

Pope Francis' call for Synod on Synodality

Pope Francis is having a special synod in which parishes are to participate. The idea is that the Pope wants parishes to communicate about core issues of parish life for the sake of developing a culture of "Synodality." What does that mean? Essentially, it means an inclusionary attitude of listening to those who may not always be listened to, in order to help us better understand the Church.

Below are questions we would invite you as parishioners to reflect upon. The questions have been approved by the Parish Council and reflect core principles of the Catholic faith. Our hope is to have a large number of parishioners and non-parishioners respond to these questions (feel free to share them with friends who are non-parishioners, including non-Catholics).

We have designated a reporter to take these responses, summarize them, and send them to the Diocesan representative who will then send them to Rome. The summaries will also be shared with parishioners to help us understand how we can use the Synod as a means to help build up Sacred Heart-St. Patrick Parish.

In that spirit, you are asked to prayerfully reflect on these questions. Type (or write) out your answers to these questions and send them to the parish office. We would like to have them returned by the **30th of January**. This will give our reporter enough time to summarize the responses and send them to the Diocese.

We will then provide a copy of the summary to the parish so we can continue to reflect on this important question: What is God asking of us as Sacred Heart-St. Patrick Parish?

1. **First Consideration:** The Eucharist is the Source and Summit of our faith. Christ's Presence in the Eucharist is our Bread of Life and the celebration of the Eucharist unites us as the Mystical Body of Christ. How does the Eucharist in its reception, adoration, and celebration strengthen your faith? Do you feel a disconnect between your faith-life and the Eucharist? Please share your thoughts on your relationship with the Eucharist and the Church. _____

2. **Second Consideration:** Scripture is God's Inspired Word spoken to us. Every time the readings are proclaimed at Mass or are read in private prayer, we have an opportunity to encounter God's Word spoken to us. How often do you make time to read, study, and pray with the Bible? How does the Bible help your daily life? What are your struggles with the Bible that make it hard to use in your daily life? Please share your relationship with Sacred Scripture. _____

3. **Third Consideration:** The Sacraments provide us with the gift of God's grace. This grace strengthens us, heals us, and prepares us for a life of service to God and neighbor. How have the Sacraments assisted you in living your faith life? Do you turn to the Sacraments in time of need such as a serious illness or when we fall into serious sin? Please share your relationship with the Sacraments. _____

4. **Fourth Consideration:** Jesus calls us to see his face in the poor, marginalized, and forgotten of the world. Organizations such as Catholic Charities and Catholic Relief Services have long been the backbone of Gospel charity to the poor locally and nationally. What do you see as the strong points of how Sacred Heart-St. Patrick strives to assist the poor? How can we improve our efforts? How is Christ calling you to minister to the face of the forgotten and marginalized? Do you feel like you are the forgotten and marginalized? Please share your thoughts on ministering to the poor, marginalized, and forgotten.

5. **Fifth Consideration:** The Church's Social Teaching is summarized in seven themes: 1. Life and the Dignity of the Human Person from Conception to Natural Death; 2. The Call to Family, Community, and Participation; 3. Personal Rights and Responsibilities; 4. Option for the Poor and Vulnerable; 5. Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers; 6. Solidarity; and 7. Care for God's Creation. How do we as a Church, both locally and globally, succeed in embracing these seven themes? Which themes are lacking and need more attention? Are there themes that you struggle with? Do you see them as a consistent ethic of life or contradictory and confusing? Please share your thoughts on Catholic Social Teaching.

6. **Sixth Consideration:** Are there any other items we need to consider? Please share your thoughts.

****We would ask that you return your forms to the parish office by January 30th.**

Having the responses in by **January 30th** will give us time to compile our responses and send them to the Diocese. Our hope, however, is that the responses received will help instruct our parish for years to come. Thank you for participating in the preparation for the Synod on Synodality.