



## THE MASS – YEAR 2/ST. PASCAL BAYLON – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

*Note: These FAQs have been prepared by members of the Synod Evangelization Team (SET) at St. Pascal Baylon for the use and benefit of parish members and other interested persons as we continue our Synod journey and move forward to implement the Synod Priority of the Mass for Year 2 (July 2024 – June 2025) in the parish. The FAQs are based on information currently available to us and are current as of the revision date noted below. FAQs may be adjusted and new FAQs added as new or updated information becomes available.*

### **Small Groups in Lent 2025** (content below new as of 01/14/25)

- **Question:** Will we have Small Groups for Lent 2025?

**Answer:** Yes. We will have a Lenten session of Small Groups in 2025. Small Groups will continue to play an important role in the implementation of the Synod Priority of the Mass for Year 2 at St. Pascal's. Existing Small Groups are welcome to resume at that time. And, if we have sufficient interest from parishioners who have not previously been in a Small Group at St. Pascal's, we would welcome adding new Small Groups during Lent, too. Remember, Archbishop Hebda invites all the faithful to participate in Small Groups as a leader or a member.

- **Question:** When will the Lenten session of Small Groups begin in 2025?

**Answer:** The Lenten session of Small Groups, for existing and any new Small Groups, will begin the week of February 24, 2025. The session will entail approximately six or seven meetings. Leaders of existing Small Groups will be contacting their group members with information about the date, time, and location of when their groups will resume. Leaders of any new Small Groups formed for Lent will similarly contact their group members with meeting details.

- **Question:** What will Small Groups be like in the Lenten session of 2025?

**Answer:** Small Groups in the Lenten session of Year 2 of the Synod in 2025 will be very much the same as they were in the fall session. Groups of 6-12 members will meet on their designated days and times for meetings of 1-1/2 hours each. Each Small Group will be guided by a Small Group leader (and possibly a co-leader) from our parish who has been specially formed and trained for this role. Each Small Group will have a common format or structure, which will include prayer, personal sharing, and discussion of the teaching and content which has been selected by the parish Synod Evangelization Team with the approval of Pastor Fr. John Mitchell.

- **Question:** What will the content be for Small Groups this Lenten session?

**Answer:** The content for Small Groups in the Lenten session will be in keeping with the Synod Year 2 Priority of the Mass. The content for existing Small Groups that are continuing in Lent will focus on the Eucharist using the Bread of Life readings from Chapter 6 of John's



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Gospel and additional Scriptures relating to the Eucharist. New Small Groups will have similar content for this session. The content for new Small Groups will focus on the Mass using the book, “Living the Mass” by Fr. Dominic Grassi and Joe Paprocki, or, if the group chooses, the Bread of Life readings. The book was the content that Small Groups at St. Pascal’s used this past fall session and was very well received. The book is easy to read and very accessible. The authors tell us this book is not just another book that explains the parts of the Mass. Rather, the book helps us understand how Sunday Mass prepares us to live the Catholic way of life that we committed to in baptism, a sacrament of initiation that reaches completion in the celebration of the Eucharist. It should appeal to a variety of people regardless of where they are in their faith journey or experience of the Mass. The parish will provide the book to new Small Group members.

- **Question:** May a Small Group select alternative content for this Lenten session?

**Answer:** If an existing Small Group led by an experienced Small Group leader would like to pursue alternative content for the Lenten session, that might be possible provided the alternative content is aligned with the Synod Priority of the Mass and the alternative content and how it will be used has been reviewed in advance with and approved by Pastor Fr. John Mitchell and Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation Kim Roering.

- **Question:** Is there a fee for joining a Small Group or for the materials (e.g., the book, “Living the Mass”) that the parish may provide to Small Groups for the Lenten session?

**Answer:** No. There is no fee for joining a Small Group or for the materials the parish may provide to Small Groups for the Lenten session. The materials will be provided by the parish at no expense to Small Group members. Free will donations to help defray the cost to the parish are, of course, welcome.

- **Question:** If I would like to join a Small Group at St. Pascal’s for the first time for the Lenten session, how may I do that?

