



SYNOD 2014

ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

A newsletter devoted to the preparations of the 2014 Synod

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Your Voice is Being Heard!

Parish Reflection Sessions to Shape Synod

During October and November, Catholics from throughout the archdiocese came together to pray, reflect on the Gospel, and discuss our collective mission of discipleship in preparation for the upcoming 2014 Archdiocesan Synod. Spirit-filled discussions took place on the topics of Catholic Identity, Evangelization and Stewardship.

“The most beautiful feedback I’ve received about these sessions was the power of sharing between parishioners – as they witnessed moments in their lives when their Catholic faith came alive,” said Randy Nohl, chair for the Synod Preparatory Commission.

“This naturally led to meaningful

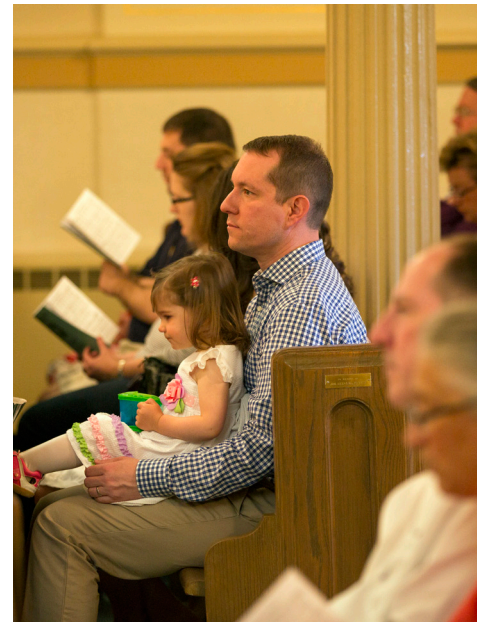
discussions and fresh ideas on what we can do to collectively restore and renew our Church in Her mission of discipleship.”

Next Steps

The Parish Reflection Sessions were the first step in gathering feedback from the faithful, which will be used to help shape the Synod.

“Ultimately, our hope is to provide Archbishop ListECKI a summary of priorities to consider for the next 10 years,” Nohl explained. “By seeking input from the local parishes, I believe we’ll have a real sense of what those priorities ought to be.”

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What is a Synod?

A Synod, simply put, is an assembly where the faithful deliberate on the pastoral needs of the diocese. A diocesan synod is called by the bishop, where he gathers together ordained and lay leaders from throughout the diocese.

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee Synod will bring together people from the entire Catholic community including priests, parish directors,

deacons, parish staff members, lay parish leaders, parishioners and representatives of religious communities and lay groups to discuss archdiocesan and parish pastoral priorities for the Church of southeastern Wisconsin.

The Synod and the sessions leading up to it should be a wonderful and exciting Spirit-led process that will give the archdiocese a clearer direction of priorities for the next 10 years.

“Our ultimate goal is for believers to renew their own spiritual fervor and reconnect to the supernatural source and transcendent power that has motivated so many believers to build up the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, and indeed change the world.”

Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI

You are CHOSEN to Make a Difference



We are a year into the planning for the 2014 Archdiocesan Synod. It's been a blessing to work with so many faithful individuals across the archdiocese in this planning process.

The commitment and generosity tells me that the Holy Spirit is surely alive in our Church; and perhaps, our own archdiocese may be turning a corner, entering a new season of hope and renewal.

When I took on this position as chair for the Synod Preparatory Commission, no one told me that the biggest challenge would be to convince parishioners that their voice and involvement truly does matter ... and is greatly needed. Isn't it true that sometimes we think, "Oh, I'm just one person – I doubt my input will really make a difference."

I learned recently according to research by the Dynamic Catholic Institute, that author Matthew Kelly discovered that just fewer than 7 percent of churchgoers handle 80 percent of the work and contributions. Kelly has identified some shared characteristics, which he calls "life-giving spiritual habits that animate their lives." These dynamic Catholics pray daily and regularly through a routine.

Some attend Mass daily. These Catholics study and read on subjects to learn and grow in their faith – they generously contribute more time and money than the average churchgoers. But more importantly, they also evangelize by sharing their faith with others.

A year from now, the Synod will be behind us. However, the work will just be beginning, to be sure. I think it's safe to say that the hope is to bring more Catholics into the fold – to inspire them to be intentional about their faith. Wouldn't it be nice to even increase the engagement of fellow parishioners by only 1 percent? Imagine the impact we can have in our parishes, in our archdiocese – even our society!

As a Planning Commission, we realize that the work ahead of us will only be as good as the input we receive. As we look forward, I'd like to pose these questions for each person reading this:

- **What can I do to use my gifts and talents for the good of our Church?**
- **How can I help spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to even one person this week ... or this year?**

To be chosen means to be "selected to do or receive something special." In Deuteronomy 14:2, it reads, "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God;

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.

it is you the Lord has **chosen** out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession."

You are **chosen** by God, himself. You matter to the future of our Church, and your participation in this Synod WILL make a difference. Thank you for all you're doing to respond to this call.

Written by Randy Nohl, Chairperson, Synod Preparatory Commission. For updates on Synod activities, visit www.archmil.org/Synod2014.htm or contact your parish coordinator or pastor.





