



mission

magazine

FALL 2022



SOLT SYNODALITY:

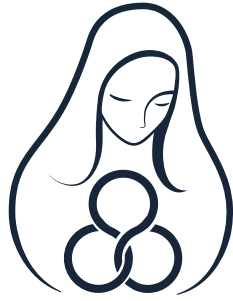
Fr. Jerry Drolshagen, SOLT

FRUITFULNESS IN DETROIT:

Fr. Dennis Walsh, SOLT

BECOMING A MISSIONARY DISCIPLE:

John McFarland



SOCIETY *of* OUR LADY
of the Most Holy Trinity

A message from the
**GENERAL
PRIEST
SERVANT**



Listening to the Holy Spirit

This past year I had the privilege of assisting with the synodal consultation in the Diocese of Corpus Christi. The purpose of the local synod was to listen to the Holy Spirit and allow Him to guide us to better live the mission of the Church to sanctify and evangelize. As such, the listening sessions were intended to be an encounter with the Holy Spirit facilitated by the Word of God, prayer, and sharing with and listening to one another. After much listening and prayerful discernment, some of the key results from the local synod are the following: a recognition that we need to listen more to the Holy Spirit in our day to day life; a deep desire for authentic relationships and communion with God and others; and, a longing to grow in discipleship of Christ,

in particular through community based formation. As I will explain below, each of the lessons received from the local synod seem to correspond to some of the deficiencies of our culture.

First, there was a universal recognition of the challenges to listen well to the Holy Spirit amidst the busyness of life, the noise and nonsense of the world around us, and our cultural influence to prefer speaking (or posting) over listening. Indeed, to listen well to the Holy Spirit requires silence, time for reflection and prayer, immersion in the Word of God and liturgy of the Church, and the discernment to hear His voice speaking to us even in the voice of other people. The synod reminded us that it takes an intentional, daily effort to listen well to the Holy Spirit.



Volunteers at the Divine Mercy parish in Belize City assist in the administration and implementation of the DISCIPLE program.



Disciples of Jesus through Mary living in Marian-Trinitarian communion, serving on Ecclesial Family Teams in areas of deepest apostolic need

Second, the call to authentic relationships and communion with others was also very telling. In a culture that often promotes and settles for virtual relationships, and a society growing in tendencies toward isolation, it is significant that people manifested their great desire for sincere and authentic relationships with God and one another. Indeed, the participants of the synod expressed in their own way the truth that we are created by God for communion and relationship. As with the first point, it takes effort and commitment to pursue this path of communion.

Finally, there was a clear sign that the Holy Spirit was inviting us to consider how we can facilitate our journey together in discipleship and mission. Being a disciple of Christ is challenging in today's world. It takes formation into the truth of who Jesus is and what He requires of His disciples. Additionally, it means swimming against a strong cultural current, so having the support of a community of disciples is also very important. As such, the local synod expressed a clear desire and need for community based formation.

Interestingly, the results of the local synod in our home Diocese of Corpus Christi very much echo the charism of SOLT. We are a community of disciples journeying together and sharing in the mission of leading people into communion with the Most Holy Trinity after the pattern of our Blessed Mother Mary who lived perfectly as the beloved daughter of the Father, mother/disciple of Jesus, and temple of the Holy Spirit. Given our charism, we sincerely hope that we will be able to assist in the response to the synodal consultation by helping people listen to the Holy Spirit, facilitating growth into authentic relationships with God and others, and forming others unto Christ. In doing so, we will merely be living the charism and mission that we have pledged to live!

FR. PETER MARSALEK, SOLT is originally from Burlington, Ontario. He currently serves as the General Priest Servant and resides in Corpus Christi, Texas.

CONTACT INFO

Director of Mission Advancement

Sr. Mary Mediatrix of All Grace, SOLT
P.O. Box 4116, Corpus Christi, TX 78469
(361) 654-0054 ext 101, srmarymediatrix@solt.net
Website: solt.net

VOLUNTEER

Sr. Maryam Caritas Sparke, SOLT
soltvolunteer@gmail.com
www.solt.net/volunteer

VOCATIONS

Priests & Brothers Vocations

Fr. Beau Schweitzer, SOLT
vocations@solt.net

Sisters Vocations

Sr. Mary Elizabeth Albers, SOLT
soltsistersvocations@gmail.com

Lay Vocations

Rosalie Buergler
solt.net/laity



SOLT Synodality

This past July, the members of the American Region of SOLT celebrated our annual assembly. The assembly is always an exciting and joy-filled time when members come together to renew old acquaintances, hear updates on the missions, pray together, and listen to thought-provoking speakers. Our assemblies have a theme which provides the framework for our meetings, talks, and homilies. The theme for this year's assembly was inspired by the exercises in synodality which Pope Francis has asked the entire Church to participate in. As the Holy Father

indicated, these exercises are intended to lead the members of the Church, "towards deeper communion, fuller participation, and greater openness to fulfilling our mission in the world."