**Answer:** If you are an adult parishioner and would like to join a Small Group for the first time for the Lenten session, you will have the opportunity to sign up at the table in the Gathering Space after the weekend Masses on February 1/2 and 8/9, 2025. Members of the parish Synod Evangelization Team (SET) will be at the tables with sign-up forms and to answer questions you may have and help you sign up if you wish. Sign-up forms will also be available from the Parish Office. Drop off completed sign-up forms at the Parish Office or the table in the Gathering Space after the weekend Masses mentioned above. ***Please return your completed sign-up form to the Parish Office or to a SET member at the table in the Gathering Space after weekend Masses no later than Sunday, February 9, 2025.***



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- **Question:** Do I have to sign-up as an individual in order to join a Small Group? Or may I sign up as part of a group?

**Answer:** You are welcome to sign up as an individual and you will be placed with a Small Group. If you have a group of people in mind with whom you would like to share the Small Group experience, you are welcome to sign-up as a new group that you identify in the sign-up form. (Be sure you confirm with each of the people that you list in the group that they wish to be included in this group.) Each of the people listed in a group should still complete and return a sign-up form for themselves, so that we also have their contact information and meeting preferences. Please note that we reserve the right to combine an identified group with other individuals as necessary to form optimally sized and balanced new Small Groups.

- **Question:** When will new Small Groups meet during the Lenten session?

**Answer:** When new Small Groups will meet during the Lenten session will depend on the number of interested adults who sign up and their availability. You will have the opportunity to express your preference(s) as to day and time (morning, afternoon, or evening) you would like to meet in the sign-up form for new Small Groups.

- **Question:** Where will new Small Groups meet?

**Answer:** As is the case with existing Small Groups, new Small Groups are encouraged to meet at St. Pascal's. The meeting rooms at St. Pascal's provide a convenient, accessible, and suitable location for Small Group meetings.

- **Question:** What about Small Group leaders? Do you need new, additional Small Group leaders for the Lenten session?

**Answer:** New Small Group leaders are most welcome and encouraged. We are always looking for adult parishioners who wish to become Small Group leaders. The more Small Group leaders we have, the more Small Groups we can accommodate. If you are interested in being a new Small Group leader, please indicate that on your sign-up form. New Small Group leader formation and training for the Lenten session will be provided.

- **Question:** What will happen to Small Groups at the end of the Lenten session?

**Answer:** Small Groups are welcome to continue after Lent if they wish. Of course, no one leading or participating as a member of a Small Group in the Lenten session is obligated to continue with their or another Small Group into another session. Experience suggests, however, that many Small Groups will want to continue. At this time, the parish Synod Evangelization Team (SET) is considering possible content for an Easter session of Small Groups that would likely run for three sessions beginning immediately after Easter and ending before Memorial Day. Additional information about an Easter session of Small Groups and related content will be shared near the end of the Lenten session as information becomes available.



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### Small Groups in Fall 2024 (content below new as of 07/20/24)

- **Question:** Will Small Groups be part of the implementation of the Synod Priority of the Mass for Year 2 (July 2024 – June 2025)?

**Answer:** Yes. Small Groups will play an important role in the implementation of the Synod Priority for Year 2 at St. Pascal's and we will build on our experience with Small Groups in Year 1 during Lent, the Easter season, and the summer. Archbishop Hebda invites all the faithful to participate in Small Groups this year as a leader or a member.

- **Question:** When will Small Groups begin in Year 2?

**Answer:** The fall session of Small Groups will begin the week of October 7, 2024. The session will entail approximately six or seven meetings. It will be up to each Small Group to decide among its members whether it wants to meet weekly or every other week during the session.

- **Question:** What will Small Groups be like in Year 2?

**Answer:** Small Groups in Year 2 will be very similar to what Small Groups were like in Year 1. Groups of 6-12 members will meet on their designated days and times on the schedule (weekly or every other week) they decide for meetings of 1-1/2 hours each. Each Small Group will be guided by a Small Group leader (and possibly a co-leader) from our parish who has been specially formed and trained for this role. Each Small Group will have a common format or structure, which will include prayer, personal sharing, and discussion of the teaching and content which has been selected by the parish Synod Evangelization Team with the approval of Pastor Fr. John Mitchell.

