

DIOCESAN SYNOD REPORT: PARISH COUNCIL DISCUSSION GUIDE

DIOCESE OF FALL RIVER



One of the recommendations made in the Diocesan Synod Report was for parishes to prayerfully discern what was heard and the ideas shared to determine what should or could be addressed locally in the short term while prudently awaiting the final results and exhortations stemming from the 2023 Synod in Rome. What follows are discussion questions, based on several topics parishes raised in the diocesan synod report, we invite parish council members to discuss and brainstorm these topics at future meetings this year.

Engagement with young people

- In what ways does our parish already engage young people and their families?
- The first step to engaging youth is engaging their families. How can we better reach the whole family?
- How can our parish make itself more of a home to young people?
- How do we offer them an authentic, intentional community?
- Does our parish have and do we need an individual(s) focused on ministering to young people?

Prioritizing a relationship with God and first focusing on Jesus

- How do we talk to parishioners about what it means to be in relationship with Jesus and invite them to conversion? Can it be improved?
- How is the devotional and prayer life of our parish?
- How do we provide opportunities for encounter, such as retreats or adoration?
- Are there opportunities for discipleship and ongoing formation? Do they meet the needs of our community?

Communication & Transparency

- What are the principal ways that our parish uses to communicate with the community?
- Are these means effective, or does our community use different means of communication?
- How often do registered parishioners receive meaningful communication from our parish?
- Does our parish have ways by which parishioners can be heard?
- Do parishioners know the members of the pastoral and finance councils, and how decisions for the parish are made?

Involving Laity & Parish Life

- What does our parish do well to invite individuals to participate in parish life?
- Is it clear to parishioners what our parish's vision is? Do we have a vision?
- Are our ministries open to new members, leadership, and alignment to that vision?
- If a parishioner wants to become involved, is it easy and clear as to how or whom to contact?
- How can we be more invitational and intentional in approaching individuals to take a next step in parish life?
- Are their opportunities that ceased prior to COVID that should be brought back or started? Conversely, are there things that should be realigned or stopped?

Connection with and visibility within our wider communities

- What is our parish's relationship to our wider community?
- Are their needs in the community that our parish is helping to meet?
 - If yes, are these well known or do they need to be better communicated?
 - If not, what can we do to help meet them?
- Does our parish connect with or participate in opportunities within the wider community?