

Challenge #21

There is a need for Engagement of all baptized

88% - Accept as is

10% - Accept with modification

3% - Do not accept

-
- Strongly support this challenge. Just want to note that the Holy Spirit is working like leaven within this disaffected group, so all plans should start from that humble recognition.
 - I am always concerned with what exactly we mean by "" welcoming "". Carnival barkers might be OK at the parish fair but as evangelization tools no. The Catholic Church has a 2,000 year story to tell that resonates in people's lives whether they know it or not, or whether they care to admit it or not.
 - The supporting info statement "church teachings are not understood and often not relevant". Should be rewritten to read: "Church teachings are viewed as not relevant because they are not understood."
 - There are those working in parishes that give the false impression of what the Church represents. Need to be careful with whom is hired.
 - How will we reach out? The "Mormon method" seems ineffective and annoying to many people. It may turn people farther away from the Church so it must be done carefully
 - There are minimally involved Catholics who are perfectly satisfied with their lack of participation. We can invite and embellish and market fervently but if we don't first answer the question, "what's in it for me?" No one will come. As the speaker just said we need to answer the question, "why do I need God?" But furthermore "why do I need the Catholic Church to find God?" Because I recently read a thread of Facebook comments where everyone congratulated each other on how faithful to God they are even though they never go to church. Many believe they don't need the mass or any church in order to believe in and love God. So many think if they are "good" and occasionally pray and give thanks that is enough.
 - Need to distinguish between those registered not coming and engaging the 80% who do not participate beyond Mass
 - Are we welcoming to all people or points of view? Yes, we must welcome and embrace all people -- we need not, and should not, welcome and embrace all views.
 - This sounds almost exactly like Challenge 16 (Theme 1) and the two should be addressed jointly. Confirmed "young people" are among the baptized who must be "engaged."
 - Much too broad of a challenge!!

Challenge #22

There is a need to overcome competing activities, influences and negative media.

75% - Accept as is

18% - Accept with modification

8% - Do not accept

-
- The media is not the enemy. For every ignorant or even biased piece of reporting on the Church, there's a wide-eyed complimentary piece on the Pope (and likely to ramp up ahead of His Holiness' visit next year). Many significant columnists and broadcasters are Catholic. Two of the most influential political commentators are a practicing Catholic and a practicing Jew (Stephen Colbert & Jon Stewart), and neither is shy about manifesting his faith. Especially for American Catholics, dwelling too much on the shortcomings of our Free Press is counterproductive. One last note -- if the Church's credibility has been shredded by the pedophilia scandal, it's all on us. Being truthful to ourselves and to the world is the only way forward.
 - There is a challenge to having people realize that faith needs to be a priority; other needs (ie, physical, emotional, mental) are addressed in their lives; however faith is often not a priority.)
 - I made this statement in my previous set of comments, but I will say again that if faith is an integrated part of our lives it doesn't have to cost "extra time." I think our busy lives can be a scapegoat for the neglect of or faith but I'm not sure it has to be and I'm not sure it's productive to phrase things in terms of the need to overcome competing activities, although I agree completely that we have to fight to overcome negativity and immorality. We are unlikely as a Catholic church – or any faith group for that matter- to get people to give up activities of daily life. Perhaps we can bring people to a shifted prioritization to see things differently in terms of their value ordering. I think that the harder we work to integrate faith as a part of peoples' lives – with plentiful invitations to participate in community works that speak to people's need to socialize, to their desire to serve and to connect, and present that as an essential part of their faith lives, people will become more involved. The more involved we feel the more likely we are to hear the messages – to listen to the teaching which causes us to question for ourselves whether our media is feeding us all the wrong messages, rather than being exhorted to believe this. We have been boiling the frog slowly for a long time. We need to counter balance that with firm resolve and sometimes with firm language, but more often with an invitation to participate, consider, and question that will lead people together to see their faith as integral to community, to society, as well as to their person.
 - I have to add that the priest scandal was obviously horrific, but I question if we should be continuing to make it a focus. We have to make the focus be the assurance that nothing like it could happen again, but I don't know if it is productive any longer to focus on what has already happened. We have been saddened together and we hope we have come out the other side –

let's live on the other side of it now, determined to prevent anything like it from happening again.

- The reference to Catholic brand concerns me. We should be known by our actions. We need to stop referring to any media who may run news which may show the Catholic Church in less than a glowing light as ""negative"" or as the liberal press. Please remember that, without shedding light on the abuse scandle, many victims would not be heard or worse still"" or, worse there would be more victims because the criminal acts would have continued.
- The major problem here is the repeated stress on "negative media." For way too long, the media held stories of abuse to protect the Church, even though reporters and police were well aware of the veracity of the reports. How much more damage was done to "the little ones" whom Christ loves because of this regard for Bishop or Father? Thank God that the truth came out. It is the media that saved the Church from itself. The young man who spoke about this media issue probably did not know the history of his own parish, where eight (8!) credibly accused priests resided. That in itself is a scandal.
- The tone here is more "defensive" than "offensive." To be fair, we need to play both. But I think we'll be most successful if we lead with the positives. I.e. We preach the Good News because it is our responsibility and it is beautiful, rather than because it is misunderstood, misrepresented or dragged through the mud.
- No argument with the challenge of competing activities. However, I am a little troubled by the expression ""meet people where they are"". If this is in reference to finding middle ground between the negative influences of secular culture and the practice of the faith, I find that confusing. Our faith and system of values is not a matter for compromise and ""middle ground". How we approach and try to reach young people can be tailored and if that is what is meant by ""middle ground"" than that is OK. However, we would do a disservice to the youth and to ourselves to portray the practice of our faith as another activity that has to compete for attention. We need to be clear that active practice of our faith should trump all activities, and rather that detracting from other aspects of life it will enhance all aspects of one's life to understand this priority system.
- I think time is an overly used excused. I don't have time, but I am here. That is the question that needs to be addressed.
- It is more important to establish the importance of a loving relationship with God and that should be our emphasis. With that accomplished, negative influences of competitive activities and the media will be dissipated. I voted no for this challenge.
- Lower priority - can be resolved with other challenges' resolutions
- Most important activity is MASS
- Mass needs to be understood as the most important "activity." No need to volunteer to feel part of that activity- while we need lay involvement, it seems that being part of a particular ministry is the most important part of "mass." It is not- it is adjunct to actively participating in the mass as part of the community.
- These should be separated into distinct challenges, as they are each unique in their causes, approach, and strategy.