- **Question:** What will the content be for Small Groups this fall session?

**Answer:** In keeping with the Synod Year 2 Priority of the Mass, the content that the parish Synod Evangelization Team is recommending for Small Groups during the fall session will focus on the book, "Living the Mass" by Fr. Dominic Grassi and Joe Paprocki. The book, which comes with a discussion guide, is easy to read and very accessible. The authors tell us this book is not just another book that explains the parts of the Mass. Rather, the book helps us understand how Sunday Mass prepares us to live the Catholic way of life that we committed to in baptism, a sacrament of initiation that reaches completion in the celebration of the Eucharist. It should appeal to the variety of people in our Small Groups regardless of where they are in their faith journey or experience of the Mass. The parish will provide the book and discussion guide to Small Group members. Brief weekly videos providing an overview of chapters of the book may also be available to assist Small Group members.

If, however, a Small Group led by an experienced Small Group leader would like to pursue alternative content for the fall session, that might be possible provided the alternative content is aligned with the Synod Priority of the Mass and the alternative content and how it



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will be used has been reviewed in advance with and approved by Pastor Fr. John Mitchell and Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation Kim Roering.

- **Question:** Is there a fee for joining a Small Group or for the book, “Living the Mass” and the discussion guide for the fall session?

**Answer:** No. There is no fee for joining a Small Group or for the book or the discussion guide. The book and discussion guide will be provided by the parish at no expense to Small Group members. Free will donations to help defray the cost to the parish will, of course, be welcome.

- **Question:** How may I join a Small Group for the fall session?

**Answer:** If you were a member or a leader of a Small Group in Synod Year 1 (during Lent, the Easter season, or the summer), you will receive an e-mail message from Kim Roering, Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation, in July asking whether you want to continue as a member or a leader in a Small Group in Year 2 beginning with the fall session. If you responded to Kim, your decision has been noted. If you have not yet responded to Kim, kindly do so as soon as possible.

If you were not a member of a Small Group in Year 1, every adult parishioner will have the opportunity to sign up for a Small Group for the fall session at the table in the Gathering Space after the weekend Masses on August 24/25 and September 7/8. Members of the parish Synod Evangelization Team (SET) will be at the tables with sign-up forms (newly revised and simplified for the fall session) and to answer questions you may have and help you sign up if you wish. Sign-up forms will also be available from the Parish Office, or download and print the form from the parish website ([www.stpascals.org/archdiocesan-synod](http://www.stpascals.org/archdiocesan-synod)) or the Pulse weekly e-newsletter. Drop off completed sign-up forms at the Parish Office or the table in the Gathering Space after the weekend Masses mentioned above. ***Please return your completed sign-up form to the Parish Office or to a SET member at the table in the Gathering Space after weekend Masses no later than Sunday, September 8, 2024.***

- **Question:** Do I have to sign-up as an individual in order to join a Small Group? Or may I sign up as part of a group?

**Answer:** You are welcome to sign up as an individual and you will be placed with a Small Group. If you have a group of people in mind with whom you would like to share the Small Group experience, you are welcome to sign-up as a group that you identify in the sign-up form. (Be sure you confirm with each of the people that you list in the group that they wish to be included in this group.) Each of the people listed in a group should still complete and return a sign-up form for themselves, so that we also have their contact information and preferences. Please note that we reserve the right to combine an identified group with other individuals as necessary to form optimally sized and balanced Small Groups.





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- **Question:** What about Small Group leaders? Do you need new, additional Small Group leaders for the fall session?

**Answer:** New Small Group leaders are most welcome and encouraged. We are always looking for adult parishioners who wish to become Small Group leaders. The more Small Group leaders we have, the more Small Groups we can accommodate. If you are interested in being a new Small Group leader, please indicate that on your sign-up form. New Small Group leader formation and training for the fall session will be provided and is required.

