

Nicodemus Group Notes

How does God speak to you?

- God speaks to me through every being and object of his creation.
- God of surprises who can sweep me into awe and peace.
- Real beauty leads us into an awareness of God's presence be it poetry, architecture, music, creation, art or story.
- When we hear the word we should be given time to receive the word, time to receive the teaching of the homily.
- Through others
- As a nation we are still grieving from the pandemic
- More should be made of preparing the prayers of the faithful so that they reflect the needs of the local community

Where and when have you heard or felt the Holy Spirit in your life?

- In the difficult moments of my life.
- Importance of making time and space
- Creation, church, bible.
- Experiencing the Holy Spirit when he says no as well as when he says yes
- Physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit – awareness of God's words entering my mind.
- In the quiet times when we can listen to our inner selves and through the actions of others.
- Don't know, don't know how to explain it.
- 11 am mass when Fr Jonathan didn't turn up. The congregation need to be prepared to lead services.
- Importance of not staying in our tribes – the 9am or 11am mass
- Sacred music
- It is difficult to pin the Holy Spirit down in words. He brings a sense of awe which brings us into a right balance with God.

What encourages you in your faith?

- Sharing with others has been emancipating and liberalising.
- Love enabled me to explore my faith in ways I am only just starting to discern.
- I am a reader.
- Church gives a sense of belonging, all travelling in the same boat.
- Talking to others, I will join in conversations, not initiate them.
- I feel confident speaking 1:1
- Good sermons
- Reading daily scripture
- Listening to others and their faith stories
- Studying scripture
- Being free from the fear of ridicule and persecution.
- Parish meetings where we meet in friendship outside mass – formally and informally.
- Priests being open to lay involvement
- Priests being approachable

- Pilgrimages and retreats.
- Day trips to shrines and visiting to other churches
- Faith, hope and courage.

What discourages you in your faith?

- Ourselves and lack of understanding
- Dishonesty or a lack of integrity in a priest or deacon
- Poor homilies
- Lack of pastoral 'soft' skills in Catholics
- Encyclicals or doctrinal documents that come out but are never taught or discussed in the parish.
- Poor formation of laity and priests
- Lack of evangelisation and catechetical opportunities for adults, particularly parents and those recently brought into the Church.
- An absence of faith, hope or courage.

When have you been encouraged or discouraged to speak about your faith outside the Church?

- Discouraged by Christians who have little knowledge or experience of Christ.
- Encouraged by the opportunities to bring others into a relationship with God.
- Discouraged to speak about faith in secular spaces.
- Difficult in a university environment where total freedom of expression can often be condemned.
- Hope with each other.
- Reflection – hope – connections with each other.

When have you been encouraged or discouraged to become involved in the life of the Church?

- Being involved is up to yourself to respond – be available.
- Sometimes I feel guilty that I do not do more.
- I have the gift of music and working with children.
- Groups of interest forming to share experience and support one another in living a Christian life: youth, men, women, like-minded people, people of an age.
- Church community – taking part – better integration.