

First Synodal Discernment Session

St. Anastasia Catholic Church

November 11, 2021

Summation of group responses to the questions guiding the discernment process

The following are the similarities and common themes found throughout the responses to each question.

I. Listening:

- There is a need for openness and dialogue.
- There are different factors that hinder our capacity for listening.
- We often focus on what we want to hear but we need to learn to listen with empathy and compassion, putting ourselves in each other's shoes.
- We need to be more aware of the promptings of the Holy Spirit when listening.
- When it comes to listening to others, especially those with different perspectives, we need to listen not just with our ears but also with our hearts, setting aside prejudices and biases.
- There is a concern that the voices of the minority are not being heard. It is important to make sure that they are being represented on committees and ministries.
- There is a need for dialogue and understanding between different cultures in the Church.
- Diversity should be embraced and not be seen as a barrier.
- There is a sense of division in the Church that can sometimes lead to conflict.
- The Church doesn't seem to be welcoming to members of the LGBTQ community and all those who experience same sex attraction.
- The Church doesn't always know how to listen to or welcome those on the periphery and the marginalized.
- Some people feel less attention is given to the voices of women and young people.
- Young people are not receiving the right example from their surrounding culture so there is a great need for resources and opportunities for education in the Church.
- We should do more to encourage religious vocations.
- Clergy and religious sisters should be more present and available for the community.

II. Sharing Responsibility for Our Common Mission:

- We need to rediscover the mission and purpose of our Baptism in order to remember why we are missionary disciples.
- There needs to be a better understanding of the teachings and history of the Church.
- There is a need for education in Scripture and Church teachings as well as an understanding of what the Catholic Church is.

- There is a great need for personal faith formation and good catechesis in order to carry the mission. Many people struggle with feelings of inadequacy, which comes from a lack of training. Most of them feel unqualified because they lack knowledge and education in the faith.
- The Church needs to foster a greater sense of identity. If we don't understand where we are coming from, we cannot understand where we are going.
- As the source of unity in the Church, there needs to be a greater focus on the Eucharist. A more in-depth understanding of the Eucharist is needed.
- As a missionary Church, we should find unity in the common mission.
- The Church needs to be a space of personal encounter with God.
- The Church needs to be a dynamic Church. We need to get people involved by informing them about the current Church missions and ministries.
- Active methods of outreach and evangelization are necessary.
- There needs to be more enthusiasm in sharing the faith. Sharing resources and positive experiences helps in engagement and stewardship.
- Opportunities for fellowship and faith sharing are very appreciated. Communication and reaching out is very important.
- The laity would like greater support of ministries and more involvement from the priests.

III. Forming Ourselves in Synodality:

- There is some resistance due to a lack of understanding.
- We need to understand how to form ourselves in synodality.
- We must not be afraid of approaching those who have left the Church.
- Opportunities for prayer, discernment, and spiritual direction are needed.
- Prayer plays a key role in discernment.
- We need to be open to change and receptive.
- We need ongoing learning and formation opportunities for the laity.
- A young and enthusiastic spirit must be maintained.
- The Church should seek integration not assimilation.
- We need to provide a place of trust where people can share.