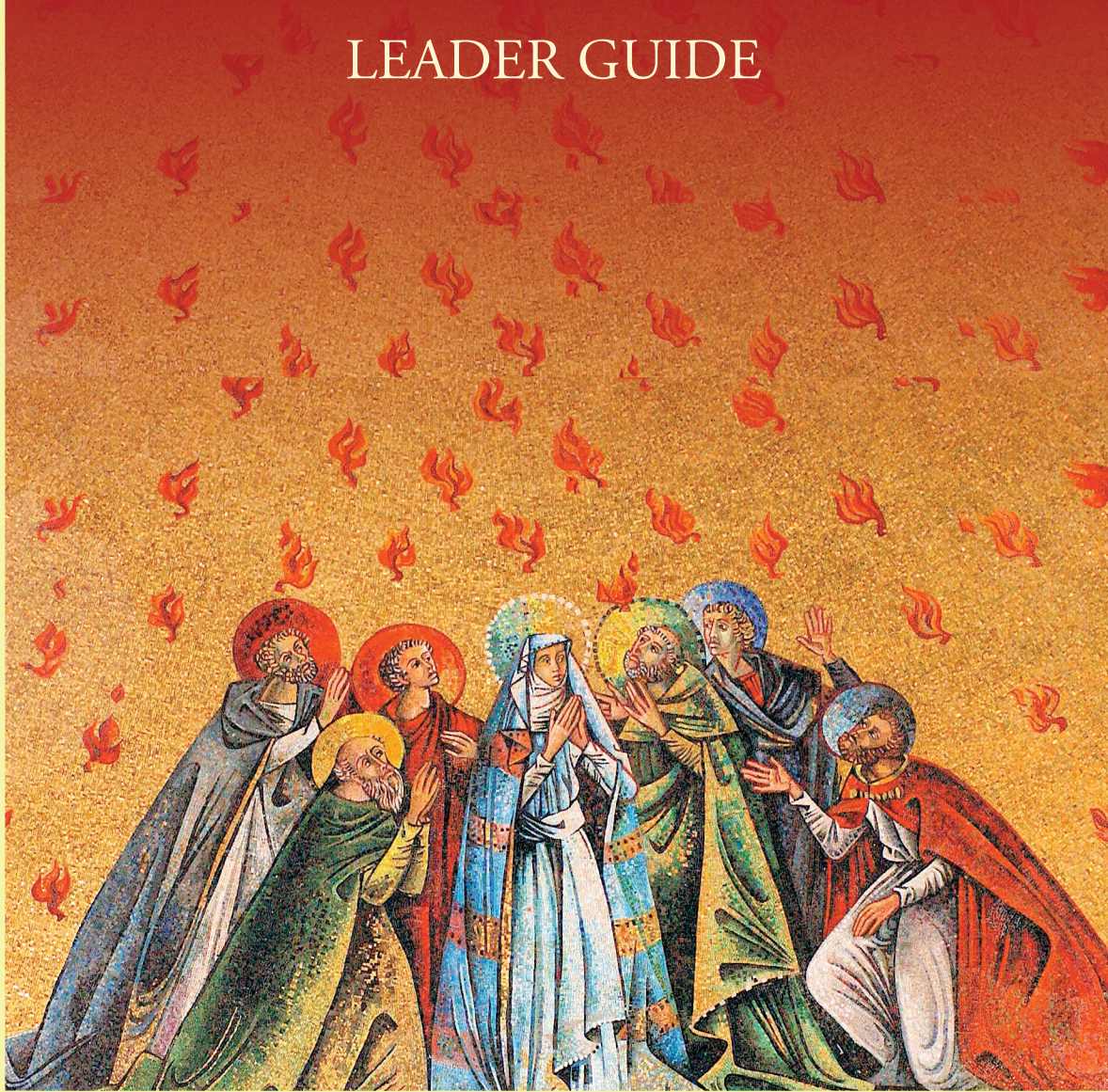




TEACHING AND LISTENING SESSIONS
ARCHDIOCESAN SYNOD

LEADER GUIDE



ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON



ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

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October 26, 2012

Dear Parish Leader,

Thank you for taking the time to review this Leader Guide in anticipation of your upcoming parish listening session in preparation for the Archdiocesan Synod. Cardinal Wuerl writes, "An archdiocesan synod provides an opportunity to look at the life of the local Church, to evaluate five key areas (Worship, Education, Community, Service and Stewardship/Administration) where the ministry of the Church is successful and areas where there may be need for more attention so that we can better prepare ourselves to carry forward the work of the Church into the future."

Parish listening sessions provide the means by which lay faithful from across the archdiocese give input that is essential for the Synod's task of assessing the state of our local Church and planning for the future.

Listening session participants consider how the local Church can "be the best Church we can be" by identifying strengths that can be enhanced together with areas for renewal and development. Within this Leader Guide is information that will help you prepare, announce, and conduct your own parish listening session. At the conclusion of your listening session, the parish will submit a report that reflects the input of the community in the five key areas mentioned above. The Leader Guide also contains a template for this final report along with suggested tools, tips, and resources.

