

Participation and Mission

Introduction:

The third grouping utilizes the remaining two aspects of the Synod's theme: Participation and Mission. All members of the Church are called to participate in the Church's salvific mission, but we must face the reality that many people feel unprepared and ill equipped to live a life of public witness or to serve the Church in leadership roles. The parish plays an important role in forming the faithful for lives of mission and service and to encourage people to utilize their different God given talents to answer God's unique call for them. Those who choose to lead also express an authority in their areas of responsibilities and guide their community through discernment and decision-making processes.

Questions:

How is the parish equipping and empowering people to go out and be on mission for Jesus Christ in their regular lives? What obstacles do the faithful face in living and professing their faith publicly? What opportunities is the parish providing to help the faithful face those obstacles? What is still needed?

(Do the faithful have opportunities to learn how to pray, learn how to discern, and learn how to live as a Christian witness?)

How are lay leaders given responsibility and to what extent do they have the authority to make decisions? (How are consultative groups used? Do lay leaders have the ability to make smaller decisions as well as either making or being part of the discussion for big picture, long-term decisions?)

What opportunities does your parish or community offer to raise people up into leadership positions? How are those in leadership roles formed to make them more capable of journeying together? How do you offer opportunities for those in leadership to listen and engage in dialogue with those they are journeying with?

(Consider formation and leadership opportunities as well as town halls and open forums.)

How are decisions made for the parish or community? (Is there a time of discernment and collaboration and who has authority to make the decisions? Who is engaged in the process? How are those not in leadership positions able to participate?)