

Brothers and Sisters,

It's hard to believe that over a month has passed since our Archdiocesan Discernment Event! We want to express our continued gratitude for your prayerful participation in this extraordinary process.

Using the small group submissions, event survey, and our own time in prayer, we have compiled a summary of cross-cutting themes from each of the major Archdiocesan Discernment Event topics; mission of the disciple, family, parish, and Archdiocese. We invite you to continue to pray with these themes and see how you can implement them in your own life, in your family, and in your parish.

Mission of the Disciple

Our first mission is to divine intimacy which we participate in through prayer and the sacraments.

- Like St. John the Evangelist resting his head on the heart of Christ at the Last Supper, we find strength in the Eucharist.
- We must abide with Christ, as Jesus says in the Gospel of John 15:5.
- Like Martha in the Gospel of Luke chapter 10, we in Denver can be anxious about many things. Denver uniquely feels the weight of activity by “doing mission work”. God is always inviting us to prioritize him first.
- Letting this relationship with Jesus actually change me. For it to be shared fruitfully, it has to actually transform me to be more like him.

Take seriously that you have personal responsibility for the mission to evangelize.

- I am my brother's keeper; The mission of evangelization has been given to me personally.
- My mission involves my sphere of influence – we are called to be the “next door saints” as Pope Francis said in his Apostolic Exhortation [Gaudete et Exsultate](#) .
- “It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain” (John 15:16) We are chosen by God, we have to be good stewards of his grace.

God's plan means that I need to grow in truth, virtue, and holiness.

- If I am part of God's plan, then I know that I need personal healing in order to fulfill that. Before Bartimaeus could follow Jesus, he had to seek healing for his blindness. Christ respects his freedom by asking him, "What do you want me to do for you?" (Mark 10:51).

Our apostolic age needs lives characterized by public witness; we need to be intentional about sharing the fruits of abiding in the Lord which are love, joy, boldness, courage, and conviction.

Discipleship needs communion, unity, and community. We are not islands, not individuals but members of the Body of Christ.

- Challenge the separation, isolation, and loneliness of our culture by being the communion of the Church

Like St. Paul writes in his letter to the Romans, "outdo one another in showing honor..." (Romans 12:10) as disciples.

"Christ called to himself twelve men" and begins his public ministry with a community (Mark 3:13). Our calling, our growth, does not happen in isolation, it happens in the communion of the Church.

Mission of the Family

Embrace the messiness and suffering of the family.

- Many people experience shame because their family situation does not live up to "the ideal family." This shame becomes a barrier to belonging and a perceived obstacle to feeling welcome in our communities.
- We need to guard our concept of family from becoming individualistic and instead embrace a biblical worldview of the family, which is more than just the nuclear family.
- Every family needs accompaniment.

Help the family to encounter healing and forgiveness.

Recognize that parents are the primary formators and educators of their children.

- There is a desire, especially for parents, to receive formation and accompaniment and for families to mentor families.

There is a need for strengthening and clarifying of what it means to be Father and Mother.

- Formation around what these roles mean during our apostolic time.

Identity is received, for good or bad, in the relationships that exist within families.

- There is a gravity to the role and responsibility of the family in light of that fact.

Mission of the Parish

God is asking our parishes to become more welcoming. A welcoming like the Father of the prodigal son in the Gospel of Luke chapter 15. A home where people are expected and awaited, seen, known, and loved.

- Be a place of belonging, a place where you can find your true identity.
- Accomplished through accompanying, more than a hospitality ministry
- Welcome through personal invitation: we each must welcome people home to the parish.
- To welcome does not mean you compromise (avoid the two flawed sides: compromise love and compromise truth): We're rooted in truth, in sound doctrine, in revelation. It must be an invitation to come and see.
- We are comfortable welcoming those who look like us. We need eyes to see who we're not welcoming.

Our parishes need to be actively working towards a supernatural unity and healing between Catholics of different language/cultural backgrounds, liturgical expressions, political affiliations, etc. Healing is an avenue to unity.

- Like Jesus prays in the Gospel of John chapter 17 – so that they (his disciples) may be one, as we are one...so that the world would know that you sent me
- Belonging to the parish also brings forth unity.
- Create unity within the parish community among ministries to reflect a Christian body. One community, not separate communities and ministries under one roof.
- The invitation is clear and has been ongoing, but have we responded to it?
- We can't pretend there have not been or are not wounds. We've inflicted wounds and we all need healing through reconciliation- reconciliation to Christ first (2 Corinthians 5:16-21).

Parishes should be a place where disciples are equipped to live their mission and vocation. (Ephesians 4)

- The laity is being called to be the protagonist: the task of the laity is to sanctify the world. Evangelization cannot fall solely on the clergy and ordained of the parish.
- The model of equipping isn't simply a classroom or lecture-based model. Equipping disciples within a parish happens through apprenticeship and accompaniment.
- Furthermore, that equipping disciples is not only giving them knowledge and skills but recognizing that God has already given them specific charisms that are essential to their mission. Accompaniment should be helping parishioners claim and exercise charisms they've already been given by the Holy Spirit.
- There are a lot of things parishes can be doing. In this time where we are being called to mission, a guiding question for us should be 'How is this helping me and others become missionary disciples?'

The parish doesn't exist for its own sake but is sent out for sake of the broader community. We need to reach out with the Good News, with the treasure we have, and share it.

- Outreach to those who've fallen away
- Outreach to the poor
- Outreach to the broader community
- We need to get to know our territory, its reality, and our people, in and out of our pews.
- We're not called into mission alone. We have an individual responsibility to live the mission, but we are co-laborers in the vineyard of evangelization.
- The parish is being called to be a place of synodality, by journeying with the people.
- The parish is the place to share the fire of the Holy Spirit and be contagious with our Gospel joy. We're called to go back to the basics- "Be humble, do less, be more." As Jesus shares with Martha in Luke 10:41-42, "Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing", and that is Christ Jesus and His Church. We are called to reflect on how much we're doing and if it is what Jesus is asking us to do.

The Eucharist is the soul of the parish. "You will win the war before the Blessed Sacrament" - Venerable Fulton Sheen.

Mission of the Church/Archdiocese of Denver

Healing - we have work to do to be a minister of healing.

- Healing starts at the top: bishops, priests, pastoral center employees, lay leaders, parish staff, parishioners, etc.
- Seeking forgiveness for the wounds we've caused.
- Seeking healing from the wounds in the broader church, in families, and in individual lives.
- Respond to the call to equip parishes to be centers of healing
- Healing for communities of different languages and cultures that have been wounded by the Church and some of her priests.

Unity - I need my Church in Northern Colorado to be united.

- There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4:4-6
- The Church should be an active agent of unity
- Consistency: of experience, formation, messaging/communications, between parishes, sacramental requirements.
- Communication of clarity of mission: more about the 'do' than the 'don't'.

- We need ongoing unity in prayer like the Advent preaching series, Surrender Novena, the Synodal experience: this is the beginning
- Unity between languages and cultures
- The Church is a family with a clear head, our archbishop, who unites and sets the tone

Again, we want to express our gratitude for your prayerful participation in this synodal process.

This model of prayerful listening and turning to God first has already proven to be fruitful in healing and unifying our communities and that is worth proclaiming! We have heard from many participants that this experience has been a time of great spiritual fruit in their lives. We encourage you to continue to seek God's will first through prayer

Thank you,

The Archdiocesan Discernment Team