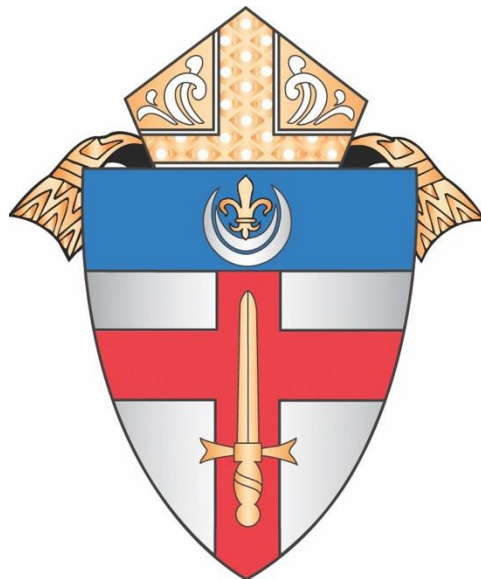




For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

SYNTHESIS OF THE Synod on Synodality – Diocesan Phase



Diocese of Covington
1125 Madison Ave.
Covington, KY 41011

Introduction

The Diocese of Covington is comprised of 14 counties in the northern and eastern part of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, totaling 3,359 square miles it is a diverse landscape of urban, suburban, and rural areas. With a total population of 529,445 people, there are approximately 89,035 Catholics: a total of 48 parishes, 30 elementary schools, 9 high schools, and one Catholic university.

In terms of the process used for the Synod, to reach the maximum amount of people possible, it was decided that a diocesan team would be formed, and every parish, school, institution, and organization would be invited to send synod coordinators to be trained to hold listening sessions at the local level. Individual members of the diocese were also encouraged to have one-on-one sessions with family, friends, and neighbors. Despite our best efforts to include those on the margins and a wide range of age groups, this proved to be a difficult task and, as you will see in the demographics listed in the appendix, most participants were adults over the age of 50 of European descent.

To systematically address the two fundamental questions of the Synod and the ten underlying themes the Diocesan Synod Team developed the following questions as guidelines for the local process:

1. Who in the Catholic Church has walked with you on your faith journey? How?
2. How do the Mass, Church's ministries and activities inspire you in your daily life?
3. What do you think is the role of a Catholic Church member? How does the Church support members in conducting their role?
4. In what ways does the Catholic Church listen to its members? Are there ways for people to be included and share their voices?

5. In what ways does the Catholic Church communicate with groups within our church, other faith communities, and our neighbors?

6. What is the Holy Spirit inviting us to do to grow as a holy Church?

- There were **75 Listening Session Reports** turned in (with 4,009 people participating)
- A total of **331 people took the Online Survey**
- There were **19 One-On-One Listening Session Reports** submitted
- And **13 letters/emails** to the bishop
- Approx. total of people involved: **4,375**

Below is a summary of the key themes that people mentioned throughout their answers to the questions listed above. Our approach was to consolidate the concepts that were mentioned as opposed to listing every comment. Some direct quotes have been pulled for simplicity. The key takeaways are listed under categories that were mentioned from most often to least often.

Key Takeaways

1. Evangelization and Catechesis

- Under this category there were many comments about the sorrow and regret for the declining number of young adults attending Mass and active in Parish life, particularly those who attended Catholic Schools.
- There is a consistent and serious concern regarding the loss of young people and the need to catechize youth in the Faith and engage them in parish life. ("Young people are leaving the Catholic Church in droves for nondenominational megachurches or no religion at all.")
- There was a great recognition of the great influential power Catholic schools

have (or could have) paired with laments about the state of Catholic education, weakness in catechesis of youth. ("We need to challenge our children and youth in the Faith and help them to understand the teachings and grow in their relationship with God.")