These three important aspects of synodality: communion, mission and participation, are at the heart of what the greater SOLT family was created to live and achieve. SOLT's founder, Fr. Jim Flanagan, envisioned a family of priests, brothers, sisters and laity, united closely on teams, growing together in faith and working together to achieve a common apostolic purpose. For us, the synodal





Previous page: *The Collart Family shares in the joy of the first profession of vows of Sr. Maria Faustina, SOLT and the first promises of Br. Andrew, SOLT.*

Sr. Mary Ignatius, SOLT and Greg Buergher, SOLT lay member, discuss synodal topics at the SOLT Regional Assembly.

Above: *SOLT Missionary Volunteers reunite with priests, brothers and sisters who hosted the SOLT Belize Mission Trip.*

Monica Oliver, SOLT Lay Member, and Sr. Solanus Casey, SOLT share their thoughts at the SOLT synodal workshop this past July.



process was taken as an opportunity to grow in our communion and participation in order to more perfectly achieve the mission of the Church.

The synodal process is above all an exercise in listening: listening first of all to the Holy Spirit and then by listening to one another. To achieve this end, we dedicated our week to the Holy Spirit, asking Him for assistance in opening our minds and hearts to the will of God. We invited an expert in communication to give a presentation on how to be better listeners. Members also participated in small group sessions during which we had the opportunity to hear each other's thoughts on a number of important topics related to our mission.

For all those who participated, the assembly was a profound experience of the synodality of the Church, which is "the particular style that qualifies the life and mission of the Church, expressing her nature as the People of God journeying together and gathering in assembly, summoned by the Lord Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel." By means of these presentations and sessions, the members of the greater SOLT family were able to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the charism of SOLT, affirm their dedication to the mission of the Church, and return spiritually renewed to their missions, homes and local communities.



FR. JERRY DROLSHAGEN, SOLT *is originally from Detroit, Michigan. He currently serves as the Regional Priest Servant and lives in Corpus Christi, Texas.*



S O L T

Regional Assembly

PHOTOS

Above:

Br. Andrew Collart receives the crucifix after making his first promises with the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity.

Sr. MaryRose, Sr. Maria Gemma, and Sr. Maria Faustina sing a song to honor Our Lady after professing first vows.

Next Page:

SOLT Missionary Volunteers help with yard work at St. Joseph's convent in Violet, Texas.

Sr. Maria Gemma, Sr. Maria Faustina and Sr. MaryRose with their formators Sr. Mary Aloysius and Sr. Maria Stella Maris on the eve of their first vows.

Next Page (Continued):

SOLT Brothers renew their promises at the SOLT Regional Assembly in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Br. Uriel Lopez makes his perpetual profession as a consecrated brother with the community.

Br. Gregory eats lunch with his sister, novice Sr. Christine, and other friends of SOLT.

The SOLT Lay Association includes single, married, families, working and retired persons who make a commitment to live the spirituality and community life of the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity.





Fruitfulness in Detroit

In 2010, the SOLT Clerical Society in the American Region decided to move the house of studies for our seminarians from Rome back to the United States. A discussion was held with Archbishop Vigneron of Detroit about housing opportunities for the SOLT House of Studies. The Archbishop offered SOLT the care of the Parish of Most Holy Redeemer with a rectory large enough to house the seminarians. In August of 2011, the SOLT priests and brothers moved into the rectory and began ministering to the people of the parish.

From the start, it was easy for those of us serving in Detroit to see that this parish is a good fit for our community. Most Holy Redeemer is a bilingual parish with the majority of its parishioners being first generation immigrants from Mexico. They have a rich faith that has been handed down from previous generations and strengthened through the struggles and poverty they face due to being migrants and living in a city that is still striving to recover from the race riots of the 1960's. The priests at Most Holy Redeemer enjoy ministering to the parish community and in turn the parish community has responded by sharing their gifts to help evangelize and



facilitate spiritual and emotional healing through various ministries. We knew it would be a good fit for the sisters too.

After several conversations with Sr. Megan Mary, unsuccessful searches for a convent, and lots of prayer, an opportunity for a house directly across the street from Most Holy Redeemer Church arrived. In August of 2017, Sr. Kateri Burbee and Sr. Solanus Casey Danda were among the first SOLT Sisters to arrive in Detroit. The house needed quite a bit of work to transform it into a convent. Sr. Kateri accepted the challenge and the sisters began teaching at Holy Redeemer Grade School while construction was happening. The SOLT Sisters now own and occupy this beautiful convent.

Archbishop Vigneron held a Synod in 2016 and then issued a Pastoral Letter "Unleashing the Gospel." His discernment of how best to implement the results of the Synod and his pastoral letter led him to the grouping of parishes called Families of Parishes. These "families" of

three to seven parishes would help the local diocese move away from simply maintaining, and toward the mission of evangelizing, especially as the Church is facing a decline in priestly vocations. In the spring of 2022, it was announced that SOLT would have its own Family of Parishes consisting of Holy Redeemer, St. Gabriel, and St. Cunegunda.

