

Christ on the Mountain

Synod 2021-2023 Synthesis Document



Overview of Our Gatherings

- Our Sessions consisted of 3 weeks, each focusing on a different word from the Synod; Week 1-Communion, Week 2-Participation, Week 3-Mission. We offered 2 sessions each week: Thursdays 7 p.m. & Fridays 10 a.m.
- We started each session in the church with a reading from scripture: Week 1-The Road to Emmaus Luke 24:13-35; Week 2-The First four Disciples are Called, Luke 5:1-11; Week 3-Mission, Luke 6:17-26.
- We used Lectio Divina. Each week after we listened to the scripture, we had quiet time for reflections in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and opened ourselves to the voice Holy Spirit.
- After the first half hour in the church, we moved to our parish hall and sat in small groups (attendance was approximately 30-40 people at each session). We had one “scribe” at each table to capture feedback. We had some guiding questions to help us start our small group listening & sharing.
 - Week 1: How is “journeying together” happening today in the Church? How is God speaking to you through voices we sometimes ignore, including those on the peripheries? How are you able to participate in the mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel? How does the parish invite all Catholics, including cultural communities, youth, families and persons with disabilities and their families, into the active life of the parish, especially Sunday Mass?
 - Week 2: How do we live a participative and inclusive church process that offers everyone the opportunity to express themselves and to be heard in order to contribute to the edification of the People of God? How do we participate by exercising responsibility in the proclamation of the Gospel and in the effort to build a more beautiful and habitable world? How do we regenerate relationships among members of Christian communities as well as between communities and other social groups e.g. communities of believers of other denominations and religious, civil society organizations, popular movements, etc.)?
 - Week 3: What do you hear the Holy Spirit saying to you about your mission? What do you hear the Holy Spirit saying to you on how the church of Denver and Christ on the Mountain can live out the commission that Jesus Christ gave us (Matthew 28:19-20)?
- After our small group discussions each table shared highlights of from their notes with the entire group.
- Everyone was invited to participate. Information was published in our bulletin and flocknote. As opportunities arose inside and outside of church, staff mentioned the listening & discernment sessions and invited people to participate. We reached out to other ecumenical communities near us to invite them as well. Participation was offered in person and via a survey that could be completed online and could be submitted anonymously. Each weekend our Pastor gave a summary of discussion highlights during the homily.
- Christ on the Mountain did not show the formation videos

Key Themes that came up (beginning with what came up most often and continuing in descending order):

- **Inclusion** – Brought Up **46 Times** - Galations 3:28 states, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is ^[a]neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus”. Parishioners would like to see the Church be that example of acceptance and inclusion. Jesus accepted all, ALL are welcome (regardless of race, sexual orientation, marital status, financial situation, disability, health, etc.)
- **Role of Women in the Church** - Brought Up **26 Times** - Women need to be recognized as equal and included in the leadership of the church. Women are necessary in the leadership and mission of the church. This is extremely important if we are going to proclaim the Gospel in the third millennium.
- **Small Groups** – Brought Up **24 Times** - Small Faith Groups help us share and grow in faith, improve our family’s faith and can create lifelong bonds that connect us to each other and, in turn, keep us connected to our faith. Small groups get us back to our roots when Jesus and others met in homes. Offering opportunities for smaller connections/groups within parishes will allow us to be more personal in sharing and growing in our faith. These groups can provide formation into discipleship and evangelization.

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- **Receiving Eucharist** – Brought Up **18 Times** - Eucharist is for EVERYONE. WE are not the Judge of another person’s life. Even Pope Francis has said this. We should be welcoming to all and not have exclusions. We do not have to be “perfect” to receive Eucharist. We need to have a better understanding of the real presence and the mystical body of Christ.
- **Pathway for Divorced/Re-Married** – Brought Up **18 Times** – We need a pathway from divorce back to the Church. There are many reasons for divorce, and we should still be allowed to be a practicing Catholic and receive communion. Dating and remarriage and annulment need to be addressed. A person shouldn’t be victimized twice by having, for example, to leave an abusive relationship only to then be told “well as long as you don’t remarry and find happiness and joy with a caring soul, you can still receive communion. “
- **Concern for the Poor** – Brought Up **16 Times** - What can we as a church community or the global church do about the problems of drugs and homelessness? Care for the homeless by finding ways to help without enabling them (ie: food vs money). Begin by feeding their body, focus on fundamentals, then try to work one on one. Mission leads to action leads to result.
- **Invitation/Involvement** – Brought Up **12 Times** - Be disciples by inviting others to events. Do charitable acts and be accepting of others. Give the messages, “We need you”, “The Church needs you”, “YOU are important to the church”.
- **Ecumenical** – Brought Up **12 Times** - Generate relationships with other denominations. Participate in community projects with other faith communities.
- **Concern Re: Synod Feedback** – Brought Up **11 Times** – Will action be taken that addresses feedback given? Will the final Archdiocese of Denver synod synthesis document(s) be made public?
- **Concern Re: Sexual Abuse Scandal** – Brought Up **11 Times** – The Church needs to continue to work to re-gain trust.
- **Importance of Life at all stages** – Brought Up **10 Times** – Life should be valued at ALL stages. The Church needs to live up to its teachings regarding abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, etc.
- **Rules / Less Rigid** – Brought Up **10 Times** –The Catholic Church is often perceived as rigid and with lots of rules. This often divides rather than welcomes people. There is concern regarding the “rules” of the church vs. the message of the Church (our faith).
- **Increase Social Gathering Opportunities** – Brought Up **8 Times**
- **Restored Order** – Brought Up **7 Times** – Questions and concerns regarding restored order in the Archdiocese of Denver were addressed by supporting why the change was made.
- **Support for Families with young Children** – Brought Up **5 Times** – Help young families feel welcome by offering babysitting during Mass and events and providing groups/activities where young children can be included.
- **Desire for More Teaching** – Brought Up **5 Times**
- **Welcoming New Parishioners** – Brought Up **5 Times**

Summary of What Attendees Heard from the Holy Spirit

Above all attendees heard that acceptance and inclusion of ALL people is of paramount importance to the mission, growth and continuation of the Catholic Church. Galations 3:28 states, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is ^[a]neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus”. Parishioners would like to see the Church be that example of acceptance and inclusion. Jesus accepted all, ALL are welcome (regardless of race, sexual orientation, marital status, financial situation, disability, health, etc.)

Attendees also heard that women need to be recognized as equal and included in the leadership of the church. If women are allowed to take a more active role in the Church, then the mission of the church can be accomplished.

The Holy Spirit revealed that Church is a community, inclusive of all and that we connect to each other by participating in small groups and sharing the Eucharist together. We need to work together to care for the poor, value life at all stages and, above all, let others know that the Church wants and needs them – that ALL are welcome.