In the fall of 2013, nearly 250 members of the clergy, religious, and laity will gather to consider the reports and make recommendations to the Cardinal that will, upon their acceptance, become "statutes" to be promulgated at the Synod of June 8, 2014. These statutes will then serve as a guide for charting the future direction of the local Church. Please be assured of my prayers for your parish community as you take part in this important and exciting endeavor.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout
Chair of the General Preparatory Commission
Archdiocesan Synod

Preparing for the Archdiocesan Synod Pastoral Guide

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What Is a Synod?

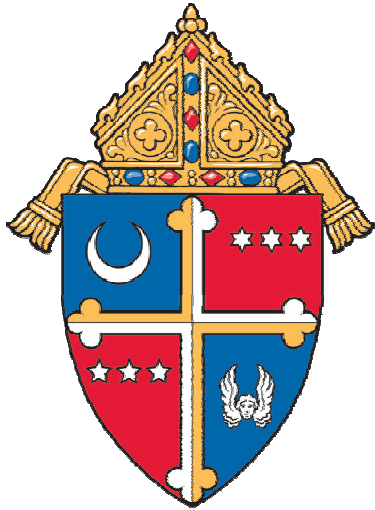
Throughout history, human beings have established *community* ("common unity"), which has always been considered the best way to advance the general welfare or the common good—taking into account both the needs of the individual and those of the community as a whole.

As Catholic Christians, we understand community not only sociologically, but also, and most importantly, theologically. For we believe that the heart of existence and the center of our lives as Catholics, is community: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thus from the beginning of history, community has been the means through which God-Love (who is uniquely "tri-unity" or Trinity) has revealed himself; indeed, the Church herself is founded upon community: "the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone" (Ephesians 2:20).

Catholic Christians together constitute a *community of communities*. Daily, Catholics gather in community to "lift up our hearts" in praise and thanksgiving (in Greek, *eucharistia*) to God and to reaffirm and celebrate our lives together in Christ. Sunday, the "Day of the Lord," is the celebration from which all other prayer flows. However, from time to time, Catholics come together in order to consider whether we are best responding to our vocation to live and give witness to the Gospel. For example, whereas in households, parents and children gather round in "family meetings," so in the Church—local, regional, and universal—bishops, clergy (priests and deacons), and members of the faithful (consecrated religious and laity) convene in **Synods** (from the Greek term, *synodos*, meaning "a meeting" or "an assembly").

Specifically, the **diocesan Synod** "is a group of selected priests and other members of the Christian faithful who offer assistance to the diocesan bishop for the good of the whole diocesan community..." (*Code of Canon Law*, 460). Moreover, "the purpose of the diocesan Synod is to assist the Bishop in the exercise of the office proper to him, namely, that of governing the Christian community" (*Instruction on Diocesan Synods*, 1). In other words, the diocesan Synod is a "consultative" body (*Instruction*, 2) whose purpose is to facilitate the bishop's ministry of "teaching, sanctifying, and governing" that "portion of the people of God ... to be shepherded by him with the cooperation of the presbytery [i.e., the priests]" (*Decree Concerning the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church*, 11).

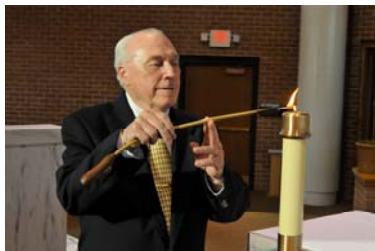
So, then, *why* have a Synod for the Archdiocese of Washington?



In the words of our Archbishop, Donald Cardinal Wuerl, the Archdiocesan Synod is "an opportunity to bring together people who represent this entire Archdiocesan Church" in order to discern if we are being the "very best church" that Christ calls us to be. In the Acts of the Apostles, we learn that "[the first Christians] devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved" (2:42, 47). Given the model set before us by Christ and the apostles, Cardinal Wuerl has convoked a Synod in order to assess "what are we doing, how well are we doing it, and is there anything more we need to do to be everything we should be" in the key elements of the life of the Church: worship, education, community, service, and administration or stewardship.

Why now?

Pope Benedict XVI has named October 11, 2012 (the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council and the 20th Anniversary of the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*) to November 24, 2013 (the Solemnity of Christ the King) the "Year of Faith," as "a summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the one Savior of the world" (*For the Indiction of the Year of Faith*, 6). Moreover, the theme of the General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops that the pope has convoked for October 2012 is "The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith" (*Indiction*, 4). Also, providentially, 2014 marks the 75th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Washington. For these reasons, beginning with Pentecost 2013, having reflected on the key elements of the Church's life (as listed above), representatives from all 140 parishes of the archdiocese will begin to formulate a basic plan of action that will lead the Catholic Church of Washington into the future. Thus we will renew our understanding of who we are in Christ, and recommit ourselves to being the very best Church Christ calls us to be.



