

Synod on Synodality: Summary Statements

Fran Feeny and Jason Santini met a combined 13 groups of over 100 parishioners of all backgrounds and ages. The results of the listening sessions were remarkably similar and presented in bullet form for the three topics discussed. Thanks to all who participated and to Fran and Jason for facilitating this process. The Parish Council has the full results of their work, and it will be available on the parish website. The purpose of these “summary statements” is to make the findings easily applicable to the Parish Pastoral Plan and the findings from the Disciple Maker Index, so we may continue to accompany one another as a parish community. This was a difficult task to summarize. All are encouraged to read the initial findings from the listening sessions.

Topic One: Joys and Concerns about the Church from the People of God

(Joys) OMC is a vibrant, welcoming community of believers on a faith journey with something for everyone to feel at home.

(Concerns) The institutional, hierarchical Church can be viewed as out of touch, cold, rule distancing and not pastorally responsive to the times, women, younger families, our youth in general and those disenfranchised. It seems reluctant to embrace people where (or who) they are preferring they measure up.

Topic Two: Listening Aspect of the Church

(How has the Church encouraged input and received this?) On the parish level, we feel heard. This Synod seems to be the first attempt for the diocese to listen. Now, the diocese needs to act on what they hear. In the past, the Church pretended to listen, the did as it willed.

(How can the Church create greater opportunities for people to be heard?) Let the laity implement the results of the Synod (e.g., parish council). Meanwhile, all parishioners should “live Jesus.” We need an ongoing forum to listen to the laity and receive feedback on steps taken from what the Church (diocese) has heard. *

Topic Three: Accompaniment & Journey

(How can the Church help personal growth in Christ and the Church?) Listen and encourage a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

(What can the Church do to support people on the faith journey?) Support lay involvement and accompany parishioners.

*Can deanery meetings of the various pastors devote a section of its agenda to “what our parishioners are saying” for the deans to take to the priest council meetings? This may help with listening on an ongoing way.

Final Consideration: It seems as though parishioners viewed Church as the diocese or the Church in the United States differentiating it from Parish. This may not have been the intent of those designing the focus questions.