

## Fifth Synodal Discernment Session

*Queen of Peace*

*February 3, 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:**

- Women often don't get the recognition they deserve which makes them feel undervalued. Women should take more leadership roles in the Church.
- People are more willing to go to parishes in which they are treated well
- Young people are looking to feel like they belong
- Young people are having a hard time accepting the teachings of the church
- Restless minds and distractions are a barrier to listening. Quieting the mind takes conscious and deliberate effort. Making a conscious effort to listen requires emptying oneself.
- We have to be willing to get out of our comfort zones to go and meet those in the periphery. We have to be willing to be uncomfortable.
- We should look for similarities and not focus on differences. We should look for unity and not uniformity.
- Our prejudices keep us from listening to those who are different from us
- In order to do outreach we need to encounter, build relationships, and go to agencies who are doing the work to see how we can assist
- Youth and young adults have left the church because they don't want to be a part of the scandals. They don't feel a sense of genuineness and authenticity in the Church.
- Families need to be united in church activities. There should be more cooperation between the family and the church.
- Those on the periphery (remarried, homosexual, those who have left the church, those who have had abortions) should feel wanted and included. They should not be pushed away.
- We do not see religious consecrated men and women other than the priests and deacons. We should develop ways to get to know them.
- Thinking about what one is going to say next hinders our ability to understand what is being said
- There is a difference in beliefs between past and present generations. Kids today are raised differently.
- We need flexibility in Mass times and an openness to additional Mass times
- There should be greater focus on the centrality of the Eucharist
- Ongoing faith formation programs are needed
- Staff and volunteers should actively reach out to new parishioners, visitors, and those who haven't been coming back to church

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

- There is a need to reach farther in order to be able to connect
- We need to address the needs of those who have been hurt by the church
- We need to reach out to those who have drifted from the church to see what we can do for them.
- Hospitality and welcoming committees are helpful and necessary. We need more personal interactions.
- We are to lead by example and witness to everyone
- People sometimes feel like they don't know enough to share. We need to spend more time learning the faith. Ignorance of the faith leads to distancing.
- There is a lot of division within the Church.
- There needs to be greater collaboration between parishes.
- We need to use Jesus as our example in loving and serving others. We need to show people how much they are loved.
- More missionary work is needed to open people's hearts
- We should meet the youth where they are at and try to get them more involved
- Services for the elderly and homebound should be available
- More education on the Mass and the Real Presence in the Eucharist is needed
- We must listen and attend to needs of the marginalized and those on the periphery

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

- We need to be able to discuss problems and bring up hard topics. We need to educate ourselves more in order to know how to respond to these issues.
- Prayer centered instruction is desirable. We need to help people learn to pray in order to facilitate synodality.
- Homilies should help with individual formation
- We must foster an atmosphere of comfort in parishes in order to help with discernment
- The Church must learn to listen to itself
- We need to be better at talking about the good things that happen in our communities
- We need to encourage participation by all and open up opportunities for new people to become involved
- We need to examine ourselves closely to see who we are excluding from our communities
- Small groups that meet together regularly would be a great way to discuss these topics and make connections