

24 March 2022

Report on the meeting of the READERS and EUCHARISTIC ministers group

The meeting took place with seven participants.

After prayer and a gospel reading each person was asked to recall POSITIVE experiences in our local Church. In practice these all pertained to our English speaking Community. All agreed on how much they appreciated the welcome and inclusiveness they experienced in coming to Mass in our community. Because we are nearly all non-Luxembourgers we understand our need to feel we belong. Although each arrived in different decades all stressed the welcome of the different priests who served the community. Appreciation was also expressed of the efforts made during Covid – the Mass on-line with Mass booklets , hymns and the regular e-mail communications between lay ministries and for those registered with the parish website. But each realised their need for meeting again in communion in both senses of the word.

Asked to share NEGATIVE experiences , most examples were of the local Luxembourg Church or of other countries participants had lived in . They were disappointed the local priests never came to the church door either before or after Mass to greet parishoners or to show an interest in newcomers. While aware that language is a barrier to participation in many activities , they felt that no effort was made to welcome them.

The third question was what WE LEARNED from these experiences and what suggestions we could make.

All felt the need for continuous adult education in our faith, for example , bringing back the training days for the various lay ministries . Another suggestion for our community was activities to bring together the single people in our parish, as well as the youth, to create a sense of belonging and solidarity among Christian believers in what is perceived as an almost hostile non-believing society. Because our community is so big and we have only one priest, it was felt lay-ministry could be developed further by volunteers for activities like baptism preparation, funerals, marriages, hospital visits, communion to the sick at home or in hospital etc.... that our community should reach out to other parishes and other Christian communities was also considered, including encouraging our youth to join the diocesan youth programme. Mention was made of the many individuals in our community who are already involved in charitable activities in Luxembourg, mostly by those who speak French or German.

At a global Church level, the group raised the question of married clergy. It asked that Rome pay less attention to sexual questions and marital matters »where it preaches hypocrisy and is bound to fail », and more to core teachings of Christ , and calling out real problems in the world, for example the massacre of Christians in several countries.