



***Synod Report: Dolores Mission Church (DMC),
DMC - Confirmation, DMC - Youth Group, DMC
- 1st Communion Catechism, DMC - Social
Justice Committee, DMC - High School Scholars, Proyecto
Pastoral, Dolores Mission School Grades 6-8***

Speaking and Listening

- Throughout the listening sessions and one-on-one conversations, both Spanish and English-speaking members of the parish, youth and elderly, said that Dolores Mission is radically welcoming and inclusive through our community and our priests, because we listen to the voices of the marginalized (e.g. immigrants and unhoused).
- People feel heard and included through our events like our weekly ventas (food on the plaza).
- English-speaking Mass attendees also feel welcome and included in the parish: though they do not live in the neighborhood, they find that priests and community members help them feel safe at Mass.
- There was a clear consensus across ages and language groups on which voices aren't being heard: LGBTQIA+, Women (especially in the context of leadership and authority), Youth, and People of Color.
- The youth are kept from speaking up because of anxiety and fear of judgment, especially regarding LGBTQ+ issues because families and churches ostracize that community.
- Many expressed frustration/disappointment with a church that speaks often/only in male/clerical voices.
- Many youth also said that pro-choice, survivors of abuse, and indigenous peoples' voices haven't been included.
- A few participants, both Spanish and English-speaking, also said that the church does not adequately hear the needs of people with mental health issues, different psychological conditions (e.g. autism), the people who care for them.
- Several individuals noted the importance of spirituality in our 'speaking and listening' - expressing a desire for a 'spirit driven' church that prioritizes "listening to new movements of Spirit in the Body of Christ."
- Very few youth said the church doesn't exclude anyone

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Celebrating

- About half the youth said that they enjoy going to Mass and about half said they do not enjoy going to Mass. They wish it was more interesting, inclusive, and interactive. However, they appreciate how Dolores Mission welcomes new people by applauding and blessing community members at Mass.
- Another key highlight which was shared consistently was the need for greater participation, formation and inclusion of women in liturgical leadership - consideration of the ordination of women to the diaconate and/or priesthood, visibility/representation of women, LGBTQ and POC in public worship.
- Many in our community highlighted the importance of prayer and liturgical celebration that leads to or is integrated in a life of christian service and justice: 'liturgy and practice'; "faith and action"; etc.
- The Sunday experience of Mass and eating together on the plaza helps create the atmosphere of welcome and safety for people from different backgrounds.
- The youth said they think it is extreme to deny someone communion or other sacraments and that it is an abuse of power.
 - The youth want services and Sacraments to be more interesting and interactive and for preaching to be related to what is happening in our world.
- A couple said that the bodas comunitarias made the church feel welcoming and accessible socially and economically.
- A few participants in group listening sessions mentioned that the Mass was a space of peace in their lives.
- One person said that they don't like when preaching becomes political.
- Several comments referred to a 'deeper reading of scripture' - and expressed a desire for greater formation in Ignatian contemplation and other forms of prayerful engagement with scripture.

Going on Mission

- Missionary discipleship was described as a kind of "walking en comunidad y amistad" - community work - visiting sick, poor, elderly, displaced peoples.
- Our parish is known not just for its welcome but its dedication in providing for the economic needs of people in the neighborhood, whether or not they come to Mass regularly, as well as the needs of immigrants and unhoused people.
- The inclusion of and participation of youth was highlighted as was their gift for speaking

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to contemporary issues/dreams.

- The youth want social justice taught in schools to form more missionary disciples and they want parishes to talk more about racial justice, LGBTQIA+ rights, and for all people, regardless of race, gender, and appearance to be welcomed.
- The youth feel encouraged to use their gifts as lectors at Sunday Masses, altar servers, serving around the church, distributing ashes, and through Belong Circles.
- It is clear that the Gospel the youth want proclaimed is a Gospel of inclusivity and not one that is interpreted to fit the norms that Church leaders already believe, so the youth want more representation of women and marginalized groups and communities that aren't scared to talk about issues.
- Participants from the neighborhood also want the parish to organize more educational workshops and service clinics that address the needs of locals.
- Mission work should be joyful work - sharing the joy of community - not the condemnation of others.

Dialoguing

- We do not typically listen to people from other faith traditions, both Christian and non-Christian.
- Our community is experiencing multiple crises locally and globally and many levels of insecurity which makes dialogue difficult; there is a widespread lack of trust/community.
- Suggestions for overcoming this fear centered around the importance of gathering around common goals and being open to change, so that even our youth notice that Dolores Mission contributes to different sectors of society by providing immigration lawyers, housing the unhoused, providing education to TK-8 students, scholarships and support for high schoolers, working with previously incarcerated people, financial support through rental assistance and food distribution, and community organizing.
- Issues in society that arose from the conversations in the parish are: safety/stability/predictability (e.g. rent/health/education), healthcare, childcare, abuse of power/policing, pollution/environment/climate change, rehabilitation over incarceration, racism and abuse of indigenous people, housing/homelessness, income inequality, and gender discrimination/inequity.
- Dialogue begins at home - there are many within our own church community who still aren't listened to or included in conversation about the lived experience of our faith.

