

SYNOD 2014

ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

A newsletter devoted to the preparations of the 2014 Synod

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The Future of the Archdiocese: Affirming and Inviting

Throughout October and November, parishes all over southeastern Wisconsin met in school basements, conference rooms and churches to discuss the future of our Church. Participants prayed and discerned about the fruitful ministries in their parishes and in the archdiocese. They also discussed ways to deepen the faith of those who are actively involved and ways to reach out to those who may be inactive.

As part of the preparatory efforts for the June 2014 Synod, these sessions offered the faithful an opportunity to voice their concerns and ideas for what will make the Archdiocese of Milwaukee prosper in the future.

So, what did we learn from the parish sessions? According to Randy Nohl, chairperson, Synod Preparatory Commission, “On the one hand, the sessions were affirming – in the sense that participants underscored the true beauty of the Catholic Church; on the other hand,

these sessions also offered great insight on what will help to grow our Church. I believe it’s an invitation for all of us to respond to the call of our mission – to bring the Good News to more people – in a more intentional way.”

Nohl outlined three key areas that were highlighted in all parish discussions:

- **Word:** In general terms, the Word refers to how the Gospel is taught and shared through formal catechesis, Bible studies, and faith sharing sessions.

- **Worship:** The experience of worship refers to the sacramental and devotional life – Mass, homilies, the power of the sacraments and devotions such as the rosary.

- **Service:** The concept of service is how the Church reaches out to those in need – whether it’s the poor, imprisoned or hurt – through charitable service.

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District Sessions What can we expect?

As part of the Synod preparatory efforts, all districts will be meeting in February and March to pray and discern the top priorities to be considered for our Archdiocese.

Each parish will send approximately 10 representatives to its respective district gathering. Those

individuals will comprise both staff and volunteer leaders and ministers, which will represent key mission areas of the Church: Catholic Social Teaching, Cultural Diversity, Evangelization, Formation, Leadership, Liturgy, Marriage and Family, and Stewardship. District gatherings will have two objectives:

- To affirm and celebrate those areas of the Church that are fruitful and thriving.

- To identify and prioritize those areas of mission that we are called to strengthen. “Feedback from the parish sessions has been instrumental in shaping the district gatherings,” commented Rich Harter, director, Evangelization for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

“The process of gaining feedback from the faithful will help ignite our mission both at the local parish level and at the archdiocese level.”

Intentional Discipleship: Will You Answer the Call?

By Auxiliary Bishop Donald J. Hying



What do intentional Catholic disciples look like? How do they act? What is qualitatively different about their lives and personalities? The answer is clear yet

challenging.

Disciples are ordinary people who have experienced the love, forgiveness, presence, consolation

and challenge of God poured out through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. They have fallen in love with

the Lord and find their deepest identity in their relationship with him. They find God and the mission of his Kingdom to be the fundamental purpose of their lives and, having a strong **Catholic identity**, find the whole Catholic experience of the Scriptures, sacraments, moral life and prayer to be the transformative means of their ongoing conversion.

Disciples instinctively **evangelize**, that is they naturally share their experience of God and their faith in him with others. The power of moral example itself evangelizes, as others intuitively sense that such a person lives from a very different center of meaning and purpose than secular society. In addition to witnessing by example, disciples are both courageous and articulate in their proclamation of Jesus and the difference he has made in their lives.

An intentional disciple is a good **steward**, knowing that everything in life is a superabundant gift freely bestowed upon us by the Lord, both to enrich us but also to bless and benefit others. This deep

conviction of existence as a gift leads to a profound gratitude that pours itself out in deeds of mercy, love and healing.

An intentional disciple is a Catholic maximalist, not asking what the minimum is that **must** be done in order to be saved, but rather asking what **can** be done for the sake of the Kingdom of God? Like St. Paul, a disciple has moved from the obligation of the law into the astonishing freedom of Christ, who liberates us to do every good work. In this context, the

Blessed Virgin Mary is clearly the first and premier disciple who responds in total faith to the seemingly impossible proposal of the angel, places her entire being at

the service of God and gives flesh to the Incarnate Word.

For us as Catholics, in this critical moment in history, we cannot afford to proceed with business as usual. All over the world, millions of Catholics are asking the same questions: how can I have a deeper and more authentic relationship with Jesus Christ? How can I more effectively live out my faith in such a way that it actually makes a difference in the lives of others, especially my family and friends? How can we continue to insert Gospel values into the public square of politics, economy, health care and education?

In millions of different ways, intentional disciples are living out the exciting answers to these important questions. If the Gospel is the script of our lives, the new evangelization is the urgent challenge to act out with fresh enthusiasm and generosity the great drama of Christ's salvation.

Synod 2014 invites us to consider anew how to be intentional disciples. Will you answer the call?

Prayer in Preparation for the Synod

O Lord, we accept your invitation to enter into the great mystery of your love and presence within your Church.

Through word and sacrament, you lead us into communion with you.

Relying on this spiritual intimacy, help open our hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit as we fashion our response to the cries of the poor who struggle to know Jesus.

(Pause and silently mention your personal intentions)

We give you thanks O Lord, for the men and women who have offered their lives as gifts to build His Church.

Renew within us the "fire" that burns with the love of the Lord for our brothers and sisters.

As we seek to fulfill our responsibilities through the Archdiocesan Synod, we stand with St. John the Evangelist, patron of the archdiocese, who was charged to care for Mary, Mother of the Church. Asking their intercession, we offer this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen.