- As a challenge I believe this is resolved naturally through addressing other challenges that are causes vs challenge that feels more like a symptom.
- As presented, the challenge is unmanageable and in-actionable
- Rephrase to focus better - "There is a need to communicate the interest the Catholic Church has in knowing and helping you"

Challenge #23

There are inadequate resources to fulfill our mission - talent, finances, and tools.

73% - Accept as is

17% - Accept with modification

10% - Do not accept

-
- I think we have the talent and tools (Holy Spirit will provide you with what you need). Let's just look at the first Disciples--Fisherman--salt of the earth, good men. Money--really there is an ingenuity that comes with being poor--really a little goes a long way.
 - Just one thought on this – there are inadequate resources, etc. in many cases. But in other cases there may be inadequately accessed or inadequately allocated resources, etc. I just wanted to consider that.
 - What exactly is meant by “empower lay leadership” ? Lay people are already running the activities at parishes, and are highly visible in the service of the Mass (sometimes overwhelming the number of clergy on the altar). We need to ask ourselves if this Lay Leadership emphasis, where everywhere you turn at a parish, there is a lay person, usually a woman, in charge, could potentially be a problem that is actually driving some people away from the Church, because when they interact with the parish, the person who most embodies the Faith, i.e., the priest, is not part of the encounter. Especially for young men, seeing a bunch of women running the place is a disincentive to be involved.
 - I am always taken by the power of word of mouth! When we effect a change in one thing we do as a Religious Ed community, the word is communicated fast! I recently made it a three year preparation period for Confirmation and my registration for the first year went through the roof! I didn't take out an ad either! We are all in silos of our own making. Perhaps we have a parish secretary who will only do what she has done for the past 30 years? perhaps we have a priest who does not enjoy children during the Mass? Perhaps we have a school faculty who is intolerant of those rel ed kids in our building during the week? All SILOS! We need to start looking at ourselves honestly. What do we hate about the work we do? What do we love about this work? And what are the needs of the people we meet in our parishes every week? Do we talk together about the stuff that has happens in our silos? have we asked for help or advice? was there a solution to it there all the time? I think that it is not always about MONEY as much as it is about sharing resources available already!!!
 - We have to recognize the financial constraints of supporting our Catholic schools. On the one hand, we correctly recognize that Catholic school teachers are under compensated (costs need to go up), and on the other we want to provide more financial support for needy families (costs need to go up). Solutions to both of these issues cannot rest solely on further financial outreach and charity support. The Diocese already asks for financial support for Catholic schools, and we have to be realistic about how much more money can be raised (some, but only at the margins).

Simply saying we need to raise more money is a noble sounding approach, but I suspect it is not novel and has placed up where we are today. A "business plan" which demonstrates efficiency and a "product" that people will readily pay should be the focus of the challenge. Who are our prospective families and students? What is the appropriate tuition for the value being delivered? Do we see our Catholic schools as a charity mission dependent on ongoing fund raising, or a self sustaining enterprise with surplus economics that allows for scholarship support out of either donations or operating surpluses. The concept of the sustainable enterprise should be separated from the scholarship support, which is how the Shepherd's program works. Shepherds students pay the full tuition, but the tuition is raised by scholarships. To the school, the Sheperds student generates the same revenue as the full tuition student. There are many private schools in Fairfield County that are thriving, and they all have significant scholarship populations. We should understand those situations better.

- I would just add to keep this positive. So many bullets lead with what we "lack." I'm not convinced we really "lack" these things, we just aren't fully mobilizing the great resources (especially people) we have
- For too long the model of many organizations within the church has relied on volunteers. We need recognize that they are few and far between in today's economy. None of our communities can be successful if we think we're going to get the job done for free!
- There are plenty of resources. What do you mean "empower the laity? Are we waiting for permission and lunch money before we speak to our friends colleagues etc about Christ?
- So true about a current inadequacy re harvesting the talents of the laity!!
- Revise challenge to "there is an inadequate utilization of resources. . ." Resources exist - why are they either not used or withheld?
- Empowering lay leadership is difficult when extremely conservative priests do not welcome Eucharistic Ministers, particularly women, do not welcome altar servers, particularly girls, and insist by their actions that they are so much better than any lay person. I understand the lack of choices sometimes for pastors, but I am begging that pastor-candidates be vetted and examined for their attitudes toward the community they are supposed to serve. And yes, I have personal experience with being turned away from a ministry.
- This challenge rises to the level identified by Bishop Caggiano as one of those with a high priority because if you can solve this challenge you will address and resolve, to some extent, the problems identified in:
 - Theme 4: Challenge 4
 - Theme 1: Challenges 11, 13 and 16
 - Theme 2: Challenges 22, 26, 28, 30, 31, 35, 36, 37 and 38
 - Theme 3: Challenges 42, 43, 44, 48, 49, 50, 51, 54, 56, 58 and 60
- A rambling statement rather than a challenge or a proposition. I don't know what to do with it.
- This challenge needs to be divided - Challenge 23A "How can parishes effectively leverage the time, talent and resources of the laity so that parishioners play a vital role in the successful operation of their parishes and the Diocese?"

Challenge #24

Is there anything that rises to a major issue in this group?

18% - Need to Add

82% - List is Fine

- Perhaps here is where Liturgical Renewal belongs?
- evangelization needs to be at the center of every faith community -- including, and especially, finance committees!
- HERE IS WHAT IS MISSING HERE: HEARING NOTHING ABOUT ECCLESIAL MOVEMENTS? PARISH LIFE IS NOT GOING TO BE NOURISHING ENOUGH FOR MANY DEVOUT CHRISTIANS. THEY NEED TO BE PART OF A NON-PARISH BASED ECCLESIAL MOVEMENT. THIS WILL ALSO BENEFIT THE PARISHES BECAUSE CHRISTIANS WHO FIND NOURISHMENT IN ECCLESIAL MOVEMENTS THEN CAN BE THE FIRE IN PARISH LIFE. ECCLESIAL MOVEMENTS AND PARISHES ARE NOT IN COMPETITION. THE MORE OUR PARISH PEOPLE GET INVOLVED IN THESE MOVEMENTS THE BETTER FOR OUR PARISHES. SO HOW DO WE PROMOTE THESE ECCLESIAL MOVEMENTS
- Role of pastor too strong. Often not equipped for the business side and management of multiple groups Problems with long standing trustees in the parish. Term limits will keep the life young and fresh.
- We can't do Challenges 21-23 if the faithful aren't on fire with faith and missionary zeal. While this is partly evangelical (topic 3), I think mention of it belongs here. Each of these communities and their leaders - parents, educators, parish leaders - need to be motivated first by their faith.
- I liked the comment of the priest. The Catholic Church is different than any other Christian denomination. (our competition). The Catholic Church is the only denomination that asserts the existence of supernatural realm and zealously promotes belief in it. While all denominations acknowledge there is a God, no others include rituals that demonstrate their belief in a supernatural realm. Humans are made up of body, mind and soul
....The Catholic Church is the only one that presents a method to nourish/nurture all three. What separates the Catholic church from all other faith expressions is its emphasis on the supernatural realm.
- Add nfp awareness to list. Contraception prevents many from participating in the life of the Church.
- Lack of understanding of Baptism root of many of these challenges
- I would recommend that the Charity and Social Justice Study group meet jointly with the Communities of Faith Study Committee. It seems to me that none of the work of this group can become an actuality unless there is a joint effort between the two study groups.

