

## Vicariate IV Synod Listening Session

### **1) Strengths of the Diocese**

- People are longing to do something and are willing to help
- Our Catholic schools
- Availability of adoration chapels
- Catholic Charities and the Thomas Merton Center
- St. John Fisher Seminary
- Respect Life Ministries
- Convivio
- FCC website
- Women's Conference
- Adult Pilgrimages
- Catholic schools
- Youth programs
- Dedication of our Priests
- Abundance of masses
- Excellent clergy
- Financially blessed by people's generosity
- Lots of wonderful young men being ordained
- Increase in participation by all the laity in parishes
- That we are having a Synod
- Our Family Life programs
- LCC
- That we are having a Synod
- Catholic Charities
- *Virtus* Program
- Our outreach to the youth
- Religious Ed programs

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

- Revamp the religious education programs
- Get families to attend Mass regularly
  - Many clapped
- More youth programs in parishes
- More welcome for young families with children at Mass
- Investigate why people are not going to Mass
- Continue formation for our youth
- Have more availability for adoration
- Improve technological communication
- Bring us up to date on authentic Catholic teaching

- More adult formation programs
- Mobile apps, etc. to catechize
- Program of stewardship that helps us combine and use our talents
- Outreach to young adults just out of college – mix social with spiritual
- Improve the music at Mass to attract the youth
- Record catechetical congresses
- Work harder to promote the mercy of Jesus
- Share resources and opportunities between parishes
- Greater outreach to our military families
- Address the New Evangelization at the parish level by offering the opportunity for individuals to encounter Christ
- Diocese to pray the rosary for the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
- Outreach to parents who suffer in shame and silence with children who struggle with same-sex attraction
  - Promote Courage and Encourage
- Formalized diocesan program for men
- More opportunities for bible study
- Provide the opportunity for underprivileged children to attend our Catholic School
- Pro-life to mean more than anti-abortion
- Economic equality as encouraged by Pope Francis
- Outreach for young adults about how to have a healthy relationship
- Corporal works of mercy
- We need a culture shift that we are not a Church that “provides services” but rather a community of believers.
- Outreach for the poor
- Be more outspoken on social issues such as:
  - Environment
  - Addiction
  - Gun Violence
- Financial transparency by the Diocese of Bridgeport
- Outreach to get young adults to come to Mass
- Welcome people to Mass
- Improve the music at Mass
- Assist families with tuition
- Create a stronger Catholic political action network
- Better communication about services that we already have
- Better job implementing Catholic social teaching
- Dialogue between home school families and the Diocese
- Return of the religious teaching orders
- Partner with SHU and FU for adult catechetical programs
- Share resources between parishes
- More bible study
- More modern music for the youth

- Improve the religious education programs
- Improve the catechetical programs for the adults
- Faith formation rather than religious education
- Family formation starts at home
- Parishes need to stop seeming like franchises
- Share resources between parishes
- More clergy to participate in teaching religion and religious education

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

- Better explain cremation
- Teach priests how to retire
- Continuing education for adults
- More assistance for families who can't afford our schools
  - Many clapped
- More nationally known speakers to come to the Diocese
- Use art, music and literature to reach out to people
- Make the Shrine in Bridgeport a National shrine?
- Opportunities to nurture the soul
- The parents must be catechized
- Improve the religious education materials
- Outreach to youth through theology of the body and theology on tap
- Encourage efficiencies between the schools
- Share resources between schools
- Share best practices between parishes
- Our schools must be schools of discipleship
  - A lot of people clapped
- Victims of abuse need to be able to share their stories with the diocese
- More education on TOB and NFP
- Improve religious education
- The Church does not take a hard stance on abortion. We do not do enough.
  - A lot of people clapped
- Draw out the laity to help...we want to help
  - A lot of people clapped
- Help adults form their conscience so they know how to make decisions
- Keep the standards of the schools high so that we can continue to attract people
- Share what parishes do well
- Much more focus on abortion
- Include prayers against abortion in the Prayer of the Faithful
- Days of recollection in our diocese
- Outreach to those who "choose" not to get married, or not married in the church, and yet come to us for help

- Help people who live their faith to understand who they really are, people created in the image and likeness of God
  - A lot of people clapped
- Programs that will unify us
- Social media should be used much more to get the word out to the youth
- All Catholic HS should have priests or nuns as principals
- Use the social media that's already available
- The laity need to be much more involved in all aspects of the Church