

TEMPLATE FOR PARISH SYNTHESIS (Documentation)

The Parish Synthesis is a written document of up to 10 pages, which conveys the main fruits of the discernment of the whole parish, summarizing the reports of the parish consultations. It contains the responses to the Preparatory Document (*Lineamenta*). Other materials such as images, videos, stories, artistic expressions, and personal testimonies can be submitted as attachments (appendices), insofar as they help to bring out the experience and input of participants.

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING PARISH SYNTHESIS

1. The parish synthesis should reflect the diversity of views and opinions expressed by the parishioners.
2. While preparing your synthesis pay particular attention to the lived experiences of participants, both positive and negative.
3. The synthesis should be faithful to the people's voices and to whatever emerged from their discernment and dialogue, rather than a series of generalized or doctrinally correct statements.
4. Points of view that are contrary to one another need not be omitted but can be acknowledged and stated as such. Views should not be excluded simply because they were expressed by a small minority of participants. Indeed, sometimes the perspective of what we could call the "minority report" can be a prophetic witness to what God wants to say to the Church.

MAJOR CONTENTS OF THE SYNTHESIS

Part I – Process of Consultation

- a. What were the main steps taken in the parish?
- b. What were the main questions posed?
- c. What was done to engage as many participants as possible and to reach out to the peripheries?
- d. Approximately what proportion of people in the parish participated in one way or other?
- e. Were there any groups of people whose participation was especially noteworthy?
- f. Where there specific groups of people who did not participate for any reason?

Part II – Experience from Consultation

- a. What was most significant about the whole experience of the consultation?
- b. What were the high points and low points, or the consolations and desolations?
- c. What dispositions, attitudes, or feelings were notable?
- d. What tensions or disagreements emerged from the listening process?
- e. What topics or issues gave rise to diverse points of view?

- f. Overall, what were the fruits that the Holy Spirit has brought about through this experience?

Part III – Significant and Resonating Insights and New Perspectives Learned

- a. Among the feedback from the local meetings, what was particularly significant, surprising or unexpected?
- b. What new perspectives or new horizons opened up?
- c. Which particular stories or real-life experiences were especially moving and why?
- d. Which points of view seem to have strong resonance?
- e. Which points of view were mentioned less but are interesting and noteworthy?

Part IV – Current Experience of Synodality in the Parish

- a. Overall, what has the Holy Spirit inspired the community to see regarding the current reality of synodality in the parish, including the present lights and shadows?
- b. What did participants have to say about areas where the Church is in need of healing and conversion, in its spiritual life, culture, attitudes, structures, pastoral practices, relationships, and missionary outreach?

Part V – Pastoral Suggestions for a Synodal Church

- a. In what ways is the Holy Spirit inviting the parish to grow in synodality?
- b. What dreams, desires, and aspirations for the church were expressed by participants?
- c. Based on their feedback, what steps does the parish feel called to take in becoming more synodal?
- d. What are the next steps forward for our parish on the path of synodality, in communion with the whole Church?

Part VI – Inculturation (Cultural Learning)

- a. What cultural image(s) articulate(s) our experience of synodality?

GUIDELINES FOR THE DRAFTING TEAM

1. It is recommended that the synthesis be prepared by a small team of persons led by the Relator rather than a large assembly.
2. This drafting team will carry out its task in collaboration with the Parish Priest and the Parish Contact Person(s)/Team.
3. They should read all the submissions in a spirit of prayer. The team meetings themselves should be synodal and spiritually discerning, listening to the living voice of the People of God across the parish under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
4. As much as possible, everyone should feel that his or her voice has been represented in the synthesis. As a model of transparency, the members of the drafting team as

well as the process of synthesizing the feedback can be made known to all. It is strongly recommended that the synthesis be made public once it has been drafted, as a touchstone for the journey of the parish along the path of synodality.

5. Opportunities can be given to the parishioners to review and respond to the content of the Parish Synthesis before it is officially sent to the Diocesan Contact Person.

The parish synthesis will be used as a working document (*instrumentum laboris*) for the Parish Pre-Synodal Assembly. The Parish Pre-Synod is the culmination of the parish consultations. This gathering will provide the opportunity for diverse members of the parish to come together to pray, to reflect on their experience of the synodal process, to listen to the feedback presented in the synthesis and to discern the parish's path of synodality. The outcome of the parish pre-synodal assembly should be included as part of the parish synthesis.

Appendices

1. Stories of Faith
2. Expressions in Art Forms
3. Images and Videos