What a Listening Session Is and What a Listening Session is *Not*

What It Is

The listening session is the phase in the Synod process in which Catholics of all ages and all levels of participation (or no participation) in the life of the Church are invited to come together to reflect on five key elements of church life: Worship, Education, Community, Administration/Stewardship and Service.

Participants consider how the local church can “Be the best Church we can be” by identifying strengths on which the church can build and areas for renewal and development. An introduction to each of the key elements will help set the parameters for each area under consideration. With this in mind the listening sessions:

- Is a structured conversation toward the goal of identifying proposals for growth and fidelity to the mission of the Church
- Is a collaborative experience of clergy, religious and laity in assessing the vitality of the local church and submitting their input to be considered during the Synod preparatory sessions.
- Is a time for listening and recording peoples’ thoughts and impressions
- Is an opportunity for evangelization
- Is designed to involve the parishioners in a simple and easy to implement format

What It is Not

- Is not a forum for people to question Church teaching. While questioning can be an important part of learning that is not the objective of this process.
- Is not an opportunity for alienated Catholics to get something “off their chest.” Making that opportunity available is important and if you would like information on conducting that type of session please contact Dr. Susan Timoney at 301.853.4558.
- Is not an open-ended town hall meeting – the process will summarize the input of the parish.
- Is not restricted only to active faithful Catholics – parishes are free to invite those who are away from the faith but need to be careful so the process not devolve into a session of grievances.
- Is not the only way to participate in the Synod (an on-line questionnaire is available)
- Is not only directed at only assessing the vitality of the parish. It is also a session to assess the vitality of the larger local church

Planning for the Parish Listening Session Step by Step

I. Choose the Date

- Listening Session will take place between October 2012 and Pentecost 2013 (May 19, 2013).
- Decide if you are able to offer babysitting for families with young children.
- Decide how you will serve the various language groups. Options to include may be bi-lingual sessions, designated sessions for each group or another format that will work for the parish community.

II. Establish a Team

- Identify a small group of volunteers or staff (4-5) who can assist you on the day
- One person to help with promotion of Listening Session
- One person to prepare the room for the day
- One person to serve as time keeper
- If the pastor will not facilitate, one person to serve as facilitator

III. Commit the Listening session to prayer

- Ask the daily Mass group to pray for a fruitful listening session in our parish and across the archdiocese
- Ask your prayer groups and other ministry groups to pray that the Listening sessions bear fruit
- Add intercessions for the Synod (see appendix) to your General Intercession for Sunday Mass
- Invite those who are homebound or shut-in to participate by praying for the Listening session.

IV. Choose a Listening Session Format

Style of Session	Pro's	Con's
Small Groups (Format A)	<p>Participants have more time to discuss one specific element of church life</p> <p>Emphasis is on coming to group consensus on priorities</p> <p>Easiest format for compiling final report</p>	<p>Need one large space and four additional spaces with chairs</p> <p>No time for general (large group) discussion</p> <p>Need to identify five excellent note takers</p>
General Session (Format B)	<p>All participants reflect on all five elements of church life</p> <p>All participants hear all comments</p> <p>Only one large space is required</p>	<p>Must have space large enough to accommodate expected number of people</p> <p>Requires skilled facilitator to keep group on time and topic</p> <p>Must make use of written cards if not everyone has a chance to speak out loud</p>
Listening Session with Video (Format C)	<p>Video introduces each element of church life in engaging manner</p> <p>Good adult learning model</p> <p>Easy for many people to listen rather than read</p>	<p>Need working projection equipment for DVD</p> <p>If using small groups, need five spaces with five DVD players/projection</p>
Five-Week Following Mass Format (Format D)	<p>Sessions are just 45 minutes in length</p> <p>Opportunity to give greater number of people a chance to participate</p> <p>Opportunity to build enthusiasm for sessions over the course of a month</p>	<p>Requires five week commitment by parish</p> <p>Potentially hard to keep participants focused on <i>only</i> one element at a time</p>

V. Host the Listening Session

- See appendix for equipment and materials

VI. Prepare the Listening Session Report

- Return it to the Central Pastoral Administration.

Attention: Mr. William Gorman
General Facilitator for the Archdiocesan Synod
Archdiocese of Washington
P.O. Box 29260
Washington, D.C. 20017

Inviting-Engaging-Encouraging Parishioners

Think about the groups you want to see represented at the Listening Session and who you can ask to be a contact for encouraging participation. Ask that Contact to:

- Personally invite fellow parishioners
- Send invitation via Email (see sample in appendix)
- Make a few phone calls and invite others to call friends
- Post invitations to their Facebook accounts

Thinking About how to include the youth of the parish?

Try

- Invite the Youth Minister or youth ministry representatives to serve on your planning committee and to serve as a note-taker at the listening session.
- Be sure to include the on-line survey link in the bulletin for youth and young adults who can't be present at the Listening Session.
- Directly include and reach out to youth in homilies, announcements, and all materials.
- Stop-by a youth gathering in the week(s) leading up to the listening session and personally invite them to come.
- Ask your youth leaders to show the youth the booklet and engage them in a conversation about the synod and ask them what they want to say at the listening session. Have a delegate make sure those notes are included in the report.
- Invite the adult leaders to bring youth representatives with them to the listening session

Thinking about Engaging Young Adults?

Try:

- Asking one young adult to post a notice on their Facebook page and send a text to fellow young adult parishioners
- Invite the young adults you greet as they are leaving Mass

Thinking About how to Engage People with Special Needs?

Try:

- Making sure the space you are using is handicap accessible.
- Ask some of your friendliest ushers to welcome your Special Needs parishioners and make sure they have what they need.
- Contact the Department of Special Needs Ministry to schedule an interpreter if you will have deaf parishioners participating.
- If you any kind of ministry to people/ families with Special Needs contact their leader to make sure they have postcards and information about the Synod. Drop in on an activity and ask them personally to participate.?
- Send a postcard that notes the on-line survey so that if they can't come to the listening session, they can participate in the on-line survey. There will be audio and visual effects throughout the on-line forum, making it accessible for all.

Don't Forget to Invite:

- Home school families
- Parishioners living in Assisted Living Facilities and homebound—ask for volunteers to pick them up
- Members of the New Movements who may be parishioners
- RCIA participants
- If childcare is made available—reminding families that you will have babysitters
- Men and/or women religious serving in your parish
- Members of your national communities (Spanish, African, etc...)

Encourage Parishioners by

- Inviting parish leaders to make an announcement at announcement time about why they will be participating in the listening session
- Placing invitation postcards in all the pews and pointing them out to parishioners
- Asking parishioners to take two, one to post at home and one to give to a friend
- Posting the time and date of the listening session on your parish calendar, webpage, bulletin
- Sending the attached letter (see appendix) to all ministry leaders and ask them to read it at their next committee meeting
- Asking parish pastoral council members (or other leaders) to invite people and hand-out flyers at the end of Mass
- Sending (if able) a “blast E-mail” to all parish E-mail subscribers
- Personally call 10 key parish leaders to invite them and ask them to help you in inviting others
- Having a friendly competition with the parish closest to you about who has the larger listening session—make a fun bet with your fellow pastor—loser will deliver doughnuts for Sunday coffee!
- Having a modest door prize (reserved parking space at Mass for winner) and every participant gets a chance on the door prize

Parish Listening Session Report

The Parish Listening Session Report is the fruit of the combined work of all those who participated in your listening sessions. The parish will use the report to summarize their thoughts and reflections on how the local Church can “be the best Church we can be.”

The report template is included in the Appendix. You will notice that the template provides space for you to answer three basic questions about each of the core areas (Worship, Education, Community, Service and Administration / Stewardship):

1. What examples did people share where the Church’s efforts are bearing fruit?
2. What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?
3. What practical suggestions did people share?
4. What were the top four elements that were identified as priorities?

Lastly, the report encourages the listing of the top four “priorities” in each of the areas reflected upon.

It is important to follow the Parish Listening Session template structure since these reports are being collected from all parishes and, as you can imagine, need to be sorted in an orderly way for the members of the Synod Preparatory Sub-Committees who will be reflecting upon them.

Within the Appendix, behind the report template, are additional forms to help you capture the notes if you conduct small-group sessions or an open larger session. These forms are optional and are simply provided to aid you.

The final report should be submitted to:

William Gorman
General Facilitator, Archdiocesan Synod
Archdiocese of Washington
Post Office Box 29260
Washington, DC 20017

Appendix

Preparing for the Listening Session

Equipment and Materials for Listening Session

Space

- A room with enough tables and chairs for all participants
- One microphone for the Pastor
- One microphone somewhere else in the room for participant comments
- Hospitality table with drinks and snack

On each table place:

- Participant booklets for the number of chairs at the table
- Pens and/or pencils
- Note cards or paper on which people can record comments
- Large Flip-charts or Post-It note pads for recording comments

If Using the Synod Catechetical Video

5 Laptops/Speakers for individual break-out groups

1 TV or Projector with DVD capability

**Hosting a Synod Listening Session in the Parish
Format A: Small Groups**

Time Frame: 2 hours:

Format: Small Group Discussion and large-group reporting

10:00-10:15: Hospitality

10:15-10:30 Welcome

A) Hello, I am Fr. _____, Pastor of _____. I am so happy to see all of you here today to participate in the archdiocesan listening sessions. Our purpose today is to join with Catholics all over the archdiocese in reflecting on how to be “The best church we can be.”

B) We want to begin by asking God’s blessing on our meeting today.
(See appendix for prayer services)

Logistics

C) Please welcome _____ who will serve as our facilitator and mc for the day (if the facilitator is different than the pastor).

D) We have planned a two-hour session. Please turn to page ## in your participant booklet. We will have five groups and you are invited to choose your area of interest. You will first meet with that group and review and discuss this area of life in our church.

A note taker/reporter has been chosen and will record all participants input. Then we will have a period in which we will hear from each group. Following that period will have a short-period in which people will be invited to add comments with no comment being longer than two minutes in length.