Challenge #25

There is a lack of understanding that in order to have a deep life of faith each family member needs to develop a personal relationship with Christ that makes faith central to all aspects of daily life.

83% - Accept as is

12% - Accept with modification

6% - Do not accept

-
- Culturally speaking, a lot of generations (and saintly ancestors) mainly related to Christ through the Mass and especially the Eucharist. So it seems the necessity for a "personal relationship with Christ" would need to be broached with sensitivity, taking well-worn sacred habits into account.
 - Make the statement more of an action statement, e.g Make Christ and the teaching of our faith central to all aspects of our daily lives.
 - There is also a lack of understanding of the continuing relationship between the SACREMENTS and daily life
 - I do not accept this Challenge because I do not recognize it as a major problem for most Catholics, such that the Diocese should adopt new courses of action to deal with it. Besides, successfully addressing Challenge 26 should correct the issues cited in this Challenge.
 - It is only when the Church reflects the love and mercy of Jesus Christ that each family member will recognize the Church as the seat of God's Kingdom on earth.
 - The speaker mentioned "domestic church." The concept of a vibrant Catholic culture within the home is implicit, but not explicit here. We must give families the tools and the call to create a strong, internal culture that can feed the family and trump the exterior, negative cultures trying to get in. Families must feel confident that they are capable of being "countercultural," and that this may be their calling.
 - Maybe reword the challenge--a bit confusing the wording.
 - I am reading too many excuses. We need to get to the root of the issue.
 - This challenge sounds condescending. Instead of telling each family member what they need to do shouldn't the challenge be how we can help them develop the relationship rather than telling them what they need to do? Semantics perhaps but if I were a disconnected parent, the tone of this wouldn't engage me.
 - My table doesn't agree that families "don't know what a personal relationship with Christ means"
 - Feels like a challenge that gets addressed by addressing other challenges first.
 - I believe these challenges (25 and 27) are similar in nature and can be combined into a single challenge.
 - I'm not sure, but maybe these two (25 and 27) can be collapsed into one challenge

- As a DRE for 14 years and a catechist for 34 years, I am very disappointed that this issue was set aside at its late date and reassigned to the Build Up Communities of Faith. Build Up Communities of Faith then did not have the ability to adequately address all the issues around this particular topic, mainly due to the sudden need to bump issues that were on the table and make space for the Catholic Schools. It felt too late in the game!
 - But, now that we are past this, what about this issue?
 - We have 38,000 (I'm sure this is bigger) children in Religious Education programs, with Parents who do not fully embrace their faith. I am not going to say that they are uncatechized since they largely attended religious ed programs as well! They call themselves Catholic, they received the sacraments, but they are as bored with the state of the Church as their children are. They know they have to deal with the many rules that come with being a part of the Church. They steal themselves to be able to get through the matrix of getting the sacraments. Many of them have issues around their choices to marry or be unmarried, or divorced. They don't see themselves as acceptable (worthy?) to the Church, but they still want their children to have a chance with God.
 - Now, let's ask them to follow the rules of going to Mass, attending classes for sacrament prep. They feel it is another hoop to jump through, no matter what you say or do to not let it be so. There is the preconceived notion that they will hate it all and we can't change their minds!
 - In 34 years of religious education, I have listened to the great struggles of these people and I have encouraged parents to go to the priest and bring their fears and needs to him. And I have been disappointed by the results.
 - Over the years, parents have asked me to get the priests into the building before their child receives the sacrament, and I knowing that will not happen, I make excuses for them and hope they will be accepted.
 - Birth to 12 covers 4 sacraments with so many chances to bring these wonderful souls back to God and His Church! They need to find out that they are the missing piece in the Church which will bring so much spirit and life to the Church! We have this opportunity to love those who are right in front of us right now!
 - Quite frankly, this is a large responsibility for a single person in a Religious Ed program in a Parish. So many of us work alone, ministering to so many beautiful families. It is not our design for this to be so! But we have been told that it is "our job to keep them away from me!"
 - And only since the salary issue was raised first by the Catholic Schools, let's not forget just how poorly DRE's are paid and the large number of hours that they work!
 - The entire Church system of education, formation and liturgy needs to work together to make all of these preconceived ideas and old ways of bringing people to the faith to change and affect a new way of engaging them and loving them!
 - I suggest another study committee surrounding Parish life and Faith formation for families with children from birth to 12 years old.

- This challenge should have been included under Group 1. It is, I believe, THE principal challenge our synod faces. Its objective is basically the same as Challenges 18 and 40. It is yet another challenge that rises to the level identified by Bishop Caggiano as one of those with a high priority because if you can solve this challenge you will address and resolve, to some extent, the problems identified in:
 - Theme 4: Challenges 1, 2 and 6
 - Theme 1: Challenges 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 19
 - Theme 2: Challenges 21, 22, 26, 27, 31, 32 and 35
 - Theme 3: Challenges 40, 41, 42, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52 and 55
- I voted against Challenge 25 because it appears the same as Challenge 26 which is stated better.

Challenge #26

There are many poorly catechized parents and a lack of ongoing faith formation opportunities.

