

SUGGESTED BULLETIN SYNOD FAQ's *For November & December 2009*

October 31st – November 1st

Parish Discussion Sessions: What's in them and when do I go? During this month of November your parish will hold one or more Discussion Sessions, depending upon the size and need of the parish community. In the session which should last about 2 hours, you will (a) pray as a group; (b) be instructed as to how the session will proceed; (c) take each of the four topics (Plus a general discussion topic) proposed by Bishop and discuss your experience and thoughts around the topic at a small table; (d) put the thoughts down on a sheet of paper; (e) spend some time prioritizing all the possible things the whole group has discussed and then close with prayer. You need only attend one session.

November 7th – 8th

Are Bishop's Four Topics the Final topics for the Synod? Maybe. Maybe not. That's why we're having the diocesan wide conversation. Our goal is to listen to the Holy Spirit's voice within the Diocese and where the Spirit may be leading us. These initial topics proposed by the Bishop are a beginning for the conversation. But they may or may not be a part of the final formulation. We need to listen to what 'bubbles up' in the conversations which occur during this month of November. So we need to make sure our conversations are made holy by God through our obedience, humility and prayer.

November 14th-15th

I'm told there was a flyer distributed listing the four topics and the accompanying questions but I didn't get one. How do I get one? You can call your parish office, they may have extras. Or you can go direction online to the Diocesan Web page (www.crookston.org) and click on the Synod link on the front page. Once on the Synod page you will click on either a text only format of the summary or the flyer form. Either one will get you the information.

November 21st -22nd

What if I can't make any of the parish scheduled discussion sessions due to legitimate reasons but still want to contribute my thoughts? After the last of the parish discussions sessions have been held, it may be possible to fill out the "Synod Questionnaire" which has been prepared for such an occasion. Your parish facilitator or parish office should have a copy on hand for you to fill out 'long-hand.' Since the thoughts won't be part of the group process of prioritizing what happens in discussions, the input received on the written forms will be 'weighted' a little differently than the group process. But it is important that everybody who wants to participate has the chance to offer their prayerful reflections. Thus the questionnaire should help with that.

November 28th-29th

What happens to all the results of the Diocesan Wide discussions? Your parish facilitators will summarize the most highlighted points made within the parish discussions within each of the four (plus one) topics. These will be forwarded to the Preparatory Commission from around the entire Diocese. The Preparatory Commission will then pray and discern the ‘threads’ common to the diocesan-wide conversation and/or what stands out most clearly as a movement within the results of the conversation. Then the Commission will re-formulate the topics and questions given these diocesan-wide threads and present a renewed slate of discussion topics to Bishop for approval for the next round of discussions and discernment.

December 5th-6th

Who will be a part of the next round of discussion and discernment? Once Bishop has approved the re-formulated questions from the Preparatory Commission, the next round of discussion will take place at the Deanery Level. All five deaneries will gather for a discussion process just like the parish discussion process. The deanery discussions will take place between January 1st and February 20th. Those attending the deanery discussions will be appointed from each parish by the pastors of the diocese. The number from each parish will be determined by the size of the parish itself.

December 12th-13th

What’s happened to the names we submitted for possible membership to the Synod? Each Deanery gathered all the names submitted for that deanery. Then in prayer and discernment, the priests lifted up 8 names from each deanery for recommendation to the Bishop for his appointment. At the end of October, letters of appointment went out to 40 lay people who have been chosen by Bishop to be a Synod member. Each of these 40 are names submitted through the solicitation process held this past summer in the parishes. On November 8th, these people along with the rest of the Synod membership gathered for an initial orientation to the Synod process. They are committed each day to praying for the Holy Spirit to anoint our Synod.

December 19th-20th

On behalf of the Diocesan Synod Preparatory Commission and the 2nd Diocesan Synod Membership we wish each and every one of you a most Holy and Blessed Christmas Season!!