10:30 Small Group

Facilitator: Direct people to tables by “Key elements”: Administration/Stewardship, Community, Service, Education, Worship (have tables designed with signs that name these five indicators)

(Ask the note taker to identify himself/herself to the group)

10:55: Small Group Wrap-up

Facilitator gives a “five-minute warning” for groups to identify their top five comments and conclude their discussion.

- 11:00: General Reporting: One person from each committee shares their top five comments:
- 11:00-11:05: Worship Report
- 11:06-11:11: Community Report
- 11:12-11:17: Education Report
- 11:18-11:23: Service Report
- 11:24-11:31: Administration/Service Report
- 11:35-11:50: General Comments

Facilitator: At this time we invite a person to stand who want to say something that has not been said. Each person will have 2 minutes (point to person who is keeping time). At 1 minute 30, ***** will raise his/her had not let you know that your time is almost up.

We have also placed at the tables (paper or note cards) in which you can write your comment and it will be added to the official notes from our session. They are the (name color of paper/card) that you see on the tables

- 11:50: Concluding Remarks

Pastor: Thank you for this very fruitful morning of reflection. You may be wondering what happens next. Listening sessions are taking place all over the archdiocese from October through Pentecost (May 19). Over the summer, all of the notes and priorities from all of the listening sessions will be collected and collated. Next fall the Synod delegates will gather to review the feedback in each key element. They will propose recommendations to the Synod Committee who will present them to the Cardinal. On Pentecost of 2014 the Synod report and policies will be promulgated by the Cardinal at a special Mass and celebration. If you want to follow the progress of the work you can do that by visiting the archdiocesan website at adw.org

Please join me know in prayer:

Bless the group and send them forth!

**Hosting a Synod Listening Session in the Parish
Format B: General Session**

Time Frame: 2 hours:

Format: Large Group Discussion on Five Key elements

10:00-10:15: Hospitality

10:15-10:30 Welcome

A) Hello, I am Fr. _____, Pastor of _____. I am so happy to see all of you here today to participate in the archdiocesan listening sessions. Our purpose today is to join with Catholics all over the archdiocese in reflecting on how to be “The best church we can be.”

B) We want to begin by asking God’s blessing on our meeting today.
(See appendix for prayer services)

Logistics

C) Please welcome _____ who will serve as our facilitator and MC for the day (if the facilitator is different than the pastor).

D) We are going to reflect on five key elements of the life of our church. We will take a few minutes to read about each element and look at some statements that will help us consider this area of church life. We will then ask those who would like to comment on this area to stand. Each person will have two minutes to share a comment related to the element under discussion.

(Point out the official time-keeper. Explain that at 1 minute30, the time keeper will raise his/her hand to signal time is almost complete)

D) All of the comments are being recorded by _____. Point out recorder. In addition you will see note cards (or paper) at your place. If you prefer to write your comment, please do so and it will be added to the official notes from our meeting.

10:45-10:50: Please open your booklet to page# and look at the element of
Worship.

(Give people five minutes for reading and reflection)

10:50-11:00: Facilitator invites those who want to comment to stand. Each
person has two minutes to speak.

11:00-11:05: Please open your booklet and read Community

11:05-11:15 Discussion of Community

(Facilitator invites those who want to comment on Community to stand. Each person has two minutes to speak. Speaker should gently remind people not stand to comment on every section but give everyone a chance to speak and everyone can take advantage of the note cards.)

11:15-11:20: Read and Reflect on Service

11:20-11:30 Discussion of Service

Facilitator invites those who want to comment to stand. Each person has two minutes to speak

11:30-11:35 Read and Reflect on Administration/Stewardship

11:35-11:45 Discussion on Administration/Stewardship

Facilitator invites those who want to comment to stand. Each person has two minutes to speak.

Notes from Each Session recorded on Large Paper (Flip-charts) are taped to the wall

11:45-11:55: Identifying Priorities

Participants are given two-colored-dot sticker and asked to place it on the two comments they think are the top two priorities.

11:55: Concluding Comments and Remarks

Pastor: Thank you for this very fruitful morning of reflection. You may be wondering what happens next. Listening sessions are taking place all over the archdiocese from October through Pentecost (May 19). Over the summer, all of the notes and priorities from all of the listening sessions will be collected and collated. Next fall the Synod delegates will gather to review the feedback in each key element. They will propose recommendations to the Synod Committee who will present them to the Cardinal. On Pentecost of 2014 the Synod report and policies will be promulgated by the Cardinal at a special Mass and celebration. If you want to follow the progress of the work you can do that by visiting the archdiocesan website at adw.org

Bless the group and send them forth!

Hosting a Synod Listening Session in the Parish
Format C: Listening Session with video presentation

This listening session makes use of a series of short (3 minute) on each of the key elements. If choosing to show the videos, please plan for a 2 ½ hour time frame.

The videos can be used in both Format A and Format B.

Video Format A:

For each small group there will need to be a laptop with a DVD and Speaker or a TV with DVD function at each working group area. Rather than reading the written reflection in the Participant Guide books, groups would watch the video.

