



For a synodal Church  
communion | participation | mission

## Discussion & Dialogue Week 3 / Question 3

Each week we will provide a sheet with the main question for the week, questions for reflection, scripture passages for your reflection and preparation, and background information. Please bring this sheet and any notes you have to your listening session. Choose whichever fits your schedule:

### Session 1

**Thursday, March 3**

7:30-9:30pm

Zoom (if needed, call the church  
before Thursday for assistance)

Meeting ID: 840 1162 3600

Passcode: 022570

Or by phone: 301-715-8592

### Session 2

**Saturday, March 5**

3:00-5:00pm

Condon Hall

### Session 3

**Sunday, March**

9:00-11:00am

Condon Hall

**Main Question: How is God calling us to be a Christ-centered Church that is open to listening, dialogue, and renewal?**

Questions for prayer and reflection during the week, before attending a listening session...

- How is God calling us to be a Christ-centered Church that is open to listening, dialogue, and renewal?
- At St. Ann's (and as a global Church), how are we dialoguing, collaborating, and resolving conflicts among our own members?
- At St. Ann's (and as a global Church) to whom do we need to listen? How are the laity, especially young people, listened to? Is there room for the voices of minorities and those who are marginalized or excluded?
- At St. Ann's (and beyond) how are decisions made for the parish and the global Church? Who is engaged in the process? How are those not in leadership positions able to participate?
- At St. Ann's (and the global Church), what areas and issues in the wider society are we focused on? Are there areas or issues we need to pay more attention to?
- What actions could really help us to move forward as a Christ-centered Church that is open to listening, dialogue, and renewal?

### **Luke 19: 1-10**

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner." Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much." Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of

Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost."

### **Matthew 11: 25-30**

At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned and have revealed them to the childlike; yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for yourself. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

### **1 Peter 2: 1-5**

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice and all deceit, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation, for you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

## ***Background on Question 3***

The call to conversion is “the indispensable condition of Christian love.” (Pope John Paul II) Christians respond to this call when they openly acknowledge personal and communal failings and experience the joy of reconciliation shaped by renewed relationship with God. Ongoing conversion is the source of renewal and of authentic reform.

Jesus’ call to conversion and renewal is a summons to place one’s life at the service of God’s kingdom, and to ever-closer discipleship of Jesus in the midst of the Church. Jesus’ vision of God’s kingdom on earth is described in his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), in his parables and teaching, and in his ministry of mercy, healing, and reconciliation.

Just as Jesus formed his first community of disciples to be a sign of God’s kingdom, so after his resurrection the Lord continues to transform the hearts and minds of those who come to him in faith. As we encounter the Lord alive and present among us, we – like Mary Magdalene, Peter, and the other disciples – are transformed to be witnesses of his resurrection and bearers of his mission in the world.

As we seek continually to return to the way of the Gospel, the Church has opportunities to renew and reform structures and procedures to better reflect Jesus’ ministry and teaching, and better to manifest the Church’s living tradition. As we listen and dialogue, we seek not superficial adjustments. Rather, authentic reform arises from conversion, a change of heart within the body of Christ, which increases the Church’s “fidelity to her own calling.” (Vatican II and Pope Francis)

Jesus was frequently criticized for sharing meals and spending time with those on the margins of society, who those in power regarded as unworthy and sinful. But Jesus said, “It is not those who are healthy

who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” If we are to be as Jesus was, we need to welcome and listen and share our futures with those who are different from us, who have different perspectives, experiences, faith (or no faith), backgrounds, and desires.

After the resurrection, the followers of the Christ were afraid:

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. (John 20: 19-20)

It can be a temptation for the Church to give in to fear, to hide behind “locked doors” to try to protect ourselves and the Church from damage and to hope that problems and issues simply go away. This can lead to minimal response or pastoral support at crucial times in people’s lives and in the life of the world. It is in these times that the people of God are called to action. Jesus breaks through the locked doors where the disciples are hiding in fear and stands among them, bringing peace. Jesus once again wants to break through the locked doors and hearts of our Church today, reaching into our experiences and standing with us in our pain and our joy.

Jesus frequently said to his disciples and continues to say to us, “Be not afraid!” As we step forward to listen, discuss, and renew, we are loved and supported by the Jesus who calls us to trust in him for a future filled with blessing, service, justice, and peace.