

Third Synodal Discernment Session

Sacred Heart - Fleming Island Catholic Church

January 13, 2022

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:

- Busyness of priests keeps them from being able to interact with and listen to parishioners
- Identifying and welcoming visitors – greeting them and engaging them before and after Mass – must be emphasized
- Questions about the proper formation of youth means that education opportunities for the youth should be offered
- There should be a focus on outreach and inclusiveness. Certain groups tend to be exclusive.
- A greater promotion of events would be helpful
- Greater recognition and involvement of women is asked for
- There is an overall interest in increasing nuns' presence and participation in the church. Consecrated men and women should be utilized more, and there should be greater support for them.
- We need to learn to hear God's voice through other people. We often don't realize how God might be trying to speak to us.
- We are often selective as to who we listen to and interact with
- Greater importance should be placed on youth ministers. The church should invest more in youth ministry.
- There is disaffiliation from the church because of a lack of understanding, especially of the Mass
- The need for instant gratification is a hindrance to listening, understanding, and being patient towards others
- There is a need to listen to those with different opinions. There is a fear of being judged and ostracized, particularly in youth.
- Parishes should give new people the opportunity to participate and lead rather than letting the same group of people be in control for many years

II. Sharing Responsibility for Our Common Mission:

- Importance of answering questions that youth pose
- There are questions/concerns about where the money in churches is going: Is the church prioritizing building/structural needs over the needs of the people we serve and evangelize?
- There should be more opportunities for learning and formation. Apologetics is needed to be able to evangelize.

- Parishes should offer creative and attractive educational opportunities for youth
- There should be better and more opportunities to communicate between parishioners and priest/parish staff. Parishes should look for creative ways to let parishioners ask questions, express needs, and make suggestions.
- Broken families should be attended to
- There is a need to remember and prioritize the mission of the church
- Outreach in the community must be emphasized
- People would like more clarity on what the laity is called to do in the community
- Parishioners should feel a greater sense of ownership
- We must share the Gospel with everyone, not just Catholics
- There are different opinions regarding the Latin Mass: some argue that it should be more available, others argue that some parishes focus on it too much.
- There should be more guidance on instructing and supporting parents

III. Forming Ourselves in Synodality:

- There should be a greater engagement of those in the periphery
- Homilies should be more reflective and practical to the audience
- There is an overall concern that other churches are being more attractive to youth and causing them to leave
- Walking together as a synodal church is more than just fellowship
- Receptivity to change, participating in mission is key
- There is a need to form ourselves in prayer
- Importance of adhering to the truths of the faith and not watering down the doctrine
- Sometimes we need to give children/youth a good foundation but give them the space to explore and find their way back
- There needs to be greater clarification on where resources for ministries and outreach are available
- Adopting a one-on-one communication approach would be more effective
- There should be a greater focus on the Eucharist
- Emphasis should be made on listening to people outside the church, overcoming prejudices and stereotypes
- People should be more open to change