For Example:

10:30 Small Group

Facilitator: Direct people to tables by “Key elements”: Administration/Stewardship, Community, Service, Education, Worship (have tables designed with signs that name these five indicators)

(Ask the note taker to identify himself/herself to the group)

Facilitator invites the groups to begin watching the video. At the conclusion of the video the Facilitator invites the group to begin discussing the key elements that can be found in the participant handbook.

10:55: Facilitator gives a “five-minute warning” for groups to identify top five comments and conclude their discussion

**Hosting a Synod Listening Session in the Parish
Format D: Five Week Following Mass Format**

Time Frame: 45 minutes

Format: Video with Large Group Discussion on Five Key elements

10:00-10:10: Hospitality

10:10--10:15 Welcome

A) Hello, I am Fr. _____, Pastor of _____. I am so happy to see all of you here today to participate in the archdiocesan listening sessions. Our purpose today is to join with Catholics all over the archdiocese in reflecting on how to be “The best church we can be.”

A) We want to begin by asking God’s blessing on our meeting today.
(See appendix for prayer services)

Logistics

C) Please welcome _____ who will serve as our facilitator and MC for the meeting (if the facilitator is different than the pastor).

D) Over the next five weeks, we will take time after Mass to reflect on a key element of the life of our church. Each of the next five weeks we will view a short-three minute video on each element and take a few minutes to look at some statements that will help us consider this area of church life. We will then ask those who would like to comment on this area to stand. Each person will have two minutes to share a comment related to the element under discussion.

(Point out the official time-keeper. Explain that at 1 minute30, the time keeper will raise his/her hand to signal time is almost complete)

E) All of the comments are being recorded by _____. Point out the recorder. In addition you will see note cards (or paper) at your place. If you prefer to write your comment, please do so and it will be added to the official notes from our meeting.

10:15-10:20 Listen and Reflect on Worship

Please open your booklet to page#. Show video segment: Worship.
(Give people three minutes for reflection on elements)

10:20-10:35: Facilitator invites those who want to comment to stand. Each person has two minutes to speak.

10:35-10:40: Identifying Priorities

(The Poster board is taped to the walls and small colored-dot stickers are distributed to participants. Participants are asked to place it on the two comments they think are the top two priorities.

10:40-10:45 Concluding Comments and Remarks

Pastor: Thank you for this very fruitful morning of reflection. You may be wondering what happens next. Listening sessions are taking place all over the archdiocese from October through Pentecost (May 19). Over the summer, all of the notes and priorities from all of the listening sessions will be collected and collated. Next fall the Synod delegates will gather to review the feedback in each key element. They will propose recommendations to the Synod Committee who will present them to the Cardinal. On Pentecost of 2014 the Synod report and policies will be promulgated by the Cardinal at a special Mass and celebration. If you want to follow the progress of the work you can do that by visiting the archdiocesan website at adw.org

Please join me in prayer:

Bless the group and send them forth!

Repeat this Same Format for Each Week

Week One: Worship
Week Two: Community
Week Three: Education
Week Four: Service
Week Five: Administration/Stewardship

Sample Opening Prayer – Option A

L: Come, Holy Spirit

R: Fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love.

L: Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

R: and you shall renew the face of the earth

L: O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit instructed the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Spirit we may know what is right and always rejoice in his consolation, through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen

Scripture: Acts 2:41-42, 44, 47

R/ Serve the Lord with Gladness

L/ Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth.

Serve the Lord with gladness

Come before him, singing for joy.

R/ Serve the Lord with Gladness

Know that he, the Lord, is God.

He made us, we belong to him,

We are his people, the sheep of his flock.

R/ Serve the Lord with Gladness

Go within his gates, giving thanks.

Enter his courts with songs of praise.

Give thanks to him and bless his name.

R/ Serve the Lord with Gladness

Closing Prayer: We make our prayer complete and perfect by praying together
Our Father...

Sample Opening Prayer – Option B

L: Come, Holy Spirit

R: Fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love.

L: Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

R: and you shall renew the face of the earth

L: O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit instructed the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Spirit we may know what is right and always rejoice in his consolation, through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen

Scripture: Acts 2:41-42, 44, 47

Closing Prayer: Join me in praying the prayer of the archdiocese

Gracious and loving God,
In this Church of Washington
Together with all the People of God,
You show forth the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

Through the Gospel and the Eucharist,
bring your people together
In the Holy Spirit
And guide us with your grace.

Make us a sign of your love for all people
and help us to manifest the living presence
of Christ in the world,
who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Sample Opening Prayer – Option C

L: Come, Holy Spirit

R: Fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love.

L: Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

R: and you shall renew the face of the earth

L: O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit instructed the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Spirit we may know what is right and always rejoice in his consolation, through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen

Scripture: Acts 2:41-42, 44, 47

Closing Prayer:

Oh, Holy Spirit, our defender and guide, help us to rediscover your saving power, for which we thirst, and renew the face of the earth.

Lord Jesus, fill us with your grace so that we can hear your voice and help us discern with honesty and humility how you are calling us to rededicate ourselves to your service and to the proclamation of your love and promises, so that our parish and homes can participate fully in the mission that you have entrusted to us.

