



Office of Archbishop Alexander Sample

MEMO

TO: The Clergy, Religious, and Faithful of the Archdiocese of Portland

FROM: Archbishop Alexander K. Sample

DATE: August 9, 2022

RE: Results of Archdiocesan Participation in the Synod on Synodality

Last year, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, called for a global Synod on Synodality, *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission*. He asked every diocese in the world to participate in this consultation process.

During the Diocesan Phase of the Synod, which began last fall and is concluding this summer, I sought the help of my priests and many Catholic leaders to organize our participation in the Synod. I am happy to report we had a robust participation in the Synod here in the Archdiocese of Portland. The entire Synod consultation process, which began with a fervent prayer campaign, was a faith-filled and fruitful experience. We give thanks to the Holy Spirit for guiding us through the process and helping us along this journey of faith.

Thank you to all who helped organize our discernment sessions and all who participated in the Synod on Synodality. We listened intently to the Holy Spirit and to one another and grounded our discernment in prayer and adoration of the Holy Eucharist.

Attached is a copy of the Synod Synopsis for the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon. It was submitted to the USCCB on July 25. The report summarizes in ten pages what we heard from all those who participated in the Synod. Around 2000 people total from almost every parish and many Catholic organizations and other groups in the diocese took part in 175 different discernment sessions. Some individuals and groups also provided written input.

Pages 2-3 of the report contain a bullet-point list of the main issues that are on the hearts and minds of Catholics in western Oregon. The Eucharist and the sacraments of the Church are cherished and form the foundation of our life of faith. We also find community, catechesis, prayer, and service to be life-giving. Our youth and young adults are important to us. We need healing around the clergy sex abuse scandal and divisions in the Church.

Please review the synopsis to learn of the other important issues. I will use the information we heard during the Synod consultation to help shape the pastoral plans and evangelization efforts of the Archdiocese of Portland. The Archdiocesan Pastoral Council will play a key role in helping me do this.

I invite all pastors to share and use the information from their parish discernment sessions to help shape parish plans for pastoral activities, evangelization, and outreach.

Many thanks to the Archdiocesan Synod Steering Committee, the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, the Area Vicars and pastors, and all who helped with our participation in the Synod. May the good Lord bless, and Our Blessed Mother keep, all the people of western Oregon. I leave you with the prayer for the Synod, which we have not ceased praying since last fall:

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.