- However, people also mentioned that the youth seem to be leaving the faith, despite Catholic educations and being raised in the Catholic Church with devout parents and good priests. The implication being that the culture and technological world that children are growing up in are presenting new and great challenges for the People of God, who are currently not rising to the occasion.
- Many people feel that the Church needs to do a better job of explaining the "why" behind their teachings -- not just reinforcing "what" they believe.
- Many students at diocesan high schools confirmed that school has become the primary experience of "Church" for most of this generation. Students primarily receive sacraments through the school, and roughly half of the Catholics claimed to only go to Mass when the school provides the opportunity.
- There was also frequent mention of great need for Adult Faith Formation and acknowledgement that parents/families are an indispensable key when it comes to the future of the faith.
- Many people expressed the desire to learn how to better evangelize, share the Faith and explain difficult teachings in a loving and effective manner. People do not seem to feel confident in doctrine and history to teach others.

- The need for better marriage preparation was stressed. There is a hope that the Church will get stronger in encouraging family life by making the sacraments more available, emphasizing that the Mass should be the center of people's lives. There needs to be less reliance on programs, social media, and more reliance on preaching the truth in love.
- Most people's answers demonstrated that parents who modeled going to church and putting an emphasis on Catholic education were instrumental in forming individuals who valued their faith life. Even those who were not raised Catholic but had parents who raised them with morals and values noted that it inspired their faith life.
- Priests, religious sisters and brothers, and educators who were pastoral, faith-filled and again, good role models, were tremendous assets to those who needed help or guidance. Many noted the work of the sisters who were influential in their education.
- "We [the people of God] need to be bold and evangelize! We should be an example of Christ in the world. Do we take seriously the battle for souls?"
- "The Church needs to teach the children the faith and hold Catholics accountable for their actions (those in the public eye)!"
- Some criticisms included that the Catholic Church keeps recycling what hasn't worked for years in engaging Catholics.
- There was also frequent mention of concern regarding the rapid and widespread decline in Church attendance.
- "The Holy Spirit is calling for a new brand of missionaries to help those who

have actively turned away from God and are seeking Him in anything but 'organized religion.'"

Trends at Catholic high schools:

- Those who walk with the students are found primarily at home and at school, not Church institutions.
- Students report minimal activity at their parishes and tend to lack a language regarding the sacraments. The school is often the primary institution through which they experience sacraments (reconciliation, Communion, Eucharistic adoration, as well as preparation for baptism - some converts).
- Most described school functions, few mentioned parishes. Given that most students see the faith as a list of rules of how to be moral, most responses were regarding the service program.
- The word "more" was the primary word of note when describing how they could grow as a holy Church. This over-worked and over-committed generation thinks that "more" is necessary to do anything, which means something else in their life is going to be lessened. Few used words such as "better."
- They feel like outsiders who are just filling spots in the church.
- They feel as if Mass is "too old fashioned" and does not address the current issues that the world faces and has too many rules for worship.
- Many talked about how the priests' homilies were completely over their heads, and they felt "talked down" to/unrelatable.
- Many students talked about how they felt the Catholic Church does a really good job when it comes to charities and ways of helping those who are

struggling -- financially, mentally, and physically.

- They talked a lot about finding ways to be more inclusive in practice and language -- while they respect the Church's values and teachings -- they say that the Church does an extremely poor job of being welcoming to those who may be outside of the teachings. They feel that the church does a lot of shaming towards people outside of the faith.
- They want to be known -- to be seen in their parishes -- not just looked at as the "future of the church".
- They would like to see more consistency with teachings -- they feel like different priests interpret teachings and practices in different ways and so there isn't consistency -- making it confusing. One example of inconsistencies with practice -- we are not allowed to have outdoor masses -- but outdoor masses happen all the time with the Pope, in Africa, Latin America, etc. -- is it the space that is important, or is it what is happening at the mass that is important?
- Many of the conversations revolved around "boring homilies", "bland music", old people not being welcoming in the church towards younger people.
- They want the Church to find better and more effective ways of reaching out to the people on the margins (youth, young adults who have been turned off to faith, refugees, migrants, LGBTQIA+ community, etc.) and providing experiences of God's love and mercy -- highlighting the beauty within the faith; the things that connect us, instead of focusing on things that separate us.