85% - Accept as is

12% - Accept with modification

4% - Do not accept

-
- Agree whole-heartedly with need for ongoing faith formation. Our own priests and deacons consistently deliver very good homilies, so I could not completely agree with the supporting info.
 - Under supporting info drop the third bullet as it is not clear which generation it is referring to. Many of my generation were well catechized. Bullet two reflects the lack of continued learning thru adulthood.
 - Yes, many parents may, in fact, be poorly catechized but 1) Do they realize it? 2) Are they willing to do anything about it? Ultimately, we can't twist their arms.
 - It may not be that ""many poorly catechized parents"" are around. What we teach to our young people is sometimes too complicated and easily forgotten. They are not ready or developmentally ready for so much information...Lets keep reinforcing the basics....Who is God/Jesus. What did Jesus do for His people when he came to live among us. What are the commandments, sacraments?.....How can we serve (support) God and His people. Forgiveness. The fact, they will seek later when they are ready.....through strong adult ed programs. Our dream!!!!!! Again, the adult ed programs must start with the basic information. Many that I have reviewed are too much information at once.....
 - Update religious ed materials
 - There is too much emphasis on homiletics...we need to include more language about building a personal relationship with Christ.
 - I agree that many parents are poorly catechized, but I don't think it's bc of a lack of programs or opportunities.
 - Here is where I could add that parents need to better grasp and embrace their authority under God and their responsibility as primary educators. Authority is a foreign or poisonous concept in our culture, so parents often lack conviction and confidence. They feel they have no choice but to do whatever everyone else is doing, or willingly hand over authority to ""experts"" like educators or doctors etc. Here is where I would also add that couples would be served well if we better educated them on the gift of their sexuality, and the Church's teachings on it."
 - Reword the challenge to: There are many adults who were never fully catechized and a lack of ongoing faith formation opportunities.
 - Formation of family belongs in this study group. Formation of children by parish and diocese should be in youth study.

- Formation will help understanding and relevance of homilies.
- I think these two (26 and 27) can be combined into one. I believe a critical and omitted piece to this problem is, "how do we get parents to want to grow in faith?" I suspect that many of them are perfectly satisfied with their poor catechization and would bristle at the suggestion they (need to go back to school.
- Having trouble with the ""lack of ongoing faith formation"" aspect of this challenge. What is the desire to even participate in such programs should they exist? What will meeting this challenge mean?
- There is a ""Family Catechesis Program"" called ""Alive in Christ"" (Sunday Visitor) that has been well received in my home parish -- Our Lady of Perpetual Help, in New Jersey. In speaking with their Director of Religious Education, she said there are 44 families enrolled for this year. The format is that while the children meet with their respective teachers to discuss the lesson, the parents meet with the Pastor, one Sunday a month to discuss the same lesson. Perhaps a program of this type would be a good start toward catechizing our adults and encourage their children to take an interest in their faith, as well.
- A rambling statement rather than a challenge or a proposition. I don't know what to do with it.

Challenge #27

Faith formation, a lifelong journey, often does not include the entire family collectively as a family AND all the individuals within the family (regardless of age).

84% - Accept as is

9% - Accept with modification

6% - Do not accept

-
- This challenge is very confusing statement--and seemed to be covered in another one of these challenges--challenge 26.
 - A rambling statement rather than a challenge or a proposition. I don't know what to do with it.
 - This proposes a problem that is larger than the Catholic church. In society today parents/families all too often abdicate the education of their children to the school system. The Catholic Church is simply a small subset of of this larger society where parents are abdicating the education of their children. This is not to say we shouldn't reach out as Catholics to the parents but we must understand this is a larger societal issue that may not be easily overcome.
 - These two (26 and 27) are so closely related that they should be combined, along with C-25. We cannot address catechesis solely on an individual basis because parents and children help each other grow in the faith, and if there is a division between the education give to children and the lack of education that persists among parents, the children will eventually opt to emulate their parents and forget what they have learned, and thus not apply it to lifelong living.

Challenge #28

Many in the Church lack an understanding about the complexity and diversity of families and family life resulting in inadequate outreach and programs.

82% - Accept as is

13% - Accept with modification

5% - Do not accept

-
- The Catholic Church is either confident of what it believes and teaches or not. I realize many see the annulment process as just a money making scheme and I believe far too many are granted far too easily.
 - Approach needs to recognize the issue of birth control in two areas.... Single Catholics and Married Catholics. Many practicing, responsible, MARRIED Catholics also wish to be responsible parents who recognize and share responsibility when it comes to appropriate methods of birth control in their marriage. The church needs to better align itself with this issue and provide pastoral guidelines that find a balance between the church's teaching on the family and a non-judgmental attitude toward MARRIED ADULTS using birth control. Birth control for single Catholics needs to be addressed separately.
 - Rather than simply accept the current trend in divorce and fractured families as unchangeable, we need to propose initiatives to strengthen and support marriage as the cornerstone of the Church and the community, with better teaching on the sanctity of marriage and Theology of the Body, beginning in teenage years, and stronger Faith Formation in general, so that Catholics come to understand the joy obtained in offering our struggles and difficulties as sacrifices for the Glory of God. There should be a dedicated counseling service as part of Catholic Charities specifically to help save troubled marriages. Divorce should never be advocated as a solution to marital problems by anyone in the service of the Church.
 - How can we encourage people to go through the annulment process when they claim that they do not want to have to conjure up all the hurt they experienced in the divorce as well as living through these bad times over again with the divorced spouse?
 - The bit about the annulment process is very true. For those who (Deo Gratias) have never needed it, the thing is totally opaque. I have heard from two couples that they had to "lie like hell" to get an annulment. I certainly hope that is not normal! Openness and education would be useful.
 - I just believe the title is wrong. The title could simply be: "Diverse family & family life"... filled with resources from the Synod on the Family that Pope Francis just organized. The diversity of these families are known, but how to incorporate them into the Church and approach and serve their needs is where the difficulty comes in. "

- This challenge seems to speak to the basic human reverence due to all. Really you need to know the culture and still basically know that in all history it has been a bit messy, now is no different except that everything is public. I think this challenge has already been covered and it seems a bit redundant.
- Church teaching is clearly presented by diocesan website- and in the gospel.

Challenge #29

Is there anything that rises to a major issue in this group?

