



PARISHIONER REFLECTION QUESTIONS

PRE-WORK - Individual Reflection*

Introduction:

We have been in a time of isolation and reactivity. This time has opened the opportunity to new learning and to tap into our collective wisdom. This can be a time of healing, reconciliation, and creativity or a time of the status quo. As we stand on this threshold we are invited to let go of our fears and discomforts along with some things we hold as dear. We become open to new possibilities. Moving from reactivity to reflection calls for three kinds of work: acknowledging our losses, exploring unstated assumptions, and noticing what wants to emerge. All of these questions are grounded in our Catholic faith, values and parish mission statement. These questions become the holding space for transformational work.

Directions:

Prior to the gathering, please sit with the following three questions for reflection. **Bring your responses to the gathering that you have signed up for. The meeting will begin in the Church with prayer.**

Framing Question #1: ***In these last few weeks/months, what have we (SETON) lost?***

All significant transitions begin with an ending. Something must come to an end before we can explore a new beginning. We might gloss over the painful work of grief to move into action, which feels more productive. There are personal stories for all of us during this time that are both personal as well as those associated with plans abandoned, dreams deferred, and the loss of control over our destiny.

Questions for reflection:

- ✚ What were we, as a parish community, on the verge of discovering or accomplishing before the events in recent months? What within all of SETON needs to move forward in different ways now?

- ✚ What was possible before that may not be possible for some time – if ever?

- ✚ What seemed important before that feels superfluous now? Why?



Framing Question #2: What did we assume prior to the events in the few last months?

*When making decisions, we are aware of **what we do**, **how we do it**, and the **processes** that we follow when we act. We may be less aware of **why** we do what we do – the unstated assumptions that undergird our choices. Many old assumptions may no longer hold true.*

Questions for reflection:

✚ What was undervalued within SETON before that may hold greater value now?

✚ Where are we experiencing scarcity now that was not evident before?

✚ What new abundance are we experiencing now?



Framing Question #3: ***What wants to emerge?***

In liminal organizations, a new status quo emerges naturally over time as groups interact under conditions of upheaval, disturbance, or dissonance. Eventually, new structures, new strategies arise in response to a changed environment. This invites innovation in the new order of things. If we remain protective of the old status quo during the emergence process, our new order will look remarkably like the old normal – not much adaptation will occur. We ask better questions when we can be led by God into something fresh and exciting. We begin to notice what wants to emerge through us as a Catholic Community of SETON.

✚ What is our greatest asset now?

✚ What relationships will we need to build on or strengthen in the months ahead?

✚ What unique role might we as SETON Parish play in our parish and in the local community in a manner that expresses our mission statement: *“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you until the end of the age.”* Matthew 28:19-20

*Adapted from: *Strategies for Winter: Redemptive Leadership in Survival Times*. David Blanchard, Andy Crouch, Jon Hart, Scott Kaufman, and Jena Lee Nardell and from *10 Questions to Ask Now*. Susan Beaumont.