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Leading and Deciding

- People want more listening sessions.
- By far the most prominent theme was the inclusion of youth - more than inclusion, trusting their insight and leadership.
- Across the demographic spectrum of the parish, people responded that we are invited to listen to the spirit together by allowing older people to learn from the youth and involving them in discerning changes, listening to the marginalized, having clear and transparent inclusion of women in decision-making and authority in the church, and addressing racism.
- There was hope, especially around concerns about inclusivity and generosity in the church, that the youth will lead the church in new ways.
- Teachers are also key allies in reading 'signs of the times' with students and their families.
- One participant suggested that priests and parishioners need to knock on the doors of people in the neighborhood and ask them what they need.
- Priests who are close to their people are trusted in decision-making and help their communities to feel included in the life of the church.
- When speaking of their experience of church in general, participants said that many priests don't seem very close to their people - and this creates distrust or a sense of distance from decision-making in the church.

Growing in Synodality

- Facilitators noted that open-ended questions make room for real listening - synod processes that ask only for 'what we want to hear/affirm' limit true encounter and don't encourage people to trust that they'll be heard.
- The church is widely perceived as primarily concerned with condemnation of what's wrong in a person/community and not interested in compassionate listening or meaningful accompaniment/solidarity.
- Participants across all demographics wanted more spaces like this (synod listening sessions/encounter), with group/parish listening campaigns and hospitality.
- The youth said that the synod gave them hope because it shows that the leaders of the Catholic Church are aware that their relationships with the members are damaged and that this is an opportunity to listen to those members.
- Youth were very excited to have their voices lifted and opinions listened to during this process, affirming their hopes for more inclusivity and listening to the voices that have typically been ignored or excluded.

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- A key point of growth in synodality would be to encourage collaboration/dialogue between youth and elderly - both groups often feel excluded and both hold wisdom and creativity for leadership in the church.

Comments Not Categorized into Themes:

Additional Context About the Listening Sessions:

NOTE ABOUT DEMOGRAPHICS: all age numbers are "greater than or equal to". We are a LA Voice member congregation and combined the synod with the Power-building Listening Campaign in LA Voice across different religious congregations. We held three "Talleres Cuaresmales"(Lenten Workshops) over three different Wednesdays, open for any to attend and focused more on the Synod's questions, incorporating prayer and a closing ritual. These Wednesday sessions were bi-lingual, and people were generally grateful to be together and listen to each other. The teachers at our school had listening sessions over their regular Friday staff and faculty meetings. Some of the listening sessions among youth were held via Zoom and some were held in person at Dolores Mission. In general students were receptive to the idea of the Synod and excited when we assured them that they should be honest about their feelings. Finally, many 1-1 conversations took place, initiated by the Social Justice Committee.

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PARTICIPANTS

Total:278

Female:	95	Male:	23
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AGES OF PARTICIPANTS

14-17:	18-25:	26-39:	40-55:	56-74:	75+:
87	5	15	25	12	5

ETHNICITY:

Asian:	Black or African-American:	Caucasian:	Hispanic or Latino:
4	0	6	102

Native American:	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander:	Other:
0	0	

Active Catholic since birth:	Inactive Catholic:	Catholic Convert:	Returned Catholic:	Non-Catholic:

MASS ATTENDANCE

Never or Rarely:	A few times a year:	Once/twice a month:	Almost every week:	Every week:	More than once a week:

Number of Participants in Ecumenical Session(s):

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Date(s)/Time(s)/Duration(s) of Listening Sessions: Parents of First-Communion

Students: February 19, 2022, 9am-10am (1 hour)

Parish-wide: March 9, 2022 5:30pm-7pm (1.5 hours)

Parish-wide: March 16, 2022 5:30pm-7pm (1.5 hours)

Parish-wide: March 23, 2022 5:30pm-7pm (1.5 hours)

Confirmation: March 22, 2022, 6-7 PM (1 hour)

HS Scholars 9th Grade: March 9, 2022, 7-8 PM (1 hour)

HS Scholars 10th Grade: March 9, 2022, 8-9 PM (1 hour)

HS Scholars 11th and 12th Grade: March 16th 7-8 (1 hour)

DMS 6th Grade: March 10, 2022, 11AM-12PM (1 hour)

DMS 7th Grade: March 10, 2022, 2-3 PM (1 hour)

DMS 8th Grade: March 10, 2022, 9-10 AM (1 hour)

Youth Group: February 24, 2022, 7-8 PM (1 hour)

Various one-on-one conversations throughout February and March 2022

Languages of Listening Sessions: English, Spanish

Format of Listening Sessions: zoom and in-person listening sessions incorporating ADLA questions along with other questions

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San Gabriel