

## Vicariate I Synod Listening Session

### 1) Strengths

- a. St. Catherine Academy provides an excellent service
- b. The faith of the people
- c. Politically we have been strong
- d. We have so many churches available. Very easy for families to receive the Sacraments.
- e. Blessed to have priests who are so committed to our retreat center.
  - i. Many laity who serve in any way they can for us.
- f. Generosity of our parishioners.
- g. Priests are well educated and give excellent homilies
- h. Very impressed by the Catholic Education
- i. Cannot say enough about Catholic Education
- j. Catholic Education is excellent
- k. Religious Education programs are very good
- l. Volunteer service in our parish
- m. Financial transparency of the Bishop
- n. Our pastor has made a concerted effort to welcome people back to our parish and it has been very effective.
- o. The Eucharist – it is available every day in many parishes
- p. Those that volunteer at the Covenant house
- q. Men’s groups are growing
- r. The beauty of the liturgies
- s. St. John Fisher Seminary is a particular strength of this Diocese of Bridgeport
- t. The compassion of the Bishop – “I’d like to see more of that.”
- u. Unfailing generosity of the Directors of Religious Education and those who volunteer in those programs.
- v. Very impressed with the volunteering of the laity throughout the diocese
- w. We reach out well to the many cultures of the diocese
- x. Wonderful Respect Life program
- y. Excellent Adult formation programs
- z. Appreciate that we have the Latin Mass
- aa. Incredible clergy and religious
- bb. Appreciate that we have full-time chaplains in our High Schools
- cc. The youth are a great strength
- dd. Formation program for the permanent Diaconate
- ee. Catholic Schools
- ff. Multicultural languages and Masses
- gg. The commitment of the teachers in the schools
- hh. I’m grateful for Convivio and the impact it has on the youth

- 2) I would like to see the diocese outreach to...
- a. Connecting between the suburban parishes and the intercity parishes
  - b. Find a way to have young married couples more involved in our parishes
  - c. Use music that young people relate to.
  - d. We need to improve VIRTUS training to include technology and update it.
  - e. Improve religious education to include much more technology.
  - f. More of a centralized use of textbooks in parishes and what appeals to young people
  - g. Have fellowship where people actively share their experiences of faith.
  - h. Facilitate more interfaith dialogue
  - i. More consolidation for youth outreach: social events, Religious Ed...share our resources.
  - j. Outreach to survivors of sexual abuse
  - k. More Bible study classes and education for Adults
  - l. More of an outreach to getting Catholics to come back to Church
  - m. Create more curiosity within adults to want to learn more about their faith
  - n. Programs in parishes that feed those who were actively involved in their faith in college
  - o. Follow up with the young families after Baptism
  - p. Make every effort possible to welcome people back
  - q. Parishes did not communicate to their parishioners about the Papal Questionnaire. Only 316 out of
  - r. Use the Catechumenal model to catechize the adults. We need much more focus on the adults.
    - i. People clapped
  - s. More *Life in the Spirit* seminars
  - t. Take a careful look at the role of the pastor in the parish
    - i. People clapped loudly
  - u. Loved EPS, would like it to come back
  - v. Deacons often seem to be senior altar servers and could do much more
  - w. Engage with our secular culture more constructively
  - x. Much more prayer, pilgrimages, study the Saints, etc.
  - y. One very strong voice on social justice issues
  - z. Find another contemplative order back in the diocese
  - aa. More use of Christian contemporary music
  - bb. Have each Vicariate offer a retreat to bring people in
  - cc. More use of the Arts

- 3) Things that we already have but need improvement...
- a. Transparency
  - b. The quality of the preaching of our priests
    - i. People clapped
  - c. Our deliverance ministry and the impact of evil on individuals
  - d. That people have a personal relationship with Jesus
  - e. More frequent publication of the FCC
  - f. More opportunities for young adults to meet together
  - g. Find ways to cross barriers between parishes
  - h. Use more women theologians to catechize adults
  - i. Catholic education...more teaching orders of religious to come to our diocese
  - j. Technology is a very important
  - k. What's the job of the pastor...needs to communicate more with his parishioners
  - l. We don't understand faith and grace
  - m. Update the Sacrament of Confession. It's archaic. We need general confession at least twice a year.
  - n. How the chancery communicates with the parishes
  - o. We need to find a way to have women have a more obvious role in our parishes
  - p. We never see our priests serving at the Merton Center
  - q. Evangelization of our adults
  - r. In the past we had a named diocesan director of religious education and director of youth ministry. We need to reinstate those positions
  - s. Update how we manage money in the parishes
  - t. There doesn't seem any place for people to go who are on fire for their faith.
    - i. People clapped
  - u. We need to allow children to go to other parishes for religious ed when they can't make it to their own
  - v. We need catechesis from the pulpit
  - w. We need more adoration chapels, more time together as a community.
  - x. Teach adults what it means to be Catholic
  - y. We need to get families back to prayer again. That is what's going to bring people back
  - z. We need to reach out to people who are very angry (for whatever reason). I'm tired for having to apologize for being a Catholic
  - aa. I would like to see the opportunity for one-on-one spiritual direction in every parish.