

Sacred Heart Parish, Roslindale, Summary of Synod on Synodality



When Pope Francis announced the Synod in the autumn of 2021 our parish began to notify parishioners in the bulletin, in conversation and in homilies about this undertaking. This is one feature of how we effectively inform the community about Church events and nearly all who are registered receive notices. We acknowledge the need to reach out to those who are not a part of the database.

As the Archdiocese sent out the questions for our reflection each parishioner had an opportunity to respond directly individually. In February 2022, we devoted our Parish Pastoral Council to a two hour discussion of the material. Several weeks later, members of our Hispanic community took part in several discussions. Finally, our International Group devoted every Wednesday in Lent for a prayerful rumination on Synodality and how we experience it here at Sacred Heart. The rationale behind the formation of "Sacred Heart International" several years ago was to acknowledge the diversity of our parish. There are a total of forty nations, states and cultures combined that attend Mass and are active. On a given weekend over 600 attend our Masses but like many other churches we have suffered because of the pandemic. Yet, we see our discussions and prayer over these past months as a way of leading people back as we further develop our way of speaking and listening to one another. Before the pandemic began, all those who were parish leaders and/or ministers would have "one to one meetings" for at least twenty minutes to go into greater depth about their fellow followers of the Lord. This process helps build listening skills which we have acknowledged must further grow and develop. Attention spans because of technology and over scheduling may have a hand in this occurring. Also, we are mindful that this is a community where many languages are spoken and there are various cultural approaches to encountering another person. In some limited instances, one's intention or point might not be made clear. We feel that some in our community need to listen more attentively to the wisdom of Church teaching made known through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and to be rooted in the beauty of doctrine. Church members regardless of their status must be collectively heard and given a response.

We all have a desire to grow in holiness but we often struggle with the call to make new disciples of those who we would not ordinarily interact with on a regular basis. While not watering down the essentials of our faith we can see that there are a multitude of ways that can articulate and live out the Gospel in personal witness and evangelization.