

Appreciative Inquiry Interview Guide

Date of Interview: _____
Interviewer: _____
Interviewee: _____
Year Came to Seton: _____
Phone#: _____
Email address: _____

Before we start I would like to explain a little bit about what we are going to do because it may be a little different from what you are used to. I am going to ask questions about times when you felt good about belonging to this faith community and about the work of the various ministries at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. We are going to find out about the parish at its best - the successes - so that we can find out what works and find ways to enhance and continue these efforts as we move forward.

Let me tell you how the results of the interviews will be used:

- All comments from the interviews will be anonymous - meaning we will not attach names to any of the stories, suggestions, examples, or comments shared.
- Anonymous material from the interviews may be used on the Seton website, the weekly bulletin and the like at the approval of Fr. Henry.
- The intent of this “Appreciative Inquiry” is to lift up what gives life to the people of our parish: to share stories, discover dreams, and create community.

This interview will take about 45 minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin?

NOTE to Interviewers: Please ask the initial question, and use the follow-on questions to encourage more detailed response if necessary. See Tips for Conducting Appreciative Inquiry Interviews for more details. (You don’t have to ask all of the follow-on questions unless you are wanting to draw out more details)

1. What first attracted you to the community of SEAS?

To start, I'd like to learn about your beginnings in the parish. When did you first come to SEAS? What first attracted you here? What is it that keeps you here? What sets us apart and makes the difference for you?

2. Most life-giving - high point experience: In thinking back over all of your time at SEAS, is there a high point in your experience - a time when you felt most alive, energized, involved, touched or loved? Or a time when you experienced spiritual growth or other positive feelings (i.e. community, stewardship/discipleship) - a time when more was accomplished than you imagined?

- *Please describe in detail the situation, people involved and what made this such a fulfilling experience for you. What actions did you and others take? How did these actions translate into positive results?*
- *What was it about you that made it a high point experience?*
- *What was it about others that made it a high point experience?*
- *What else helped to make it an outstanding experience?*

3. Let's talk about some things you value most -- specifically about yourself and the community of SEAS.

- *Without being humble, what do you value most about yourself? What are the gifts that you bring to your friends, family, and community?*
- *How have you been called to use these gifts? At home, work, in the community, at SEAS?*
- *What gifts are you most grateful for? Why?*
- *What do you value about SEAS? What do you appreciate about the mass, the people, traditions, various ministries, and activities? What are the core factors/strengths without which our community would not be the same?*

4. Community/Outreach: We are a community that is there for people when they need us. We treat people with great care and dignity in each of our ministries. We reach out in response to real human needs by helping people to serve and help one another, and to use their gifts in ways that go far beyond what could be seen or imagined.

- *Recall one or two of the best examples or experiences of SEAS in service to the community or to individuals.*
- *What is one thing that SEAS could do to better listen to and serve the needs of people in our community? How can we reach more people?*

5. Spiritual Growth: We are called to continuous conversion through spiritual growth. SEAS offers different forms of faith formation through bible study, liturgical celebrations, small faith groups such as Renew/Why Catholic and other offerings.

- *Can you think of a time when SEAS has inspired and strengthened your prayer and spiritual life? What was the source of your personal growth? ? What was the setting? Who was involved?*
- *What could our community do to further deepen and inspire spiritual life for our parishioners?*

6. Generosity: The community of SEAS is a very generous community. We have witnessed this in countless ways from the support of Hurricane Katrina victims to the response to mission requests.

- *When have you personally experienced or witnessed the generosity of this community? Who was involved? How were you impacted? What impressed you most?*
- *Can you think of a time when the SEAS community demonstrated generosity of time, generosity of talent, and generosity of treasure?*

- 7. Call to Involvement: Recognizing that everything is a gift from God, we celebrate the many talents of our people and their gifts of service. We encourage our parishioners to live the Catholic Faith in service to others.**
- *When have you felt most welcome in participating in a parish organization or activity? What was it about this experience that made you most comfortable and at ease?*
 - *Describe a time when you felt you were discovering and learning something new about ways to be of service or life-giving to others. What lessons can be drawn from your experience?*
 - *What could our parish community do to get more people involved in serving others?*

8. Visions of the Future: Fast forward to 2012: We have been able to preserve the core strengths of our community and experience greater sharing of time, talent and treasure among the people of our parish. It is a community that you love and cherish and invite others to experience.

- *What do you see? How would you describe the community, ministries, relationships among the people, the involvement?*
- *What are you and your fellow parishioners doing to provide service and life gift to others?*
- *What was the key to our growth in community?*
- *What was the smallest change that was made which had the most significant impact?*

9. Carrying Forward What We Value Most: Good parishes know how to "preserve the core" of what they do best.

- *What are three things - core strengths, values, qualities, ways of working - you want to see preserved and leveraged at SEAS as we move into the future?*
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

This is the end of the interview. Thank you very much for your time.

Do you have any questions?