

## **Fourth Synodal Discernment Session**

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### 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:**

- Listening must begin with a positive and open attitude
- The focus must be on personal invitations and conversations. There must be follow-up after this.
- There is a lot of polarization, divisiveness, and intolerance of other people's views
- Outreach to the socially excluded could be improved
- Sometimes the Church focuses too much on families but not so much on singles, widows, and the divorced
- Different languages can sometimes be a barrier for listening
- We need to ask God for help in learning to listen

#### **II. Sharing Responsibility for Our Common Mission:**

- Every baptized person is called to participate in the Church
- We are called to spread the Good News of the Gospel at all times
- Sacramentality is an important part of the Church and there needs to be greater focus on that
- We need to learn how to pray and teach others how to pray
- Concern that the youth are leaving the Catholic church to join protestant churches because they have more opportunities and they find them more engaging and entertaining. We are losing most of our youth after Confirmation.
- Pro-life ministries should be supported more
- Prison ministry should be attended to
- There should be better catechesis and greater focus on the Eucharist.
- It is helpful to have religious sisters involved in the community as they have a lot to contribute and can be great evangelizing tools
- Events and ministries should be announced in church bulletins
- It is important to reach out to those who have left the church to ask why
- After mass gatherings can help in reaching out to people and fostering fellowship
- We are sometimes hindered by fear

### **III. Forming Ourselves in Synodality:**

- There needs to be a greater receptivity to change. Changes should be welcomed.
- There should be a focus on adult faith formation
- The churches' mission should include the hopes and dreams of parishioners
- Church must be open to discussion and dialogue in a friendly way
- The church must create opportunities to take the time to listen and walk together with people
- We must be open to ongoing learning, behaviors and the mindset of synodality
- We must be willing to build bridges
- We must support each other