2. On Being More Welcoming

- There was an exceptional amount of concern regarding the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ individuals (although not always clear if the people were requesting the Church to change its teaching or just attempt to be more welcoming and loving).
- There is an impression that white, middle-aged, heterosexual, married males have the most power/influence in the Church. Everyone else is sort of seen as second class.
- People don't feel welcome. ("More women need to be involved. The LGBTQ community feels unwelcome. Divorced people feel unwelcome.")
- Many people mentioned how much depends on the personality of the priest and the quality (or lack therein) of homilies, as well as the demeanor of the people in the pews.
- Many see the Church as a structure of rules and more focused on being judgmental than kind and loving.
- There needs to be work on making it more clear how to join a parish and less difficult for people from all walks of life to be accepted and get involved.
- A young lady at one of the high schools reported that she felt judged during a class discussion on the sacrament of marriage because of her parents' decision to divorce. Another participant said that she drifted away from attending Mass due to her parents' divorce and not fully understanding the Church's teaching. She felt judged and "unwelcome."
- Parish life can be very difficult for couples who have young children/babies. Many parishes no longer provide childcare/children's service, etc. during mass. ("Be more

welcoming/accommodating of families with young children.")

- Sometimes there seems to be a lack of opportunity to ask questions in a nonjudgmental way.
- Many people called for the Church, down to individual parishes to be more inclusive of all, and foster environments to encourage attendance and participation rather than the opposite.
- "I think the Catholic Church seems a little scary for people who don't know anything about it, because we have memorized prayers and phrases, we say during mass I think they might be intimidated showing up to Catholic mass rather than a non-denominational church that is very laid back and seems more informal."
- "People who were raised Catholic do not understand how bizarre Catholicism is to non-Catholics."

3. Authenticity/Consistency

- There is a deep concern about lack of consistency in the Church among leaders, institutions, teachers, bishops, cardinals, and even popes on the Truths of the Faith and moral life. Desire for the Church to stick to tradition and not capitulate to the culture.
- The sex abuse crisis has caused a lot of anger and confusion and has turned off many people, especially young adults.
- Participants are demanding more transparency in all areas of Church communication. The Church should not be involved in any evil practice and should have nothing to hide.
- The Church is seen as hypocritical and judgmental – seems to arbitrarily choose what sins carry more weight.
- People feel the Church is too hierarchical and inward focused.

- On the other hand, people expressed that Protestant churches seem to be about a “show,” whereas the Catholic Church is about worshipping God and authenticity.
- The Church has, in some of its practices, given a confusing message (i.e., Politicians who still receive holy Communion despite support of anti-life laws). The Synod does not seem to be addressing the questions of the Church’s dealings with these situations where very public people say one thing, but supposedly their Catholicism should be having them say something else. Yet they still “get away with it” in the public realm.
- “With all the capital campaigns and collections, it seems that all the church wants is money.”
- Young adults feel there is a lot of hypocrisy in the Church especially towards homosexuals and transgender people, along with out of wedlock children, birth control, those with addictions and conflicting views on abortion.
- “We all need to take personal responsibility for growing in holiness with the help of the Holy Spirit. We communicate with the example of how we live, through our ministries.”
- “What is really disturbing is the Vatican seems to be embracing or adopting other religions vs. remaining true to our Catholic faith. From the media standpoint it is extremely confusing given that we have priests on social media spouting heresy (like how gay marriage is fine, etc.), being praised by outside groups, and not being disciplined by the Church.”
- Many people expressed the challenge of being compassionate – treating all

people as children of God – but at the same time acknowledging that a certain lifestyle is not God’s way.

- Lack of empathy for those who have left the church for any number of reasons (including those who have experienced abuse in a variety of ways - ex: spousal abuse that resulted in divorce).

