IN A FUTURE VISION OF PREACHING: How might we change the way we think about preaching**

- Need to be more invitational and conversational in nature. It has more power this way. More of a personal message.
- Needs to be applied to my everyday life; otherwise it fritters away.
- Pope Francis to think of preaching of "reaching" to the marginalized in the world. A different model that it was in the past. It is relational.
- Are we better served by not leading with a word where others have a general bad thought just because we use this word?
- Sometimes fall into the trap of a single homogenous level of faith. People are all at levels, so we should not assume they are ready to hear the words we are using. Have to customize the message to be multi-level.
- We can use many different forums for preaching, and they are not considered a formal way of preaching e.g. a Homily ... A retreat is another way of doing this, general conversations and even experiences in the workplace are all opportunities for preaching
- Has to apply to everyday life
- Not a special occasion but something we should always be tuned in to
- Preaching itself the ability to communicate the mind and heart of Christ to the mind and heart of the people to affect their lives.

#### **PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS: What are the challenges in today's world and the audience**

- Preaching has a very elastic understanding.
- Preaching itself the ability to communicate the mind and heart of Christ to the mind and heart of the people to affect their lives.
- We cannot limit preaching to the Church. Have to find ways to translate the message so others can find God, in particular where young people are invited to the relationship with Christ.
- Jesus reads the signs of our times, hatred and violence has to be tempered by the Gospel

- The desire to grow is present in many, preaching can be a response to this. There is a sense of Spiritual emotion which needs to be serviced.
- Preaching can be active in many different forms. Not just in the sanctuary, but everywhere.
- God is active in every person's life, whether a believer or not. These needs to be recognized in the means of delivery.
- The preacher should reflect on life or scripture stories to identify the movement of God in their life and hold them in a way that will connect to some activity in their life. Relatable.

**POTENTIAL ACTIONS: What Key Initiatives & Action Plans are you considering that would enable the ideas?**

- We can use different forums for preaching, and they are not considered a formal way of preaching e.g. a Homily ... A retreat is another way of doing this.
- Preaching is a revelatory process to help other reflect and how God is moving in their lives.

Who is Responsible and Timeline for Next Steps

**Fr. Jack and Mike Cunningham will communicate the next steps**

Next Meeting Date \_\_\_\_\_