Synod Logo Embodies Our Faith



The Archdiocese of Milwaukee Synod logo reflects the essence of who we are as Catholics and the richness of our faith.

- The sacraments of initiation are highlighted in the waters of baptism (blue wave), encountering Jesus Christ in the Eucharist (wheat colored host) and receiving the Holy Spirit in confirmation (red flame and universal icon of the dove).
- The tongues of fire and the descent of the Holy Spirit that filled the early Church at Pentecost are represented in the flame and dove. The archdiocesan Synod will take place on Pentecost

weekend, June 7-8, 2014 as this is a time for openness to the Holy Spirit and an opportunity to “renew within us the ‘fire’ that burns” (Synod prayer).

- The Cross of our salvation signifies that we are redeemed by the love of God the Father through the death and resurrection of Jesus and we are given the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim Jesus’s message and to “go and make disciples.”

This image combines all of these integral aspects of our faith and projects strength, vibrancy and hope in a promising future for our Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

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Event	How Information Will Be Used
<p>Parish Reflection Sessions October-November 2013</p>	<p>Information from Parish Sessions will be collected, summarized and submitted to the Synod Preparatory Commission.</p> <p>The Commission will identify significant and recurring themes that <i>affirm the mission of the Church</i> and themes that <i>call us to strengthen the mission of the Catholic Church</i>, especially in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.</p>
<p>District Gatherings February-March 2014</p>	<p>In preparation for the district gatherings, background papers will be written on key areas of the Catholic Church: Catholic Social Teaching, Cultural Diversity, Evangelization, Formation, Leadership, Liturgy, Marriage and Family, and Stewardship.</p> <p>Representatives from all parishes will meet as a district to pray, reflect and discern on key themes from parish sessions in the context of these subjects or new ones that emerge as part of the discernment process.</p> <p>The output and summary from those sessions will then be submitted to the Synod Preparatory Commission and Archbishop ListECKI for review and consideration to include as part of the discussion and discernment at the 2014 Synod.</p>
<p>Synod June 2014</p>	<p>The identified priorities will be discussed, discerned and prayed over with a hope of determining the priorities for our Church over the next 10 years.</p>
<p>Fall 2014</p>	<p>Archbishop ListECKI issues a Synodal Declaration identifying goals, priorities and recommendations for implementing the vision of the Synod.</p>

Ustedes son elegidos para hacer la diferencia

Randy Nohl, Director, Comisión Preparatoria del Sínodo



Ya tenemos un año planificando para el Sínodo Arquidiocesano 2014. Ha sido una bendición trabajar con muchas personas de fe en toda la arquidiócesis en este proceso de planificación. El compromiso y la generosidad me dejan saber que el Espíritu Santo sin duda está vivo en nuestra Iglesia; y quizás, nuestra arquidiócesis está por mejorar, entrando en una nueva época de esperanza y renovación.

Cuando tomé la posición como director para la Comisión Preparatoria del Sínodo, nadie me advirtió que el desafío más grande sería convencer a los feligreses que su voz y su involucración en verdad son importantes... y necesarias. ¿No es verdad que a veces pensamos? “Ah, yo solo soy una persona—no creo que mi opinión realmente hará una diferencia.”

Recientemente, según estudios hechos por el Dynamic Catholic Institute, el autor Matthew Kelly, descubrió que menos del 7 por ciento de los feligreses que asisten a Misa contribuyen un 80 por ciento del trabajo y las donaciones. Kelly ha identificado algunas de las características comunes, a las cuales llama “hábitos espirituales vivificantes que animan sus vidas”. Estos católicos dinámicos oran diariamente y regularmente a través de una rutina. Algunos van a Misa diariamente. Estos católicos dinámicos estudian y leen temas para aprender y crecer en su fe – ellos contribuyen generosamente su tiempo y dinero en comparación con los feligreses típicos. Aún más importante,

ellos evangelizan compartiendo su fe con otros.

Dentro de un año, el Sínodo será parte de nuestro pasado. Sin embargo, el trabajo estará apenas comenzando, por seguro. Podemos afirmar que nuestra esperanza es atraer al rebaño más católicos – e inspirarlos a que sean intencionales en su fe. ¿No sería bueno que aumentara el compromiso de los feligreses al menos 1%? ¡Imagínense el impacto que tendríamos en nuestras parroquias, en nuestra arquidiócesis – incluso en nuestra sociedad!



Como la comisión de planificación, sabemos que la efectividad del trabajo que nos espera dependerá de las ideas que recibamos durante las sesiones del sínodo. Mirando hacia el futuro, quiero plantear las siguientes preguntas a nuestros lectores:

- **¿Qué puedo hacer para utilizar mis dones y talentos para el bien de nuestra Iglesia?**
- **¿Cómo puedo divulgar la Buena Nueva de Jesucristo por lo menos a una persona esta semana... o este año?**

Ser elegido significa ser “seleccionado a hacer o recibir algo especial”. En Deuteronomio 14:2, dice “Pues tú eres un pueblo santo y consagrado a Yavé, tu Dios. Yavé te ha elegido de entre todos los pueblos que hay sobre la faz de la tierra, para que seas su propio pueblo”.



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.



Photos by John-Paul Greco
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