

Vicariate II Synod Listening Session

1) Strengths

- Strength of Youth Ministry has increased significantly over the past few years
- Very happy about the deacons in our parish
- Very happy the Synod is being held
- Outreach opportunities like the New Covenant House are very important
- St. John Fisher residence is very important to our diocese
- New leadership
- Family focus
- Quality professional Catholics
- First Women's conference coming up
- Diocese does a remarkable job with social services
 - Person gave several examples
- Our Catholic schools
- Electronic access to everything in the diocese
- St. John Fisher residence
- Marriage Preparation program
- Catholic Charities in their assistance in providing meals
- Music ministry at my parish
- Always feel welcome at many parishes
- The Lenten Confession Campaign
- Compliment the staff that helps with RCIA at the Catholic Center
- Thrilled with the Respect Life program, especially the involvement of the teenagers.
- Wonderful number of speakers throughout the diocese.
- Quite impressed with the staff and dedication of the religious ed program at our parish.
- Thank Bishop Caggiano for listening to so many different groups. It is greatly appreciated.
- Quality of the Fairfield County newspaper.

2) I would like to see the diocese outreach to...

- Like to see an outreach to Special Needs Children.
- Outreach should be more in-reach. The laity should be more involved in running the day-to-day operations of a parish.
- Encourage more laity to get involved in Church music programs.
- More focus on young families

- The association for the joy of the gospel is not the first thing that is shared in parishes. Too many people are leaving the Church because they are being judged for their lifestyles or choices rather than engaging in dialogue.
 - People need to be invited back.
- See more youth *service* programs
- See more outreach to families who are going through a divorce.
- Administrativ help in caring for the physical needs of the parish.
- A review of the screening and training program of the priests.
- Process through which priest
- More social justice involvement by the Bishop. To be more public in speaking out against social injustices.
- Full equality for women in the Church
- Adult spiritual development
- Creation of more Third Order movements
- A much greater focus on prison ministries
- Training for new DRE's and ongoing training for current DRE's.
- Rotating conferences on questions like Doctrine, etc.
- We need to do something about getting young adults and young families involved
- We need to encourage more women to become sisters
- WE need a centralized retreat center and diocesan retreats
- Our health care is too expensive. I suggest we use *Christian Healthcare Services*. Can we make more people aware of it.
- Develop a program for young families to teach their young children about the faith (before) they come to religious ed.
- A diocesan level Office of Liturgy
- Get the Ammaeous program going again in more parishes
- Better educate was we already do well throughout the diocese.
- Work together with other houses of worship in our town
- Encourage the lay vocation
- Outreach to those who are disenfranchised
- Increase role of women in the Church.
- Outreach to those in Voice of the Faithful
- We need to scrutinize the Catholic education at Sacred Heart university and Fairfield University
- Outreach to our Gay brothers and sisters who love the Church.
- Contribute to the salaries of the teachers so that we don't lose them to the public schools.
- Can we create a system where we can more immediately serve those in need who come to our parishes.
- More interfaith opportunities
- Find specific ways to reach out to those who have left the Church.
- Don't lose the young adults so that you don't need to get them back

- Outreach to senior citizens who are lonely and in need
- Outreach to the clergy and faithful laity regarding the unification about the 2 forms of the liturgy and not have such division
- Recommend that all people in Church leadership read *Evangelie Gaudium*
- We need to have JOY and have an alive faith. Kids are not drawn to sad faces!
 - Followed by clapping
- We offer nothing to those who feel marginalized by our Faith
 - We need listening ministries in all of our parishes
 - We need exit interviews of those who left the Church, most of whom left slowly.
- Like to educate the public about the dysfunctionality of the prison system
- Welcome-back program in all parishes
- Parents need to be catechized. Jesus Taught adults and blessed children. We bless adults and teach children.
- A diocesan resource on website that has all the service resources throughout the diocese.
- More promotion of solid Catholic colleges and universities around the country.
- Material assistance to women who are pregnant or new mothers who are in need.

3) Things that we already have but need improvement...

- Continuing education for priests regarding end of life issues.
- Better understand why people want religion, why they need religion...before we start changing programs
- Earlier involvement of children to be involved in service.
 - Create an annual diocesan-wide service program.
 - Followed by clapping
- Convert some of the rooms in our Catholic nursing homes to hospice rooms.
- Much more focus on the family
- Before a priest is assigned to a parish, that he be interviewed by laity from the parish to see if he's a good fit or not. They will then tell the Bishop if they recommend him or not.
- Better develop the programs preparing kids for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- The Diocese needs to support those parishes who say to parents that they cannot participate in religious ed if they do not attend Mass.
- 4 times a year seminar on teachings of the Church with excellent speakers.
- We have a lot of work to do on our public image.
- We need to much better share the richness of our faith

- Get people to publicly pray
- Ongoing training for priests and deacons regarding their homilies
- Relationship of the pastor to the parish. New pastors too often do not consider the effective programs of the parish and start fresh.
- We need to form out people to dialogue with the secular world.
- More outreach to people of other faiths
- *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd* is an effective program for very young children and should be made known.
- We need to allow lay professionals to handle the finances of the parish instead of the pastors who usually have little to know training in that field.
- Someone in diocesan leadership has to come forward and apologize for the child abuse that has taken place.
 - How are we financially supported the priests who have perpetrated child abuse.
- Request the financial support of people to build a diocesan center for evangelization.
- We need to bring *Life in the Spirit* seminars to the diocese.
- Find a way to get the disenfranchised in a setting like this to have the same discussion
- Much more transparency regarding the finances of the parish and the diocese.
- Bring in women theologians to teach in seminaries.