The SOLT Sisters had been discerning where to move their house of formation since the closing of the Seattle Mission. The ten-bedroom house they were praying for was answered in was the vacated rectory at St. Cunegunda. The Sisters and aspirants have recently moved into St. Cunegunda and the first group of SOLT Missionary Volunteers in Detroit are now residing at St. Gabriel's vacated rectory.

This year the SOLT Mission in Detroit will be home to seven sisters, seven women in formation, six men in formation, two brothers and four priests. The expansion has been an unexpected blessing. It will be interesting to see how God's blessings continue to unfold.



Previous Page: The SOLT Ecclesial Family Team in Detroit, Michigan Above: SOLT priests concelebrate with the bishop; SOLT Missionary Volunteers arrive at the mission in Detroit

FR. DENNIS WALSH, SOLT is originally from North Haven, CT. He was ordained a priest in 2004 and has been serving as pastor at Holy Redeemer parish in Detroit, MI since 2011.

Becoming a Missionary Disciple



As I look back on my faith journey,

one of the greatest tools that helped me grow in my faith was being surrounded by a supportive community and having accountability partners. This is one of the many reasons I am incredibly humbled and excited for the opportunity to serve in this new position with SOLT as the Becoming Missionary Disciples' Coordinator. I am serving with a great team of people to help bring this program to more parishes and groups where they too are given tools to grow in their faith and establish community and accountability.

Becoming Missionary Disciples is an evangelization program that has been developed by SOLT. Its goal is to help people deepen their relationship and love for the Lord and to encourage them to live that out in their daily lives as missionary disciples. It consists of 3 components: REVIVE: Encountering God's Love, DISCIPLE: Formed in Holiness, and MISSION: It's Your Life. Each of these offers a unique opportunity to grow spiritually, to experience God's love in a new and deeper way, and to recognize the call to live as missionary disciples daily.

REVIVE aims to awaken the participant to the importance of a relationship with Christ and the Church and encourages them to commit to becoming intentional disciples of Jesus Christ.

Through DISCIPLE, we hope and pray that participants will grow in their relationship with the Persons of the Most Holy Trinity by living their baptismal call and to live as beloved children of the Father. In addition, we anticipate that they will conform their lives to Christ through

Above: A DISCIPLE team leader shares a special moment with a program attendee in Belize City; the music team leads people in praise and worship each night in Corpus Christi, Texas.



Above: DISCIPLE participants in Phoenix take time on to reflect on scripture in adoration; a table of women in Belize City share in a discussion of that night's presentation.

the transformative power of an encounter with the Holy Spirit. We will invoke the intercession and study the beautiful example of our Blessed Mother Mary, who is the model and perfect disciple.

In and through MISSION we invite participants to meet in small groups of 2 to 6 people each week for Liturgy Prep. The group prays and reflects on the Sunday readings and applies a mission goal for their week as each person strives to conform their life to Christ by living the liturgy more fully in their daily lives. These Discipleship Groups are meant to support, encourage, pray for, affirm, and help hold members accountable in an effort to grow closer to Our Lord and to live the liturgy daily. In addition to the weekly meetings, we hope to offer additional resources, and gatherings to go deeper in the faith, and other support for those in MISSION. These will help participants continue to grow in their relationship with the Lord as we all strive to live our call to be on mission and bring Christ to those around us.

This fall, we are excited to be offering the DISCIPLE program at St. Anthony's in Robstown, TX and REVIVE in Spanish in San Pedro, Belize and we look forward to more opportunities to bring the Becoming Missionary Disciple program to you. It is my prayer that this program may be a great tool for Catholics to grow deeper in their faith and find the community and accountability they need on their spiritual journey. If you would like more information about this program and how we might be able to help you to bring it to your parish or group, please check out our website at becomingmissionarydisciples.net and contact me at disciple@solt.net.



JOHN MCFARLAND is originally from San Diego, California. He has an MA in Theology from the Franciscan University of Steubenville and taught high school religion for ten years. John and his wife Caroline live in Corpus Christi, Texas with their four children.



Above: Fr. Dale Craig, SOLT congratulates Br. Uriel Lopez, SOLT on his perpetual promises this July, with the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity.



SOCIETY of OUR LADY
of the Most Holy Trinity
PO Box 4116 • Corpus Christi, TX 78469

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Robstown, TX
Permit No. 774

INSIDE

SOLT SYNODALITY:

Fr. Jerry Drolshagen, SOLT

FRUITFULNESS IN DETROIT:

Fr. Dennis Walsh, SOLT

BECOMING A MISSIONARY DISCIPLE:

John McFarland



On the front cover: In May of 2022, students from around the country participated in the SOLT Mission Trip to Benque, Belize in Central America.

Right: Participants in the DISCIPLE program in the SOLT Phoenix mission share a moment in prayer.



mission
magazine
FALL 2022