



FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH COMMUNION PARTICIPATION MISSION

IN OUR OWN WORDS

Four members of our parish family participated in the gathering at the Public Auditorium on June 11th: Charlotte Brown, Margarete Smith, Rosalind Whatley, and Erin Whatley. Each one of them has written a short reflection based on their experience and impression of the day-long gathering. Those reflections will be shared here in our bulletin over the next few weeks. Today's reflection is written by Margarete Smith.



Hopeful and nervous best describe my state of mind as I entered Cleveland Public Auditorium on June 11, 2022 for our Diocesan Pre-Synodal Gathering. I was hopeful that the day's work would jump start a wave of recognition, response and action that would help us to be more of a Church that is about, "inclusion, unity and love," as called for by a participant in one of our parish listening sessions. My nervousness came from my fear that I would not see or hear enough of our parish's concerns, fears, and recommendations from our parish report addressed during the gathering.

Thankfully I left the gathering with hope, and my nervousness gradually disappeared as I read the Top 10 Priorities for the Diocese of Cleveland which were determined after examining reports from parishes throughout our diocese. The contents of our parish's report are well represented in the priorities listed.

Interacting and collaborating with the other Catholics from various areas of our diocese that were assigned with me to a table for the work of the day, helped me realize that though we arrived from different parishes and were of different races, we had some common dreams, hopes and fears for our parishes and our Church. One table mate, Andrea, stands out because of her expressed wishes for more inclusiveness, diversity and oneness in her parish.

I admit to wanting actions to be taken immediately that address our concerns, fears and dreams. I, however, also realize that this Synod on Synodality is a process that has only just begun, and I left the gathering feeling hopeful.