15% - Need to Add

83% - List is fine

-
- Economic injustice & family life. From lack of living wages, to lack of affordable housing, to necessity of two-parent families to hold 2, 3, or even 4 jobs to support their children -- how can the Church effectively accompany struggling families and ease their burdens?
 - Parents need to be empowered to the primary religious educators of their children
 - Major issues in Family and FAITH FORMATION: Is our religious education truly providing a strong grounding in Catholicism? Are young people by the time of Confirmation taught about the 7 Deadly Sins, 4 Cardinal Virtues, the Spiritual and Corporal works of Mercy these days? There has been a clear demand from young people at the Synod or ongoing Faith Formation after Confirmation, the ideal time to introduce the teachings of SJ2's Theology of the Body, and to begin to talk about vocation and the vocation of marriage.
 - We need to help families start praying in their home.
 - we need to take the church into the home (home masses)?
 - we need to remind young parents (when we prepare them for a baptism) to pray with their your children before they fall asleep.
 - NFP is a treasure that needs to be shared. so counter-cultural and so important."
 - I continue to believe that the propositions are largely platitudinous, as almost all have garnered large percentages of yes (or modified, which probably means a tweaking edit or two) votes. In my view, synod leaders have overlooked an important source of information by not asking delegates for their assessment of which propositions warrant prioritization. I appreciate that the synod leaders will ultimately prioritize the ""challenges"" or propositions by (1) using ""verbs"" (I think that must mean ""content"" -- that is, subjects, verbs, and direct and indirect objects together provide the substance of the propositions; the verbs alone are generally incommensurable and do not compel, on their own, a prioritization), (2) assessing which propositions, if addressed, can subsume others, and (3) assessing which propositions share common elements. That is a sensible approach. Still, receiving delegate reactions on prioritization would be (have been) invaluable. The environment here is conducive to aggregating immediate and visceral reactions, which can have a useful, truth-telling function that study-committee work cannot duplicate.
 - The role of women in the Church was not addressed in these challenges. Making up over half the engaged Catholics in this diocese, women lead most of the parish programs and offices (and yes, families). Yet, they have no say in any official way regarding women's role in the Church. This is a huge issue, particularly for the young adults who have grown up understanding the sin

of misogyny. They, the gifted young men and women of tomorrow's Church, will leave to find greener pastures where all can find the fullness of their being by answering God's call to love all.

- A discussion point that needs specifically to be addressed is the understanding or rather lack thereof or simply dissent to the Catholic Church's teaching on Human Sexuality, the use of Contraception, Natural Family Planning etc. this is true not only for youth but adults
- Nfp and teaching on fertility/ family
- A major challenge is that we are not, in many cases, reaching parents and children in our current models of RE. (grade K-8). Do we need to 'look out of the box at different models of RE?

Challenge #30

There is a need to understand the needs of ALL members of the parish community individually and collectively.

88% - Accept as is

10% - Accept with modification

3% - Do not accept

-
- The parish is geographical - it includes everyone within the border. It isn't just the Catholics or the people who choose to come. Parishioners should understand this and feel a missionary responsibility to this understanding of parish
 - Remember that not everyone belongs to a family. In this challenge do not forget the singles - not just divorced or widowed but especially those who have never been married.
 - Unhealthy to address individualism. This misplaces the focus- it should be on the larger community. We commune together- leave the "I" at the door.
 - This challenge is without focus. Maybe better to be thought of as the need to appreciate the diversity of the all vs understanding the needs of all.
 - This is closely related to the challenges in Group 2, re: families, because the parish is a spiritual family.
 - A rambling statement rather than a challenge or a proposition. I don't know what to do with it.

Challenge #31

We must address the lack of understanding about the Church's teachings.

86% - Accept as is

10% - Accept with modification

4% - Do not accept

-
- Are we using the lay theologians in the diocese? Do we know who they are?
 - This is a loaded point. We need to address all of the teachings, not a select few. By way of example we should not be teaching about birth control and then ignore a teaching about immigration. We need a serious look at this issue.
 - Often the issue here is that we don't teach what the Church teaches or we don't do it well. we don't dare! who talks about Life to pro-choice democrats, about the right of immigrants to anti immigration republicans, about NFP to couples who have practiced contraception for 10 years
 - The lack of understanding of church teaching is a local leadership failure. We need our parish priests out in the community. Why are they not more present in our community. This may sound like an unfair generalization but I believe it is more common than you might think.
 - In every listening session prior to the Synod, the poor quality of homilies was mentioned. For many Catholics, especially those on the verge of leaving the Church, the homily is the priest's primary tool for engaging his congregation. I would stress the necessity for expanded classes for seminarians in homiletics and scripture study. (As a graduate of a non-denominational Divinity School, I can speak for the importance that our Protestant and Episcopal brothers and sisters place on their preaching and the effectiveness that this achieves.)
 - I voted to not accept this challenge because I believe we have plenty of resources available to us to learn and grow in the Catholic faith, both offered within our diocese and in the larger world. The invitations have been sent and people are not coming. So I think more programs is not the issue. Making people aware of the fact that they need a program is more the issue. Break people from their complacency or apathy. Make them aware that they are not aware. You can't feed a person who thinks they are full. Show them that they are actually malnourished and starving and the banquet halls will be filled.
 - This can be combined with other challenges - 25, 26, or 27.
 - Liturgy implicitly teaches and informs us. The mass is not a time to catechize.
 - Is there room for personal interpretation? I believe so, scripture and teachings will resonate differently to each and every one of us at times, so how do we allow for that while keeping consistency, continuity and ownership of our Catholic beliefs and principles?
 - This could just as easily, and perhaps more correctly, be included as part of the theme "Fostering Evangelical Outreach."

- From the listening session which I attended, it seemed evident that there is a real need in our Diocese for Adult Catechesis.

Challenge #32

There is a need to create an environment of healing and understanding for the people we serve.

90% - Accept as is

7% - Accept with modification

3% - Do not accept

-
- Sure, no judgment but this whole meeting people where they are & welcome drill has got to be a two way street. It intrigues me that Evangelical & Pentecostal communities seem to attract lots of people (particularly Catholics) while the Catholic Church in its drive to be "" in touch "" looks stupid. See the results of the Extraordinary Synod in Rome a couple of weeks ago for prima facie evidence.
 - The phrase "meeting people where they are" is ambiguous and has the potential to set people up for disappointment. Notwithstanding many of the false impressions made in the media resulting from some of Pope Francis' statements, there are certain lifestyles that are simply incompatible with Catholic teaching. Confusing people does them a great disservice. Approaching people with mercy is, of course, the only way to welcome fallen away Catholics and encourage them to re-discover their faith. But, God's mercy and forgiveness is connected to the sinner's contrition and repentance. If we begin the conversation with mercy and are unprepared to discuss contrition and repentance (i.e., reform), we are setting ourselves up to create even more hardened opinions on the part of fallen away Catholics.
 - I believe this is the same as Challenge 30. "We need to understand the needs of all members of the Parish.." and "there is a need to create and environment of healing and understanding.."
 - We need to define "welcome". Do we mean to welcome all people on their own terms or do we intend to welcome a subset of people only? Or will we only welcome those who conform to our terms?
 - There are many who are still looking for the Church to "pay" for past mistakes or sins. They need to be educated about opening their own hearts and forgive those who may have hurt them. This is not about forgive and forget but more about forgive and learn from the past so we can heal and move on.

Challenge #33

We must acknowledge and understand how current trends and modern culture are affecting traditional Parish organizational structures and the dynamics and demographics of Parish communities.