4. Communication/Listening

- Many people expressed a desire that the Church be more transparent about its operations at every level, and that there be more catechesis, clarity, and education about why the Church teaches what it teaches about the most prominent moral issues of our day. LGBTQIA+ and abortion being the most frequently mentioned.
- A large number of people stated that they did not believe the Church communicated with the outside world and other religious communities, or if it does, they didn’t know how.
- Some people felt they did not know how to report concerns/issues bigger than the parish. However, most respondents felt that they have a personal relationship with their Pastor so that they feel comfortable to go to him with any faith questions, concerns, or needed advice
- Communication is an issue. People feel that communication is top down only -- not much communication both ways. Not really listening, just shutting people down. Church not using full talents of priests and laity. Need a better balance between clergy and laity.
- Many felt the priests have the final say with little to no input.
- Parish bulletins, the diocesan newspaper, homilies and through the pastor were mentioned most often as

the primary ways the Church communicates with its people. Respondents also mentioned parish/diocesan websites, e-mails, letters from the bishop, school newsletter, participation in ministries like St. Vincent de Paul, and word-of-mouth.

- “For those who have fallen away from the Church, there is no communication.”
- A few people felt like the Church only communicates when they want money.
- Seems that what is communicated nationally is only “negative”. It centers on societal hot-button topics like abortion, gender issues, refusing communion to politicians, and of course the abuse scandals. Too much emphasis on the “Thou Shall Not’s” and not enough emphasis on the Gospel.
- Many feel not listened to. There was a call to reestablish parish councils, diocesan boards, lay advisory team meetings, online or paper questionnaires. For so long, the voice of religious and laity have been quieted. Give them an avenue to speak and be heard. The Synod process is a start to listening to its members. Priests need to walk with the people. Know what is going on beyond the rectory.
- “The laity is not involved or listened to enough.”
- “We listen to people’s voices too much. There is only one voice I care about and that is God’s. I come to the Church to have her conform me to Christ, not conform His Church to me.”
- “We are all supposed to be parts of the Body of Christ, but the trouble is that everyone wants to be the head and have everything their way.”

On the Synod process:

- There was a lot of gratitude for the synodal process, and joy about being heard. (“This is the first time we feel like we are being heard” and “We don’t have a frequent survey or way to give feedback”.)
- There was also criticism and skepticism about the Synod. Many felt that the direction and goals of the Synod were unclear. The focus was not strong enough.
- “Imagine if the Vatican put a process in place where over three years, they would help people become equipped in spreading the Gospel and helping people understand what and why the Church teaches. Then, after that, invite as many people as possible to come together for discussion where evangelism is the main goal. Wouldn’t that be more productive than ‘listening sessions’ with a bunch of Catholics who don’t know their faith and silence demanded from the ones that do?”
- Perhaps the idea that listening to others is not the same as agreeing with others should have been emphasized, but many people professed concerns that this process implied that the Church’s process is a democracy and that certain teachings of Christ can be changed.
- There was also little hope expressed that the synod would bring about any “change.”

5. Leadership

- Priests are seen both as being supportive and as non-supportive. Some had priests who guided them — by offering the sacraments and other liturgical opportunities or ministries they felt that they were being supported. Others did not feel that support. They felt priests were too busy or that there was just not enough time to go around. *The priests seem to be the anchor for those who feel that the parish/church is supporting them. Personal interaction and having ministries that reach out are all important.
- There were several responses that indicated that they would like to see priests relieved of some of the administrative duties that so often pull them from the pastoral concerns of the flock.
- Priests need to be more pastoral, less rigid; homilies need to be concise and to the point, not just rambling on. So much depends on the pastor and priests - the type of person - being pastoral, being a shepherd, etc.
- Many people asked that women be more involved and included in the administration of the Church. This desire to have women involved also included a desire to see women ordained as priests and deacons. ("There are many gifted women who would have inspiring words to share from the pulpit.")
- At the same time, while women are not priests, they are recognized as great leaders in the Church. Many shared that what they knew the most about the Catholic Church came through religious and lay women who were associated with Catholic Education.