Father, let our love and commitment to you make me your love visible to those who have left and are far from your church. Let our love overflow to the masses, so together we are able to build a civilization based on your love which brings the fulfillment of your promises to each person, home, and to the entire world. Amen.

Parish Synod Listening Session Report

Name of Parish: _____
Date of Listening Session: _____
Contact Person for Follow-up (if necessary): _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

* *Please include a copy of all notes that were recorded at the session*

Notes on Worship
(Use additional pages if necessary)

1. What examples did people share of where the Church’s efforts are bearing fruit?

2. What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

3. List the top four elements that were identified as “priorities”

Notes on Education
(Use additional pages if necessary)

1. What examples did people share of where the Church’s efforts are bearing fruit?

2. What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

3. List the top four elements that were identified as “priorities”

Notes on Community
(Use additional pages if necessary)

1. What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

2. What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

3. List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes on Service
(Use additional pages if necessary)

1. What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

2. What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

3. List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes on Administration/Stewardship
(Use additional pages if necessary)

1. What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

2. What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

3. List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Worksheet

Notes from General Session (two-minute comments) on Worship

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes from General Session (two-minute comments) on Education

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes from General Session (two-minute comments) Community

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes from General Session (two-minute comments) Service

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes from General Session (two-minute comments) Administration/Stewardship

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Worksheet
Notes from Participant Note cards on Worship

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes from Participant Note Cards on Education

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes from Participant Note Cards on Community

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes from Participant Note Cards on Service

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

Notes from Participant Note Cards on Administration/Stewardship

What examples did people share of where the Church's efforts are bearing fruit?

What were the areas where more might be done to strengthen the work of the Church?

List the top four elements that were identified as "priorities"

SAMPLE LETTER

Dear Parishioner,

Do you know that the Archdiocese of Washington is preparing for a Synod in 2014 and as part of that our parish will have an opportunity to participate? What is a synod? Cardinal Wuerl writes "An archdiocesan synod provides an opportunity to look at the life of the local Church, to evaluate five key areas (worship, education, community, service and stewardship/administration) where the ministry of the Church is successful and areas where there may be need for more attention so that we can better prepare ourselves to carry forward the work of the Church into the future.

I've planned an opportunity for you to participate in this process whereby we review our mission of manifesting the kingdom of God in our community. It is also my hope that you will think about whom among your friends and family want to learn more about the church or would like to join the conversation to come and join us. Indeed, given the historic nature of this project (the synod will be a first for our archdiocese!), it is very important to me that you make plans to join fellow parishioners on _____ "to reflect on how the Archdiocese of Washington can be the best it can be.

Parishes across the Archdiocese are holding listening sessions and the comments shared and priorities identified will be sent in a report to the Synod committee. The synod committee will review the reports from every parish and make recommendations Cardinal Wuerl to consider. On Pentecost of 2014, Cardinal Wuerl will announce all of recommendations that have been accepted and will be instituted across the archdiocese.

If you are not able to attend our parish listening session, you can participate in the process virtually. To learn more about the synod, follow its progress, or launch the online forum visit www.adw.org.

In the meantime, please commit to praying for the success of the listening sessions happening around the archdiocese and that the work of the synod will bear much fruit in the years to come.

Most sincerely in Christ,

SAMPLE EMAILS

To: Email Letter for Families
Subject: A Parish Listening Session
Content:

Do you know that the Archdiocese of Washington is preparing for a Synod in 2014 and as part of that our parish will have an opportunity to participate? What is a synod? Cardinal Wuerl writes "An archdiocesan synod provides an opportunity to look at the life of the local Church, to evaluate areas where the ministry of the Church is successful and areas where there may be need for more attention so that we can better prepare ourselves to carry forward the work of the Church into the future.

It is also an opportunity to think about whom among our friends and family want to learn more about the church or would like to join the conversation to come and join us. Our listening session is going to be *****.

Join me in praying for the success of this process and for our local church that we can all that the Church calls us to be!

To: Email Letter for Families
Subject: Our and our Children's Church
Content:

Do you know that the Archdiocese of Washington is preparing for a Synod in 2014 and as part of that our parish will have an opportunity to participate? What is a synod? Cardinal Wuerl writes "An archdiocesan synod provides an opportunity to look at the life of the local Church, to evaluate areas where the ministry of the Church is successful and areas where there may be need for more attention so that we can better prepare ourselves to carry forward the work of the Church into the future.

This is a great opportunity to think about what we would like to see in place so our children will grow-up knowing that the church is their spiritual home. Come join the conversation! Our listening session is going to be *****. Babysitting will be provided.

Join me in praying for the success of this process and for our local church that we can all that the Church calls us to be!

Muestra de Carta por el Parroco a sus Feligreses hablando del Sinodo del arquidiócesis de Washington.

Querido Feligreses Parroquianos:

¿Sabia Usted que la Arquidiócesis de Washington se esta preparando un sínodo arquidiosesano en 2014 y que como miembro de su parroquia Usted puede participar?