86% - Accept as is

8% - Accept with modification

6% - Do not accept

-
- The supporting info for this challenge says "families and individuals will attend parishes and other faith communities where their spiritual needs are being met". It is certainly true that families feel free to attend Mass where it suits them. At the same time, the Church has a duty in all cases to instruct people as to how their spiritual needs should be met. The Challenge as stated is Man centered, and it should be expressed in a way that makes it God centered. The Church's approach to parish life should always be based on its mission of the salvation of souls, which means properly forming the faithful in Church doctrine, conducting liturgies and worship in a manner which glorifies God, and engaging parishioners in a way which encourages their daily and habitual exercise of their spiritual life. This mission can be pursued in many different ways, and I believe the intent of the Challenge is to recognize this variety. However, it could also be interpreted as accepting a false perception that the Church's message is too judgmental and harsh for our tolerant society, and that in the context of our culture it will fall on deaf ears. We do not want to deviate from the truth, and we should say so explicitly in the statement of the Challenge so as to avoid any confusion.
 - How do we imitate, within our Catholic Faith, what some of these other Christian denominations are doing that are drawing Catholics away from our Church? Is it better organized youth groups with outreach to the disenfranchised? Welcoming groups? Visits by the pastor to reach out to families? More hospitality? Bringing people to a personal relationship with Jesus? Something we need to explore.
 - Liturgy should not be personalized. It already provides the basic foundation for each person to explore and discover his or her personal relationship with Christ. To try and augment the sacred to address people's secular needs will lead to confusion and division. We need to be unified in a common liturgy.
 - Feels like an acceptance of relativism as written. Not quite getting what our question is here.

Challenge #34

Is there anything that rises to a major issue in this group?

16% - Need to Add

83% - List is fine

-
- Parents do not view themselves as their children's primary religious educators -- they handed over the reins long ago to the priests and sisters and have not taken their role back.
 - We need to address the role of the laity. The involvement of the laity needs to be respected
 - More uniformity in liturgies that lend to a cohesive understanding of the church's teachings - this also can build a positive parish culture.
 - Building infrastructure old, inefficient and environmental waste. Need to address this since the Mother church lectures us regarding environmental waste. Priest education is needed in customer services management. Trustees are not impactful and dinosaurs of the parish. They should be turned over after two three year terms . Trustees should have an impact.
 - I think it is worth explicitly clarifying/defining the responsibilities of a parish. To make the Sacraments available? to meet material needs of its needy? to be missionaries of the Gospel? What else?
 - Pastors need support staff to accomplish all these things. Where is the recognition of the challenge of forming, recruiting, and paying these people? And when will we free up pastors from so many financial and administrative duties so that they can be priests? Also, we just need to deal honestly with the fact that we may need to consolidate or simply close parishes.
 - Diocesan priestly formation needs to include how to identify lay leaders and capitalize on their talents in order to build up the parish faith community.
 - Liturgy is missing. Call it renewal- or the renewal of the renewal. It needs direction before we loose any connection to our rich heritage of music, art, environment, etc. The liturgy is the most important nourishment and physical relationship we can have with Christ. Do we have an Office of Divine Worship? A unified set of directives coming from such an office would help unify liturgy in the diocese- and would help bolster our larger identity as a diocese.
 - A question or discussion concerning the collaboration of clergy and lay faithful needs to occur. This is important not only for the fulfillment to call to holiness through respective vocations but for the support of the church. The place of ministry for clergy, as it were, is church property to feed the people with the word of God and the sacraments. The place of ministry for laity, as it were, is the world. These are mutually supportive in pursuit of sanctity and when done properly guarantee the evangelization of the world.
 - We need to catechize the proud over-achieving Catholic. I have met some who seem more interested in maintaining their status as uber-Catholic than in inviting the fringe into greater communion.

- Where is challenge related to administration of parish faith communities given declining ordinations? What is role of laity and woman in lay leadership and administration.
- There is a need to explain, and encourage the development of, small Christian communities so that the faith can be built up as a result of new relationships developed among its participants. There seems to be great hesitation to form such groups at the parish level because they threaten the control of a pastor, or because of the fear that they might wander outside Catholic teaching. I offer one successful example from my own experience: A Saturday-morning men's Scripture study group at St. Joseph Church in Danbury that reads and meditates on the upcoming Sunday Scriptures for an entire week and then meets to ponder, freely discuss and learn from the Scriptures themselves and also from the members. Sometimes the pastor attends; sometimes not. But he's not afraid of what we will discuss or whether we'll wander off into heresy.

Challenge #35

There is an ongoing need to strengthen both the Catholic identity and academic excellence of our schools.

81% - Accept as is

13% - Accept with modification

5% - Do not accept

-
- I support Catholic Education. I am a product of a Catholic Education thru HS and we sent our seven children thru Catholic Elementary school some thru Catholic HS and one to a Catholic College. I have friends who sent their six children thru Catholic Schools Elementary, HS and College. Six of our seven children were altar servers thru HS and one attended world youth day. Despite all of the Catholic education only one child of above thirteen as an adult attends mass regularly. A few others attend Christian churches. Based on these results and those of other good Catholic friends I am not convinced that a Catholic Education is a guarantor of continued participation in the Mass and sacraments. Among the issues that affect participation are divorce, birth control, interfaith marriages, sexual preferences. I think the Children, Young adults and mature adults need to see themselves as something bigger than themselves. We need to have more continuing education about our biblical roots old and new testament, more about Christianity and more about social responsibility. Maybe regular coffee and cookies with the Pastor , Priest or Bishop. Become more familial. When I was a youth in Los Angeles there was Mary's hour in the Coliseum where over 100000 Catholics participated. An annual gathering in the Bridgeport Webster Bank Arena of 10000 plus Catholics would give us all a sense of the larger community and reach of our faith. Make the School and Religious Ed youth an integral part. Preach about the services the Diocese/Churches perform, pray the Rosary have Benediction. Make it an afternoon Religious event!
 - I can speak only for my school, but the expectation of academic excellence is woven with our Catholic beliefs into one beautiful garment. It is true that salaries are not in keeping with those of the public domain; it is a truth that many are teaching because of the love of there faith. Every school regardless of having achieved recognition for academic excellence should continue on the path of excellence...always seeking the best tools to educate and bring our faith to others.
 - I believe we have to raise salaries in all areas of church leadership. They should be standard throughout the diocese and not subject to the whims of Pastors. Having said that, I have worked in social work my entire life (after four years teaching in Catholic Schools). We do it for the love of what we do, for our commitment to the mission, and because we are Catholic. It is generally an area for young graduates to begin their careers. Most of our schools are quite good. I mentor at Kolbe Cathedral, and am amazed at the course offerings. Is it like a private school - no, but

neither does it cost \$40,000+ a year. However, generally there are very caring staff and values that outweigh the lack of other niceties.

