



SACRED HEART ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

"Being the living example of God's love to others"

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Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Parish Prescott **"Inviting the Holy Spirit to Work Within Us"**

Parish process: A synod committee was convened in January 2022, led by the Pastor and including members from the clergy, staff, and various council members. The Committee developed the questions, conducted the listening sessions (with about 225 parishioners in 18 groups, not counting those who responded in writing as well as students and parish and school staff) and made a report to the Pastor; this report was subsequently modified by the Pastor to produce this report being submitted to you. The Parish elected the narrative approach and there were three main questions asked and these questions were adapted for listening sessions with children and young adults. The Synod Committee prayed the Synod Holy Spirit Prayer at all of its meetings and the prayer was printed on cards and prayed as a parish community at all Masses during the synodal process. The main questions are included in bold print below with the children's version in italics. The common themes are listed under the questions with a brief summary at the end.

1.) **Describe your relationship with Jesus.**

Do you believe in God and why? Describe your relationship with God.

Who is Jesus to you?

- Use Jesus' guidance on a daily basis and follow His example.
- God and Jesus help us to be an example to others. Pray regularly (at church and at home) and receive the sacraments for strengthening faith.
- Pray for other people in more need than I.
- God and Jesus speak to me in different ways through thoughts or signs.
- When I don't have a relationship with Jesus, I feel something is missing.
- God protects us.
- God created us and our world and that shows that he cares about us.
- Jesus is always with us in our hearts.
- Jesus sacrificed everything for us on the Cross.

2.) **Describe your relationship with the Church.**

Does the Church play an important role in your life and why? Do you see yourself on a journey with the Church toward ultimate happiness in Heaven?

- The Church provides me quiet time to pray without distractions.
- Being at church seems like being a part of a family.

- The Catholic Church provides us the sacraments which nourish our souls. We receive the same sacraments as all Catholics around the world. There is no separation between Christ and the Catholic Church.
- My enthusiasm for the Catholic Church is founded on a vibrant, joyful parish community.
- I am fully committed to the Catholic Church. It is my calling to serve God's people. (Several people stressed the importance of servant leadership).
- The Church is God's House.
- The symbols and signs in the Church are important (statues of Mary and the saints, Crucifix).
- Sometimes I feel that the Church is too political and we have to tiptoe around dialoguing about our faith. Church scandals and lack of accountability need to be continuously and aggressively dealt with.

3.) **How can our Parish community help you in your faith journey?**

- We need to have more faith formation and opportunities to discuss our faith. There are many on-line opportunities, but we want in-person learning (This was the single most-mentioned topic). We would like to see more Diocesan involvement in our area (Northern Arizona) to provide classes (e.g. Kino, parish missions, Bible study, Spanish Bible Study) and more opportunities for learning. Non-

engaged Catholics interviewed seemed to indicate that more faith formation may have encouraged them to stay in the Church. We should direct learning opportunities to some target groups such as young adults and young families.

- Encourage use of small faith groups.
- Encourage sharing of witness testimony after Mass, including seminarians and their vocation stories. Also, continue listening sessions periodically.
- Engage youth more in the Church including having a separate Spanish Youth Group; have help from the Diocese in receiving training and having Diocese-wide/Deanery-wide youth events. Also, have a more traditional youth Mass encouraging youth participation.
- Make the liturgy more vibrant by including parishioners more, especially young people; have more variety of liturgical music; include more cultural events; have clergy support ministries by speaking about them in homilies and attending ministry meetings and programs.
- Provide more assistance to the neediest groups in our area, especially the homeless.

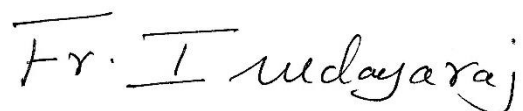
4.) **SUMMARY AND ACTION PLAN:**

The main themes gathered during the synod surrounded improving faith formation; engaging youth more; making the liturgy more dynamic and inclusive and continuing to listen to people. The common pattern in all of these areas seems to indicate that people are thirsting for nourishment of their souls by our generous God, longing for the love of our Savior Jesus Christ, and needing a rekindling by the Holy Spirit.

Main parish strengths noted include varied and abundant ministries; perpetual adoration chapel; multiple priests; sense of reverence; parish school; generous parishioners.

Going forward, we plan to present these results to our parishioners and work in unity with the Diocese, clergy, ministry leaders, various councils and parishioners themselves to implement some of these suggestions. We respectfully ask that the Diocese of Phoenix support our Parish in this effort.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Irudayaraj". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first few letters.

Father Irudayaraj, CMF
Pastor