



## Parish Dialogue Gatherings

Prior to the Synod in November, the people of the Archdiocese are invited to attend a parish Dialogue Gathering. The purpose of these gatherings is to hear directly from the faithful and identify the most important issues that should be addressed at the Synod. These gatherings will encourage open, honest, and respectful sharing of each participant's perspective. Responses from the gatherings will be recorded and serve as the foundation for Synod 16.

### La Salette Dialogue Gathering



**WHO:** YOU!  
**WHAT:** OLLS Parish Dialogue Gathering  
**WHEN:** Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 9am - Noon  
**WHERE:** Father Landry Center  
**WHY:** To support Synod 16 (see below)

#### What to Expect?

At each Dialogue Gathering, a parish-selected Facilitator will lead parishioners and parish leaders through one of three formats for prayer, personal reflection, and group discussion. Each session lasts about three hours. Participants will be asked to reflect upon and share their responses to several questions related to the overarching themes of the evangelization initiative, **Unleash the Gospel: Encounter, Grow, and Witness.**

#### What is an encounter with Jesus?

An encounter with Jesus can best be described as a moment in our lives that is so impactful it causes us to change how we live. Once we have encountered Christ, from that point forward we are either all in or all out. We no longer live for ourselves but rather give our lives over to the one that saves us. In Mark's Gospel account, Jesus

calls the people to Himself and says, “*Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me*” (Mk 8:34). And again later in Mark the same command is given to the Rich Young Man (Mk 10:17-30). Jesus is constantly seeking to encounter us in our daily lives. When we encounter Jesus and reflect on His call to come and follow Him, we are faced with a decision to either embrace our cross and follow Him, or walk away as sad as the rich young man. When was the last time you had a life changing encounter with Jesus in your life? How has your parish fostered opportunities for this to happen? What type of opportunities do you think your parish or Archdiocese could offer that would open the hearts of others to encounter our Lord?

### **What is Evangelization, anyway?**

Evangelization is bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to those around us.

### **How do you grow daily as a disciple?**

A follower of Jesus is constantly seeking to treat others as He treated others, to pray as He prayed, to love as He loved, to be more like Him. Growing daily as His disciple demands the daily surrender of ourselves to Christ “...yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me” (Gal 2:20). Growth as a disciple only proceeds through daily surrender. The surrender in our own discipleship should mirror Christ’s surrender to the cross. Surrender is exactly what Jesus did on the Cross for you: He personally surrendered His life into your and my hands, so that you and I, through our sin, might nail Him to the Cross. He surrendered Himself, so that you might know the intimate depth of His love for you and He invites your surrender of love in return. What do you do to grow daily as a disciple of Christ? What has your parish offered that has helped you most in growing daily as His disciple? What could your parish or Archdiocese do to support your growth?

### **How do you witness Christ’s mercy?**

Most Catholics tend to think, “isn’t it just important to be good and try to get to heaven?” No! Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord – that’s the point of being a Christian. It is why a parish exists; it is why the Church exists. We must be a living witness to the power of His mercy. It is time for us to do the thing Jesus made us for: tell people that He is alive; that He died in order to meet them; that He has a marvelous life in store for them. The only thing we need to have is this conviction: “*Knowing Jesus is the best gift that any person can receive; that we have encountered Him is the best thing that has happened in our lives, and making him known by our word and deeds is our joy*” (Aparecida, 29). When we encounter Christ anew and grow daily as His disciple we naturally witness to His everlasting mercy and Unleash the Gospel to everyone that we meet. When or how have you given witness to the mercy of Jesus? What does your parish do to help you in witnessing the power of Jesus’s mercy? What could your parish or Archdiocese do to better prepare you to be a witness?