- We need to create academic excellence with our faith at the core. God gave each of us gifts; we need to ensure that our students are given the tools needed to use those gifts.
- Should we be talking about Catholic Education or Catholic Application?
- The wording in the first bullet--this is a second career is not clear. Is teaching a second career or the teaching of religion a second career?
- I do not accept this as a challenge because I believe with some exceptions many Catholic schools can't compete with the resources of the towns. The challenge is school by school.
- Good Day all: I am the priest who affirmed the excellence of our academic excellence while questioning the Catholic identity in SOME of our schools. Catholic identity is very complex, and our own Sacred Heart University has four full time people in that area. To have a good Catholic school in addition to academics you need a majority of the faculty to be active Catholics. Secondly you need leaders capable of creating a genuine sense of community where the love of God and neighbor is lived out daily. In the schools without a strong identity the children learn the religious doctrines but often do not attend Sunday Mass because the parents do not attend. Parents who do not attend Mass are sending their children to the school because it is a private education away from public school problems at a cost less than that of the quality private schools. Maybe we need both schools in inner cities that provide private education to anyone and a second tier of schools for the children of active not nominal Catholics. It makes no sense to me to be spending a fortune to educate catholic children who only go to Mass at school Masses and (maybe) Christmas and Easter.
- Within the goal of strengthening Catholic identity: We should prioritize sacramental preparation in our schools. Not all do it, and kids go to an evening CCD class. What makes a school Catholic if the students aren't receiving this preparation?
- Modification - Add "promote" . There is an ongoing need to PROMOTE and strengthen both the.....
- It is such a shame that we are always going to talk about the lack of money whenever we talk about schools. But at the same time, the schools are not the same as they were years ago. In order to keep the ships afloat, non catholic children have been allowed to enter and attend using the school as an affordable prep environment. Will faith get watered down? I do believe so! Religious Ed programs have no moneys and they still have to have materials, books, use of building expenses allocated to their budgets, and then have to defend their salaries, benefits, and even the extra ream of paper. why are we keeping buildings open that are not full? why not regionalize the schools in order to deal with the lack of enrollment, salaries, expenses?
- As written this challenge seems to only gloss over the issue of strengthening Catholic identity in our Catholic schools. As a parent whose daughter left a Catholic HS because she could not find one girl who was not awfully conceited and mean. I was saddened by what she learned there. She learned that we don't walk the talk. There was no holding high tolerance and love in a Catholic school. She found more of that in the public school she transferred to.

- Are the parents who choose to send their children to our schools choosing them because they want their children to have a Catholic education or because they don't want their children to go to their local public school?
- I voted against Challenge 35 because it is already done well.

Challenge #36

There is a need to make Catholic education more accessible for those families who wish their children to attend Catholic schools.

86% - Accept as is

9% - Accept with modification

5% - Do not accept

-
- The diocese and parishes need to acknowledge and support families who cannot afford a Catholic education and choose to home school their children, as well as support those who would like to educate their public schooled children in the Faith.
 - I would need more information for this. It seems to me we offer quite a lot of scholarship money through Shepherds and the Catholic Academy Programs, as well as private scholarships. Perhaps, not all parents of limited means know about them. If that is the case, mother should every parish and Catholic 8th grade should be certain the parents know About financial aide opportunities
 - There is a need to promote Catholic education as well as make it more accessible
 - There is no mention of how Catholic schools are ill equipped to handle children in need of resources. That is the reason why we did not send our son to Catholic grammar school.
 - I believe this could be combined with Challenge 37.... Make Catholic schools more accessible while at the same time making financial models that are sustainable over time. "
 - I would encourage the Diocese look into the feasibility of supporting those families who desire to home school their children. I worked at Grolier Educational Corporation as an Educational Consultant – I called Schools and Libraries when new encyclopedias or books were available. Predominant in the mid-West were home schooling entities affiliated with a church. They had their own curriculum and rarely did they purchase from us. I was in the home of a family where home schooling was the choice for the children’s education. Because the schooling was faith based, it was a pleasure to see their actions demonstrate their faith. However, they are not isolated. They have a loose organization of parents or go outside of their homes for enrichment programs that are free in the area in which they live. If we are to meet diversified needs, we have to look into all areas of growth in our parishes including school faith communities. We say the first teachers are the parents – if the parents are faith based then it should follow so will the children.
 - Several parishioners have approached me as their delegate to say they are concerned at how many non-Catholics attend our schools. Certainly, they should be welcome. But they want to prioritize making it available and affordable to Catholic families first.
 - In my travels I have come across a beautiful parish to model, Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Carmel Indiana. They have 4 Sisters and all the rest are lay faithful. The key difference is that

parish has been tithing for a long time. There is an average of 10% tithing per family and so the school is absolutely free to all children from the parish--how extraordinary. The catholic education there is also excellent and thorough.

- Add support and encourage home schoolers to the list of supporting info
- I voted against Challenge 36 because there are scholarships and tuition forgiveness programs already in place. Therefore, if parents send their children to non-Catholic schools it is for a reason beyond finance (regardless of what they may say). In most places in Fairfield County the public school systems are excellent and parents do not want to pay tuition twice. They may send their children to Fairfield Prep or Lauralton Hall because of the prestige these schools have in getting into the college of their choice or have excellent sports programs that develop talent that colleges sport programs are looking for. This Challenge seems to miss the mark.

Challenge #37

Catholic schools lack viable financial models that are sustainable over time.

88% - Accept as is

6% - Accept with modification

6% - Do not accept

-
- Add "Some" to the beginning of the sentence.
 - We no longer have a living endowment. We need to build endowments to support our schools though a growing endowment. Endowments need to be built for other critical programs, buildings and positions.
 - Many members of the synod seem to have strong opinions about Catholic schools despite the fact they do not have children in our schools and are misinformed about the great things going on in our schools. Why do we always have to defend Catholic schools? Let's focus on Challenge 37, and Challenge 38 may take care of itself.
 - Offer a true quality product with a firm Catholic character and inspire the laity to support that enterprise with an endowment.
 - A rambling statement rather than a challenge or a proposition. I don't know what to do with it.

Challenge #38

There is a need to strengthen the relationship that should exist between schools, parishes and the broader diocesan community.

