

Archdiocese of Edmonton

Synod Report: Gathering the Fruits of Reflection

April 5/2024

Background

The Archdiocese of Edmonton completed the Synod Report of 2022 by synthesizing the discernment of 350 Listening Sessions and 4,000 participants. A Synod Advisory Committee and a Feedback Discernment Committee ensured there were a variety of voices and perspectives from every corner of our Archdiocese. Throughout the process we reminded ourselves of two questions: what are we hearing and where are we going?

As an Archdiocese, 2023 marked the year for the renewal of our Pastoral Priorities. The question, as presented in the *XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops First Session*, “How can we be a synodal Church in mission?” became the guiding compass as we embarked on a journey of discerning a path forward. Our intent was to “**promote the most appropriate initiatives to involve the whole People of God.**”

Key Recommendations for the Archdiocese of Edmonton:

The Archdiocese of Edmonton Synod synthesis report outlined the following key recommendations:

- ✓ Renew the proclamation of the gospel by a return to scripture and the authentic teachings of the church,
- ✓ Enrich the work that comes from discernment of going forth in mission with the distinct and unique calls each parish identifies for themselves,
- ✓ Renew the call to mission both within and outside the church walls, forming confident witnesses of the faith,
- ✓ Move out into the world and our spheres of influence to be confident disciples and renew the fire for transforming our world,
- ✓ Continue gatherings across the Archdiocese where people can hear testimonies and respect the ideas of others by providing a space so that all can contribute in accordance with their gifts.

Process:

Our Archdiocese of Edmonton Synod synthesis report has been a constant reference guide while discerning the Pastoral Priorities. Consultation at various levels of leadership has been extensive. Our clergy, eight deaneries, Presbyteral Council have engaged in dialogue discerning how best to articulate the Pastoral Priorities so as to create a **climate of mutual listening and sincere dialogue**. The goal is to empower our parishes so that they may fully serve the People of God.

This led to the formation of a Pastoral Priorities Implementation Committee which is comprised of six members from the previous Synod Advisory Committee along with eight new members from a variety of vocations. The mandate for this committee, in the spirit of synodality, which include the following responsibilities:

- ✓ Expound, elaborate, and provide actionable details to the Archdiocesan Pastoral and Evangelical Priorities 2024-2027,

- ✓ Review appropriate meeting summaries and feedback documents, such as the Synod Synthesis Report to inform the implementation plan,
- ✓ Outline a strategic process to guide and support the implementation plan by assessing the Archdiocesan pastoral landscape, through the lens of evolving needs, challenges, and opportunities,
- ✓ Brainstorm engagement and leadership opportunities that develop the pastoral priorities and nurture the People of Mission culture within the spirit of synodality.

To ensure continuity, the Synod Coordinator, who is now in the role of Mission Engagement Lead, provides leadership and support to this newly formed Pastoral Priorities Committee.

Archdiocese of Edmonton Pastoral Priorities 2024-2027

After wide consultation with clergy, religious, and laity who serve across various ministries and vocations, and informed by our Archdiocesan Synthesis Report, three pastoral priorities emerged. The following chart outlines the Pastoral Priorities and how they are aligned with, *A Synodal Church in Mission Synthesis Report*.

Archdiocese of Edmonton Pastoral Priorities	A Synodal Church in Mission: Synthesis Report
Be It Done (Overarching theme)	9(c) Mary of Nazareth, woman of faith and Mother of God, remains for all a unique source of theological, ecclesial and spiritual meaning. Mary reminds us of the universal call to listen attentively to God and to remain open to the Holy Spirit
Living in the Word through Worship, Witness, and Service	Linked to the three pillars of synodality: Communion, Mission and Participation
Formation for Eucharistic Worship	3 (k/l/m) If the Eucharist shapes synodality, then the first step we should take is to celebrate the Mass in a way that befits the gift, with an authentic sense of friendship in Christ...second step is to make liturgical language more accessible to the faithful and inclusive of the diversity of cultures...third step is to widen community prayer beyond the celebration of Mass.
Forming Confident Witnesses	10 (e) The Church’s magisterium has a well-developed body of teaching on the importance of both hierarchical and charismatic gifts in the life and mission of the Church. This calls for growth in both ecclesial understanding and in theological reflection.
Formation for Service to families and marriage	8(n) We need to be more creative in establishing ministries according to the needs of the local Church, with the particular involvement of the young...We could also explore the possibility of establishing a ministry assigned to married couples committed to supporting family life and accompanying people preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage

