



Synod on Synodality Listening Session – Convener Feedback to Archdiocese

Date of Session 3/20/22

Location of Session St Frances of Rome

Estimated No. of Attendees 75

Person Completing Form Steve King

#1

Describe the listening session experience (attendees’ attentiveness, engagement, openness, etc.).

Attendees were very vocal and engaged. We had parishioners from St Frances of Rome as well as from other parishes that are not holding listening sessions. They saw the advertisement on the Archdiocese website and came to share. They had a strong desire to share their thoughts about the Church. Who it was, where the Church is really struggling, and what they thought the Church should be to others. The people who attended did so with a lot on their minds to share, and with a lot of trust placed in the governing body of the Church, which tells us this process has a lot of potential IF it’s followed through on. For St Frances of Rome, this was a good start, but not a place we can stop at. We need to find ways to search for feedback beyond those who showed up. While we are very grateful for the voices and the feedback, it was very obvious that we drew largely from the pews, and those who attended skewed very much towards our Senior population. We did not attract many of the youth, young adults, or middles(30-60s). Nor did we attract those who had left the Church. Without those voices, this listening session, while very successful in its own right, cannot be considered complete. Many attendees were hopeful and happy to share. Some were very frustrated at what they feel are the failings of the Church establishment. All were open to the possibilities this process presents though.

#2

Highlight frequently cited points that generated energy or struck a -particular chord with attendees.

There were 4 main buckets that the feedback shared fell into.

- Trust -a lack of trust in the current establishment brought about by what is perceived as an unwillingness to listen to the people, as well as remaining pain from past coverups like the abuse of children. There is concern that the feedback given will go nowhere, and there is not a clear and easy way for people to see the progress of this process as it’s implemented. There is also not a clear path for parish conflict to be communicated to the Archdiocese and responded to efficiently.
- Social Justice -a yearning for the Church to put the lessons and teachings of Christ into better practice. To really reach out and service those who are hurting and in need, and to focus more on the beatitudes in Luke’s Gospel than on rules and regulations of Doctrine.
- Acceptance -Welcome ALL into the church, and into God’s gift of the Eucharist. Do not exclude those groups who have been shunned or marginalized. Jesus loved and accepted all who searched him out with a yearning in their hearts for God’s Grace. The Church often judges and excludes those

it feels don't meet the standard. This feeling is especially strong among our LGBTQ+ community. It is also strongly felt that the time for women's roles in the Church be expanded, and that women be accepted as deacons and priests.

- Communication -the last few years have stripped away a lot of the favored ways of communication. While we have invested in and significantly improved digital communication, there are a significant number of parishioners who crave and need the intimacy of face-to-face interaction to learn what's happening in their communities. Additionally, there is a feeling that issues within the Church are not listened to or acted upon. There is no clear path to take up issues with the Church beyond the parish level.

#3

Describe less-frequently cited points that attendees found inspiring or that introduced new perspectives.

- Having an open mind and heart to God and to His flock will facilitate better listening and solutions.
- We need to reach out to others in our communities that are different from us, and this includes those of other faiths in order to learn from each other and work together towards a better future.

#4

Provide examples of diversity of views and opinions that were shared by attendees.

- There was a lot of diversity in the type of communication people preferred to engage in. Though we are in a very modern, rapidly changing way of life, there are a lot of people who still want the old ways of sharing. Face to Face. There are also a lot of people embracing new technology. There is not just one answer to how we share and communicate with each other, and we need to keep our audience in mind when we communicate.

#5

Highlight any pertinent, unique feedback that was shared by attendees.

- What are we doing to encourage and welcome those with disabilities to participate in the Mass?
- There is a significant shortage of priests in the Church. Why leave out 50% of our people, women, and deny them the opportunity to serve as a priest?
- Stop judging who is worthy, and start focusing more on the two most important commandments. Truly be an example of this to our people. Don't use the gift of the Eucharist to punish those you don't agree with their lifestyle. LGBTQ+, divorced, or anyone determined to be "living in sin".

#6

Share additional observations, comments, or input that you feel could add to our learnings in this Synod listening phase.

- The Church needs to do something with this feedback. They need to follow up and even if the answer is no to some of it, there needs to be explanations, and the people need to know that you HEAR them. If this is swept away and just placed in a file somewhere with no resolution, you won't get people to share their voice in the future. There must be action to go with the feedback.