¿Que es un sínodo? El Cardenal Wuerl escribe: “El sínodo arquidiocesano es una oportunidad de mirar y estudiar la vida de la iglesia local y evaluar las cinco áreas esenciales de la vida de la Iglesia (culto, educación, comunidad, servicio y administración/dirección) mirando las cosas que la Iglesia hace bien mientras estudiando las áreas que necesitan mas atención para poder prepararnos a llevar adelante el trabajo de la Iglesia en el futuro.

Yo he planeado una oportunidad para que Usted pueda participar en este proceso donde repasaremos nuestra misión de manifestar el Reino de Dios en nuestra comunidad. También es mi esperanza que Usted piense entres sus amigos y familiares quien pudiera querer aprender mas sobre la Iglesia o quien quisiera tomar parte en esta conversación con nosotros. Es más, mirando la importancia histórica de este proyecto (¡es la primera vez que se hace un sínodo en esta arquidiócesis!), es muy importante que Usted venga a esta reunión con los feligreses de su parroquia tomando lugar el: _____
“para reflexionar como la Arquidiócesis de Washington puede ser lo mejor posible.”

Muchas parroquias en la Arquidiócesis están teniendo estas reuniones con los feligreses y los comentarios y prioridades identificados serán presentados en un reporte al comité del sínodo. El comité del sínodo repasara todos los reportes recibidos de las parroquias y mandara sus propias recomendaciones al Cardenal Wuerl para su consideración. En Pentecostés 2014, el Cardenal Wuerl anunciara todas las recomendaciones que han sido aceptadas y que serán instituidas en toda la arquidiócesis.

Si Usted no puede atender la reunión con los feligreses en su parroquia, Usted puede participar en el proceso por medio del Internet. Para aprender más sobre el sínodo, seguir su progreso, o entrar en la discusión por medio de Internet, visita al: www.adw.org.

Mientras tanto, le pedimos que por favor se comprometa a rezar para el éxito de las reuniones con los feligreses en las parroquias y que el trabajo del sínodo de mucha fruta para el futuro de nuestra Iglesia.

Fielmente en Cristo,

We want to hear from you!

Help us prepare for the archdiocesan synod by sharing your feedback on five key areas of the life of the Church: worship, education, community, service and administration/stewardship. We invite you to share your feedback at our upcoming parish listening session. Your participation will better prepare us to carry forward the work of the Church into the future. If you cannot attend our parish listening session, join us virtually! To learn more about the synod, follow its progress, or launch the online forum visit, www.adw.org.

Date:

Questions? Contact us!

Time:

Phone:

Location:

E-mail:

ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

FROM

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

TO

Bulletin Notes

Mark your calendar and invite a fellow Catholic to participate in our Archdiocesan Synod listening session on _____ from (name time). At this session we will reflect on sources of strength and opportunities for growth in five areas of church life; worship, education, community, administration/stewardship and service. If you can't join us on this date, you can participate in an on-line forum which can be found at www.adw.org.

Do you want to help make our Church "be the best Church we can be"? Join us for the Archdiocesan Synod listening session on _____. Participants will reflect on five areas of Church life and have the opportunity to suggest ways the church can more effectively carry out its mission in the parish and in the world. For more information, see www.adw.org.

Announcements

Next week our parish will be hosting an Archdiocesan Synod listening session. We invite you to come and help us consider five areas of church life and make suggestions for becoming "the best church we can be." The session will begin at (name time). The results of the listening session will be added to results from parishes all over the archdiocese and considered for action by the synod committee made up of the clergy, religious and laity.. For more information, see the flyer in the bulletin.

Have you heard about the Archdiocese of Washington Synod Listening Sessions? We invite you to come and help us consider five areas of church life and make suggestions for becoming "the best church we can be." Our parish listening session is _____. We invite you to come and to bring a friend, perhaps someone who has been away from the church to join this very important conversation. For more details and to learn how you can participate on-line, please take home a copy of our bulletin (or see our parish website).

Today is our parish Archdiocesan Synod listening session. We will gather at (time) in (place) for this very important reflection and discussion. Everyone is welcomed to attend and (childcare will be provided). If you are unable to join us today, please consider completing an on-line survey at www.adw.org

..

General Intercessions

We pray for our archdiocesan synod, that Catholics will respond fully and actively to the invitation to reflect how we can be the “best Church we can be.”

We pray for our parish’s synod listening session on _____ that with the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will build on our strengths to more effectively carry out the mission of our church.

For our parish Synod listening session we pray for wise and careful consideration of the needs of our church and community will bear abundant fruit in the years to come.



“Our archdiocesan synod will provide us an opportunity to look at the life of the local Church, to evaluate where the ministry of the Church is successful and the areas where there may be need for more attention so that we can better prepare ourselves to carry forward the work of the Church into the future. The pastoral priorities of our local Church will be examined, particularly within the context of the New Evangelization and in the spirit of the Year of Faith”

– Donald Cardinal Wuerl

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Archdiocese of Washington

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