FUTURE, from Page 3

Below is a sampling of some of the topics discussed, affirmations shared and ideas expressed. This list is not all-inclusive; rather, it

simply gives a pulse of the sessions. Information from the parish sessions is being comprehensively summarized and will inform the

upcoming district gatherings taking place in February and March.

Parish Sessions at a Glance...

Area	Sampling of Topics Discussed	Affirmations of the Church	Call to Mission
Word	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult formation, Bible studies, faith sharing groups • Evangelization • Catholics Schools • Youth Ministry 	<p>Bible studies and faith sharing groups are authentic ways people encounter Christ.</p> <p>Our efforts geared toward young people are fruitful and have tremendous impact on creating our future leaders.</p>	<p>Participants expressed a need to expand adult formation and Bible studies – so that others can encounter the same joy through these programs.</p>
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacraments • Liturgical ministries • Prayers and devotions • Parents/grandparents as role models • Communion to homebound • Homilies 	<p>Participants overwhelmingly captured the beauty of the sacraments – and commented on how the Eucharist and our emphasis on sacramental life truly differentiate our faith from others.</p> <p>Some participants commented on the thoughtful approach to liturgical ministry and its positive impact on Mass-goers.</p> <p>Homilies of depth can challenge and move parishioners to a closer walk with Christ.</p>	<p>Participants expressed a need to teach or reteach the beauty of our sacraments. There’s a sense that many who left don’t realize what they’re missing in the sacramental life.</p> <p>Participants expressed a need to expand the creative movement of worship styles such as adoration/music events.</p> <p>Comments revealed preaching should teach, challenge and move parishioners to action.</p>
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food pantries, jail ministries, communion to sick • Respect life efforts • Witnessing at work, neighborhoods and parish • Lay ministers • Witness of religious 	<p>Participants overwhelmingly commented on the generosity of the Church through abundance of service initiatives.</p>	<p>Participants commented on the need to prioritize and collaborate across parishes, districts and the archdiocese.</p>

El Discipulado Intencional; ¿Responderá usted al llamado?

por el Obispo Hying



¿Cómo se conocen los discípulos católicos intencionales? ¿Cómo se comportan? ¿Qué es esencialmente diferente en

sus vidas y sus personalidades? La respuesta es clara pero aun desafiante.

Los discípulos son personas comunes y corrientes que han experimentado el amor, el perdón, la presencia, el consuelo y el desafío de Dios derramados a través de Jesucristo en el Espíritu Santo. Se han enamorado con el Señor y encuentran su identidad más profunda en relación con Él. Ellos se dan cuenta que Dios y la misión de Su Reino son el propósito fundamental de sus vidas y con una fuerte identidad católica, aceptan toda la experiencia católica de las Escrituras, los sacramentos, la vida moral y la oración como el medio de su transformación continua.

Los discípulos instintivamente evangelizan, es decir que, comparten naturalmente su experiencia de Dios y su fe en Él con los demás. El poder de la conducta moral evangeliza por si mismo, como otros intuitivamente perciben que esa persona vive un enfoque y un propósito significativamente distintos a la sociedad seglar. Además de dar testimonio, los discípulos son a la vez valientes y expresan con facilidad su proclamación de Jesús y la influencia que Él ha tenido en sus vidas.



Oración en preparación al sínodo

Oh Señor, aceptamos tu invitación para unirnos al gran misterio de tu amor y presencia dentro de tu Iglesia.

A través de la palabra y los sacramentos, tú nos guías en comunión contigo.

Confiado en esta cercanía espiritual, ayúdanos a abrir nuestros corazones a las obras del Espíritu Santo mientras discernimos nuestra respuesta a las aflicciones de los pobres que sufren por conocer a Jesús.

(Pausar para reflexionar sobre sus intenciones personales)

Oh Señor, damos gracias por los hombres y mujeres que han ofrecido sus vidas como ofrendas para edificar Tu Iglesia.

Renueva en nosotros el “fuego” que arde con el amor del Señor por nuestros hermanos y hermanas.

Mientras tratamos de cumplir con nuestras responsabilidades a través del Sínodo Arquidiocesano, nos unimos a San Juan el Evangelista, patrón de la arquidiócesis, a quien se le encargó el cuidado de María, Madre de la Iglesia. Pidiéndoles su intercesión, ofrecemos esta oración a través de Cristo nuestro Señor.

Amén.

Las sesiones de los distritos

Como parte de las actividades de preparación del Sínodo, todos los distritos se reunirán en febrero y marzo para orar y discernir las prioridades más importantes para la consideración de nuestra Arquidiócesis. Cada parroquia enviará aproximadamente 10 representantes a un encuentro en su respectivo distrito.

Esas personas son tanto empleados como líderes voluntarios y ministerios que representarán áreas claves de la misión de la Iglesia: La Enseñanza Social católica, la diversidad cultural, la evangelización, la formación, el liderazgo, la liturgia, el matrimonio y la familia y el servicio.

Las reuniones del distrito tendrán dos objetivos:

- Para afirmar y celebrar aquellas áreas de la Iglesia que son fructíferas y prósperas.

- Para identificar y priorizar aquellas áreas de la misión que estamos llamados a fortalecer.

“La información recaudada en las sesiones de las parroquias ha sido fundamental en el desarrollo de las reuniones del distrito”, comentó Rich Harter, director, de Evangelización de la Arquidiócesis. “El proceso de obtener comentarios de los fieles ayudará a encender nuestra misión tanto al nivel de parroquia local como al nivel arquidiocesano.”