- Many people were complimentary of the work of their pastors, priests and the bishops of Covington (both Bishop Roger Foys and Bishop John Iffert). However, several people were dismayed by the actions of individual priests and leaders.
- The Diocese of Covington used to have a Lay Ministry Program and lay people were able to learn Church teaching and be trained on how to help a pastor run things. Now there is very little opportunity for lay people. The priests oversee everything and not all of them are good administrators.
- People asked for priests and religious to be permitted to marry.
- "The bishop should visit each parish in his diocese as often as possible."

6. Liturgy and Sacraments

- Love for the Church, the sacraments and, most especially, the Eucharist and reconciliation, were a common theme. (1. "Mass is a weekly reminder that others are walking the same journey I am." 2. "The Eucharist is the most important thing in my life.")
- There was lots of gratitude for the sacraments and for the strong foundation of faith and truth.
- There was conflict over the liturgical orientation of the Church. There were certainly people that wanted to see the Church lose some of its over emphasis on ritual and become looser in its structure. On the other hand, there was an equal number of people that wanted to see the Latin Mass more widely permitted, and even grief and confusion about the recent restrictions and removal of the Latin Mass.
- "Allowing for the Latin Mass is important but not without educating

people about the importance of unity, tradition, and a respect for Vatican II. Many people are deeply hurt by the Popes actions to stop the Latin Mass while not holding accountable the Priests who change the liturgy by adding words to the Vernacular Mass. The Latin Mass, Vatican Two and Tradition need to be respected.”

- “I wish we had one Mass that had guitar/drums/different styles of music. Embracing more styles of music and variety.”
- “Praise and Worship music with adoration is something that feels missing from our parish/some other parishes. Music also makes a statement about who is welcome here.”
- Many people struggle with the idea of the sacrament of confession. There have been many “horror” stories that have come out of the confessional, which seems to persuade people that they are not meeting Christ in confession, but an individual priest. There is a general feeling that you shouldn’t have to tell your sins to a person ... if you are truly sorry for them and resolve not to do them again on your own, God’s mercy is endless. It is between you and God.
- At one of our high schools, the Mass was mentioned numerous times as inspiring. It is a way to keep them “centered and close to the lord.” The Eucharist was specifically mentioned as a gift that we are able to receive. Confession was also seen as an important sacrament in keeping them “rooted” in the church. Many found comfort and joy in the rituals of the Mass. Ministries and groups that individuals were involved in made them feel more involved and inspired to live

out the teachings of Jesus. These activities were broad, a sense of belonging was VERY important.

- On the other hand, at the same school, those who did not feel involved or felt the mass was too ritualized did not feel inspired by the mass or sacraments.
- Overall, it seems that the sacraments help the students stay on the straight and narrow. Reconciliation and the Eucharist are a reminder of God's love for them and motivate them to be better individuals.
- Parents spoke of the response of their young adult children as, "I get nothing out of the Mass". Others responded that the homily needs to relate/translate to today. It needs to tell us what we need to do to become a better person. They don't want to be told every year why we use A, B, C synoptic gospels with John thrown in at certain times. They want to know how the readings relate to their life today. They are looking for a priest who inspires them.
- Many people cited the Eucharist as a key part of their faith life. Sunday Mass and Eucharist and the faith community allows them to refocus and reset each week, keeping them in relationship with God. The reading of the Word/scriptures and the homily inspire them to follow Christ the rest of the week. There was great appreciation shown for our parish priest.
- There was an overall concern about a priest shortage.

7. Support

- Some stressed that if a person participates in the Church, they can pretty much find the support they need, but if they are not involved, nothing is

available to them — there is no outreach.

