

## Archdiocesan Synod Update ~ June, 2022

Although the Archdiocesan Synod was interrupted by COVID-19, and the original timeline and plan had to be adjusted, Archbishop Hebda remains committed to a process he believes will provide critical input to both he and Pope Francis as the practice of Catholicism moves forward. An infographic of the synod process timeline is on the other side of this update.

Saint Matt's involvement with the Synod began during Year 1 when several of our lay leaders attended the first round of listening sessions held throughout the archdiocese in Fall of 2019. The Synod's 3 Focus Areas were created based on the input from the over 8,000 people who participated in the listening sessions. Archbishop Hebda attended all of the listening sessions and shared how the synod process would work. COVID interrupted that process Spring of 2020, and the archdiocese spent Year 2 preparing for Year 3 activities by offering 4 different online series involving study and prayer. The focus of Year 3 has been engaging parish communities in discussions around the three Focus Areas: 1) Forming parishes that are in the service of evangelization, 2) Forming missionary disciples who know Jesus' love and respond to his call, and 3) Forming youth and young adults in and for a church that is always young.

Year 3 has focused on involving large and small groups of people in parishes throughout the archdiocese, educating them about and discussing the 3 Focus Areas and asking for their "best ideas" under each focus area. During the Fall of 2021, Saint Matt's held a series of small group meetings in which people were invited to listen to a 6 part series and provide their thoughts and ideas about the 4 topics under each of the 3 Focus Areas. Propositions were developed for each of the 4 topics under each Focus Area by archdiocesan synod staff, and the propositions were then discussed by 10 person teams at each parish. The Parish Teams helped the synod staff to further refine the propositions, which were then presented to and discussed during the Synod Assembly held June 3<sup>rd</sup> through June 5<sup>th</sup> at Cretin-Derham High School. There were a total of 40 propositions presented to the Assembly. There were 500 people at the assembly, including 2 from each parish. Saint Matt's representatives were Karen Thompson and Becky Montgomery.

During the Synod Assembly, attendees discussed each Focus Area in depth. There were 6 people at each table, and each person selected the proposition under Focus Area 1 and shared why they chose it. We then put the propositions we had each selected in a cup, one was randomly drawn and we spent more time discussing it and what it would look like at each of our parishes. There was no debate about which proposition was the best, rather we shared why we chose the proposition we did and how it could be implemented by parishes. At the end of the discussion on that Focus Area we electronically submitted the 3 propositions that we felt the archdiocese should prioritize. We switched tables and repeated the process for each of the remaining Focus Areas. This process provided us with an opportunity to learn from one another and understand each other's perspective. At the end of the Assembly, we each individually listed the top 5 propositions we thought the Archdiocese should prioritize.

Saint Matt's Synod Planning Team consists of Suzanne Clarke, Joanne Smith, Karen Thompson and Becky Montgomery. Stay tuned as the Planning Team continues to work with the Parish Council and parish organizations to develop and implement our own action plan using the synod Focus Areas and prioritizing some of the propositions which will further enhance the spiritual growth of our members and all of us as we fulfill our mission of *Being a Visible Expression of God's Love*.