86% - Accept as is

7% - Accept with modification

6% - Do not accept

-
- 73% of Catholic School children do not go to Mass on Sunday. Parents of Catholic School children tell me they get more prayer and liturgy at school, so it is not necessary! 74% of Religious Ed children do not go to Mass. How can we say that today we have a more effective environment for bringing children to the faith in the Catholic Schools? Catholic Schools today are different. I went to Catholic School through High School and attended Catholic Colleges. My children attended Catholic Elementary school. But I'm not so sure that it is the place for my grandchildren. 1. Costs are too high for us. 2. Environment is different today. there are other things we can do to give them a good experience of their faith.
 - I was a DRE for 10 years in the Bridgeport Diocese and then for 12 years in the Archdiocese of NY. In Pleasantville, NY at Holy Innocents Parish, there was a wonderful Ecumenical bond with the fellow clergy from the area churches of all Christian congregations most of which had one Sunday service. All pastors met monthly and discussed and concluded that they each needed to ask their parishioners to sign petitions requesting from the Recreation Board that all sports activities not begin until Sunday at 1:00 PM. People have power and their voices were heard. No sports on Sunday. This enabled the children to attend Mass and church services with their families. So being that many of our Catholic school children and those in the Religious Education programs are not attending Sunday Mass/ services but are rather playing soccer, volleyball, baseball, basketball, etc, if this was implemented it would free the families to get to Church.
 - I voted against Challenge 38 because most parishes do not have schools and the current dynamics are not address in this challenge. It does not address parish religious education and faith formation programs.

Challenge #39

Is there anything that rises to a major issue in this group?

15% - Need to Add

83% - List is fine

- Economic Justice for staff at Catholic schools. How can we present our students with the great gift of our Catholic Social Teaching and deny their teachers fair wages?
- Home/School programs for religious education need to be encouraged so parents can once again fulfill that role with some guidance. Challenge of Catholic Schools becoming private schools
- I continue to believe that the propositions are largely platitudinous, as almost all have garnered large percentages of yes (or modified, which probably means a tweaking edit or two) votes. In my view, synod leaders have overlooked an important source of information by not asking delegates for their assessment of which propositions warrant prioritization. I appreciate that the synod leaders will ultimately prioritize the ""challenges"" or propositions by (1) using ""verbs"" (I think that must mean ""content"" -- that is, subjects, verbs, and direct and indirect objects together provide the substance of the propositions; the verbs alone are generally incommensurable and do not compel, on their own, a prioritization), (2) assessing which propositions, if addressed, can subsume others, and (3) assessing which propositions share common elements. That is a sensible approach. Still, receiving delegate reactions on prioritization would be (have been) invaluable. The environment here is conducive to aggregating immediate and visceral reactions, which can have a useful, truth-telling function that study-committee work cannot duplicate.
- How about starting a "charter" or accelerated Catholic school so that Catholic education can offer a comparable product on a quality basis to that of private schools and some of the more affluent public schools?
- I would also like to add general comments -- This process is awesome! I commend everyone especially Monsignor Dariusz and Patrick Turner on coordinating and implementing such a well designed and efficient system. Congratulations on successfully getting input and feedback from a large group of people on a multitude of complex issues. Thank you to Bishop Caggiano for conducting the SYNOD. It is one of the many ways he is demonstrating that he truly cares for the people of the Diocese of Bridgeport.
- The church of Bridgeport needs to recognize and support catholic home school families. These families should be welcomed and not perceived as opponents to catholic schools. Accommodations need to be made recognizing that parents being the primary educators of their children in the faith should be assisted not hindered from bringing their children to the sacraments when as parents they believe their children are prepared.

- Could teachers in schools be required to take an oath of loyalty to the Church? Is bringing back teaching orders possible? would solve both the faith formation problem and the financial problems.
- There was a time a synod talked about among other issues orphanages and health care opportunities. Will the school business be next to disappear? There is a significant need for the Catholic education in all corners of Fairfield County. But we all certainly know and have heard the "Catholic" aspect or characteristics of yesteryear does not exist in the schools. Do we have any minimum standards to keep a school in existence? Why might the dioceses, for example, still be running k-8 configuration when most communities over the past many years have moved to offering a transitional middle school setting? With many private schools available for the economically well off and with many very fine public school systems within Fairfield County maybe some priorities need to be established with all this competition. Wanting the very best of Catholic Schools might mean less of them. Education is a very expensive portion of a budget. With less schools it might be easier to pay better salaries and underwrite quality facilities and programs. I realize this might be a political football but better to have the very best and real "Catholic" education occurring. Might we be better spending our efforts to educate by teaching of religion and holding quality programs for all ages, children through adults. Not many religions are in the "school" business particularly since states have now assumed that responsibility.
- We need concrete curriculums especially for religion and what is expected in Catholic Schools to help them re identify Catholic School missions and their Catholic identity.
- Homeschooling needs to be supported and presented by the Diocese as a viable schooling option. For large Catholic families who cannot afford Catholic School, the Diocese should support and promote parents (who are able) to home school so they can provide a proper Catholic education for their children. Perhaps diocese can provide materials or information on homeschooling programs? Or create a homeschool community to meet, or more schools like Regina Caeli Academy "Hybrid education" .
- I just want to highlight two educational avenues that often get overlooked: our universities (how to make them strong in Catholic identity and affordable) and our homeschooling communities (how to support them, encourage this as an option, not see them as "competition" to our diocesan schools).
- The diocese must develop a formal process for supporting home-schooling families, even to the point of teaching parents how to teach and offering them guidance in the selection of appropriate educational materials and resources for each child. A second new, much more important, challenge also be addressed: Teachers themselves must be properly catechized. If our mission as a Church is to make Jesus Christ known, then teachers must be able to explain to their students how well they know Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord. Catholic education is meant to be all about WHO you know, NOT what you know. My three children have left the Church, due in part to the fact that their parochial school teachers either didn't know Jesus or didn't know how to convey the joy of that relationship to my kids. We cannot employ teachers

as they are employed in another diocese I know of – new non-Catholic teachers are given a “three-week crash course” to prepare them to teach in parochial schools. That is intolerable.

- I voted yes to Challenge 39 because the other challenges do not address if the Catholic School model is correct today. Should it be more along the lines of the public school system: elementary, middle and high schools? Can it integrate the secular school system into its operations? Is the curriculum relevant both academic and non-academic (extra curricular)? There seems to be a need for a path for non-college bound students to learn a trade (many if not pay very well), and should there be schools or courses that provide such a path. This upholds the dignity of the individual which we put down because they do not go to college, while at the same time bemoan that we are losing factory jobs overseas probably because we are no longer training students to learn a trade. Even Joseph and his son Jesus were laborers.