- Many comments about no support for those who have been widowed. Priests and lay people should reach out and connect with them.
- On at least one occasion the expense involved in funeral arrangements was mentioned as painful.
- Parents commented that the Church was not supportive when their child was sexually molested by a priest. There is still a lot of hurt from this out there!
- “I do not feel that the Church really supports its members. It seems the church is trying to be more appealing to a secular world vs. trying to combat the secular world. We have a poorly catechized laity.”
- “I really wish the Church would stand in greater opposition to the world though, to be set apart, and continue to call me to greater holiness, rather than just accepting me as I am and leaving me there.”
- “If you fit into a specific demographic/box, the Church is your best friend. If you are an outsider like LGBTQ, you are not supported at all.”
- Many examples of how the Catholic Church support followers of Christ in carrying out their role, but concerns that it also falls short too often.
- “Unfortunately, those at the top of the Church are lukewarm and milquetoast. They build bridges with the World, which is fallen and depraved, instead of throwing out life rafts to those drowning in the World and pulling them into the Ship to Life, which is the Catholic Church.”
- “The Catholic Church should do more in our community and should speak out in

the world to condemn those things that are not aligned with Christian values such as abortion, homosexuality, transgender, pornography, any abuse, or neglect of any human being from conception to natural death.”

- “Unfortunately, the ones supported in the Church are those that celebrate and make compromises with the World. The ones who stand firm in their Faith are demonized for being rigid and old-fashioned. The heresy of Modernism pervades the Church. And the good Catholics who admonish those who make compromises with evil are ridiculed, hated, and marginalized,” contrasted with, “I think the church leaders only listen to the people who want to change the church and don't give a lot of time to people who love the church and its traditions.”
- Another common concern was for priests who seem to need support, and do not seem to have the help they need. Many would be willing to support their pastors if they knew what they could do.
- On a spiritual level, people want more access to spiritual direction and have no idea how to even begin.

On Divorce and Annulments:

- There are negative feelings about the annulment process members have undergone.
- The concept of an annulment is not well defined. I understand that Christ said that Marriage is indissoluble by mankind, but how can a Church tribunal made up of human beings truly decide whether there was truly a marriage or not. Everyone learns things about their spouse that they did not know or realize until long after they were

married ... would not this give grounds for everyone to get an annulment?

- The process is painful. Not just the idea that you must “re-live” everything, but you must talk bad about your former spouse and air out all their dirty laundry to establish your freedom to marry.
- Individuals who have been divorced and are now remarried have been told by priests that they cannot go to Communion, because they are committing adultery. This comes across as very unwelcoming because different sins seem to be held to different standards. A high school boy might sleep with a different girl every month, but he can still receive communion. If someone is divorced and remarried or in a homosexual relationship, they cannot receive Communion – this seems hypocritical and unjust.

8. Catholic action, participation and understanding of mission

- Most people saw their roles as being disciples, praying, being involved, or spreading Christ’s love. Loving one another was seen as the heart of being a Catholic.
- “We need to love/ serve our neighbors, especially the most marginalized.”
- There was a lot of mention of the importance of the Church as family, community. People seemed to truly value small, close communities.
- There was an overall recognition that the mission of the Church is evangelization, love and service of God and neighbor.
- There was a recognition of the vital role that family life plays in the life of faith, paired with concern regarding the state of family life in the United States.

- We need to listen more; He invites us, and we do not always hear the call as we are too busy in worldly things. We are focused on what we want and not in what Holy Spirit is inviting us to.
- “Maybe, a re-focus on our Church as being a ‘field hospital after battle’ for all of us sinners where healing of wounds in a loving environment is the priority would help counter some of the perceptions of our ‘rules’ as being judgmental rather than life affirming.”
- “The Holy Spirit is calling us to holiness and engagement in the sacraments.”
- “The Church and its traditions are losing out to secular society. We need to stay strong to our traditions and our Faith.”
- “I think people need to try and get more involved in parish activities and be more of a community of faith. I think we need God in our lives more than ever before.”
- “At the local Church level, there are lots of ways to be included – but people don’t help. People show up for Mass and that’s it – not helping. When people do come together to help and they start talking to each other and with each other, this is a way to be included and heard.”
- There were several people who were unclear about their role in the Church, looking to the priests and religious as the primary evangelizers. Other than attending Sunday Mass and financially supporting the Church, some were unclear on their role as a lay person in the Catholic Church.

