

Synod 2021 – 2023 Questionnaire for Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, West Point, Virginia

The Holy Father has asked the Church to participate in a Synod or, “journeying together,” as the Church moves into the future. Each diocese has been tasked with providing input on the best path forward. There are three main groupings to the synod: 1. Communion, 2. Participation, and 3. Mission. Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament has developed a questionnaire that will gather important information on each of the three themes. The Parish Council asks if you would please take a questionnaire, review it, pray about it, and then fill in the answers to the best of your ability and **return by March 6th**. You do not have to answer every question.

In Part 1, “Communion” is examined in a particular way. What does it mean to journey together, listen to each other, and celebrate together? Please answer the 8 questions in Part 1 within the context of “Communion.”

In Part 2, “Participation” is focused on discussion and dialogue to speak out to those whom we encounter regardless of if they are current parishioners or others far from the faith. How does the Church dialogue with secular society? Please answer the 6 questions in Part 2 within the context of “Communication and Dialogue.”

In Part 3, “Mission” is focused on the fact that all members of the Church are called to participate in the Church’s salvific mission, that many people are not prepared to live a life of public witness, or serve the Church in leadership roles. Please answer the 9 questions in Part 3 within the context of “Mission.”

St John Paul II provided the Church with the sure norm of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, giving us the boundaries within which we must live our lives and witness the love of Christ to others. The context of the answers to the questions should be approached with the thought in mind that we are to save souls.

The Truth of God is unchangeable although it can be presented in many ways. The Synod will not change any of the teachings of the Church but may present them in different ways so as to reach more individuals.

As said above, please take some time, review the questionnaire, think about it, pray about it, and then fill in the answers for the questions. The Parish Council will collect the questionnaires and condense them into a document that will be delivered to the Diocese of Richmond. If you have any questions, you may ask any member of the Parish Council or Father Oscar. We will be glad to help in any way possible.

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| Age Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Young adult (14-18) <input type="radio"/> (19-25) <input type="radio"/> (26-40) <input type="radio"/> (40-65) <input type="radio"/> Over 65 | Gender: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female | Ethnicity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Hispanic <input type="radio"/> Vietnamese <input type="radio"/> White <input type="radio"/> Black <input type="radio"/> Filipino <input type="radio"/> Other |
| Religious Denomination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Catholic <input type="radio"/> Protestant <input type="radio"/> Other | | |

Parish SYNOD Discussion Questions

PART ONE: “Communion: Journeying Together, Listening, and Celebrating” (Themes 1, 2, & 4)

1. How is our Parish unique from other parishes?
 2. What do you like best about our Parish?
- What does our church do well?
3. In our Parish, town, and surrounding counties, there are persons on the margins who are poor, sick, needy, have no access to transportation, or have no formal faith or church affiliation. How can our Parish reach out to such people on the margins?
 4. There are many individuals and families who used to call our Parish home but have fallen away for a number of reasons. How can our Parish reach out to those who no longer come to our church?
 5. What activities can be done that will bring together the different peoples of our Parish?
 6. Only a small number of parishioners have a role in Mass and church activities. As our parishioners get older and “age out,” how do we ensure enough parishioners take over these roles or fill vacancies (building and facilities upkeep, lectors, Eucharistic ministers, altar servers, Sunday school teachers, ushers, lawn and garden maintenance, Parish, Finance, Facility committee members, etc.)?
 7. How do we overcome the language differences among the various ethnicities?
 8. Any additional comments or ideas?

PART TWO: “Communication and Dialogue” (Themes 3, 6, & 7)

1. Can or should our Parish work closer with other faiths in our town?

If so, how?

Work closer with the Ministerial Association?

Do even more with the Good Neighbor Center (GNC)?

Does our pre-school program help our working with other faiths in town? How?

2. How can the relationship between the pastor and/or parishioners be improved with those outside the Parish or those who have left the church?
3. Over the many years and many pastors, disagreement with the pastor or Parish leadership or staff has been a reason that people have left the Parish or the Faith. What can be put into place to deal with disagreements or concerns so that people feel they can express them and be listened to?
4. Should our Parish get more involved in bigger issues of society? _____

What issues? (**Circle one or more**): housing for low income, hunger, women and family shelters, opioid crisis in local area, ride-sharing for elderly or disabled to medical appointments, Meals on Wheels, divorce issues, abortion, bereavement (support of families who lose someone)?

5. What other uses can our van den Boogaard Parish Hall be put to or made more available to the Parish as well as the surrounding area?
6. Any other additional comments or ideas?

PART THREE: “Called to Mission” (Themes 5, 8, 9, and 10)

1. Only 31% of Catholics believe in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist (Catholic Virginian, November 1, 2021). 69% now think it is just a symbol. How do we make sure Catholics have the correct knowledge of the Faith?
2. We have opportunities for daily Mass, adult education, the Rosary, knitting group, food preparation for funeral receptions, help repairing and upkeep, Mercy Center volunteering, Good Neighbor Center volunteering, funeral reception help, etc. but have poor attendance, declining attendance, and/or aging members. What can be done different for the future?
3. Every ethnic group in our Parish has their own traditions. Many of our members are unaware of these traditions. How can we learn about and share those traditions throughout the Parish year?
4. How can the Parish get more people to become lay leaders?
5. How could or should the Parish get feedback from parishioners?
6. What would you like to see changed in how our Parish does things?
7. Are there some things the U.S. Catholic Church need to change to get people back to the faith, keep young people from falling away from the Church, attract more priestly vocations, increase the moral fabric of people?
8. The Synod process goes from the Parish level to the diocese level, then to the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops, and finally to the Vatican for a 2023 gathering of Church leaders. What would you like to see or expect to see come out of this two-year information and opinion gathering process?
9. Any additional comments or ideas?