9. Ecumenism

- There was a desire expressed by many for the Church to be more ecumenical in some of its attitudes.
- A small number said that they would like to see non-Catholics invited to participate in reception of our sacraments.
- There were some comments which seemed to indicate interfaith activities may not be as active as they have been in the past.
- Most people agreed on the benefit of having more ecumenical opportunities.
- People expressed an interest in having more contact with other Christian churches and participating in community-wide events. They feel the bureaucracy of the Church has a very negative impact on people's perception.
- "Ecumenical events and dialogue, it seems, have greatly cooled over the past decade."
- The Catholic Church tends to engage with other Christian faith traditions in times of worldly or community need (i.e., disaster relief), not so much just to dialogue.

Conclusion

- What the Catholic Church needs more than anything is unity.
- The true answers are only going to be found in Christ and in the teachings of His Church.
- The Church must not bow to the pressures of the world, but stand strong in her teachings, recognizing that not everyone will say "yes" to the will of God.
- Parents/immediate family are the most important piece of someone's faith journey. Grandparents were also often mentioned as playing a key role.

- Clergy (especially pastors) and men and women religious are clear symbols of Christ and have a huge impact (for better or worse) on how people view the Catholic Church.
- Teachers, especially religion teachers, were mentioned by young people describing who has walked with them on their journey.
- Many responded that they feel like the Holy Spirit is calling the church grow in faith, calling members to holiness, and the renewal of the family; to communicate a consistent message of God's love.
- Others felt the Holy Spirit is calling the Church to be more forgiving, more loving, more inviting, more diverse, and less judgmental.
- There were many people that want the Church to return to valued traditions and not give into the modern world, and there are many that see western culture leading the Church as a good thing
- Some mentioned that the Holy Spirit is calling the Church to "Be Bold", evangelize through beauty — church music, literature, and art.
- A decent amount of people responded that they would like to see expanded roles for women, including ordaining women deacons and priests and allow priests to marry.
- It seemed that there were clearly those who supported the mission of the Church and its message, and those who either did not support, were jaded, or "hurt" by the Church. There did not seem to be much middle ground.
- Most people would like more teaching from the pulpit on current moral and social concern issues (i.e., abortion, Eucharistic participation for dissident

Catholics, etc.). However, others feel like the Church is getting too political and straying too far away from the Gospel.

- People are searching for more frequent accessibility to the sacrament of reconciliation, easier availability of spiritual advisor relationships, continuing education for adults in faith formation and knowledge, perhaps in a format like RCIA and guided by specially trained laity and ordained leaders.
- Many respondents identified Mass, the sacraments, and devout individuals as significant and inspirational in their faith life.
- Regarding listening, there seemed to be differences among generational groups. Older respondents commented more on the Church's lack of listening while many younger respondents expressed the thought that the Church shouldn't

listen to people – people need to listen to the Church.

- It seems that developing relationships, personal invitations, treating individuals as beloved children of God are keys to spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ; people will join ministries/activities if they are invited and encouraged; and the pastor and parishioners both have an important role in being a welcoming, Christ-centered parish.
- Most people agree that the Church needs to be transparent in everything, and should never cover anything up, even if it seems to be to “protect” the Church's reputation.
- There was an overall sense that nothing will change even if people can participate or voice their concerns or opinions. Suggestions were made for surveys to be done on a yearly basis by the parish and the diocese as well.

Appendix

Demographic Breakdown

By Sex

Sex	Percent
Female	60%
Male	40%

By Age

Age	Percent
18 to 23	1%
24 to 29	5%
29 to 39	8%
40 to 49	12%
50 to 59	20%
60 to 69	28%
70+	26%

By Race

Race	Percent
White	95%
Hispanic	3%
Black or African American	1%
Asian	1%

Faith Background

I was brought up:	Percent
Catholic	87%
Non-Catholic Christian	12%
Other non-Christian Religion	.5%
With no Religion or Belief System	.5%