- **Question:** What will the formation and training of new Small Group leaders at St. Pascal's involve?

**Answer:** The formation and training of new Small Group leaders will take place at St. Pascal's during one two-hour session and possibly a second session (if needed/desired) on a weekday evening in September (currently scheduled for Tuesday, September 17, and, only if needed/desired, Tuesday, September 24). It will be an abbreviated and much more focused and practical formation and training than what last year's Small Group leaders may have experienced.

- **Question:** When will Small Groups meet during the fall session?

**Answer:** As with Small Groups in Synod Year 1, we hope to have meeting times for Small Groups in Year 2 during the fall session available on a variety of days in mornings, afternoons, and evenings. We hope to have available days and times for Small Groups in the fall session from which you can choose (or express a preference) in the sign-up forms for Small Groups.

- **Question:** Where will Small Groups meet?

**Answer:** Also, as with Small Groups in Synod Year 1, Small Groups in Year 2 are encouraged to meet at St. Pascal's. The meeting rooms at St. Pascal's provide a convenient, accessible, and suitable location for Small Group meetings. If, however, a Small Group determines that it would prefer to meet at a location other than St. Pascal's (e.g., a parishioner's home or other suitable location such as a social room at a parishioner's apartment building, townhouse, condominium, or senior residential facility), the Small Group leader should contact Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation Kim Roering to determine whether the proposed alternative location is acceptable and, if so, the parish and Archdiocesan requirements (if any) that will need to be satisfied in order to use it.

- **Question:** What will happen to Small Groups at the end of the fall session?

**Answer:** Small Groups will continue and a spring session for 2025 is planned. No one leading or participating as a member of a Small Group in the fall session, however, is obligated to continue into the spring session. At the conclusion of the fall session, we will consult with Small Group leaders and members to assess their experience and interest in



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continuing and look for ways to continue to improve the Small Group experience and content at St. Pascal's as we prepare for a spring session of Small Groups.

### Synod Priority for Year 2 – The Mass (content below new as of 06/15/24)

- **Question:** What is the focus of the Synod Priority for Year 2 that will be implemented over the next year (July 2024 – June 2025)?

**Answer:** The focus of the Synod Priority for Year 2 is the Mass, particularly the Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian life. In this year, the faithful will be encouraged and provided opportunities in a variety of forms to deepen their experience of the Mass and the Eucharist. Archbishop Hebda makes the connection between this priority and all three “mysteries of the Upper Room” (where Jesus joined with his apostles for the Last Supper) which he explored in his Post-Synodal Pastoral Letter, *You Will Be My Witnesses*, and wants us to re-integrate these mysteries to enrich our lived experience of the Liturgy.

- **Question:** What are the three “mysteries of the Upper Room” and what opportunities can they provide us related to the Mass?

**Answer:** The mysteries and the opportunities they can provide us related to the Mass include the following:

- *Washing of the feet* – The first mystery is the washing of the feet which, in connection with the Mass, can be expressed by showing radical hospitality before and after Sunday Mass, especially to the newcomer, the disconnected, and the stranger, as well as actively fostering works of mercy within and beyond the parish. The Archbishop in his letter emphasizes this point with a quotation from Pope St. John Paul II (in his 2004 Apostolic Letter, *Mane Nobiscum Domine* (“Stay With Us Lord”), “We cannot delude ourselves. . . our concern for those in need. . . will be the criterion by which the authenticity of our Eucharistic celebrations is judged.”
- *The Eucharist* – The second mystery is the gift of the Eucharist which calls us to educate about the Mass and for celebrating beautiful liturgies with active participation, so that the Sunday liturgy becomes a truly lived source and summit of our Catholic lives.
- *Pentecost and the power of the Holy Spirit* – This third mystery speaks to the importance of living Sunday as a “day of fire,” by heightening our trust in, and recognition of, the Holy Spirit’s power in our lives to reveal God’s love, heal and renew us, and empower us to be Jesus’ witnesses. This mystery helps the faithful to live Sunday not only as the day of the Eucharist, but also as the day of fire with praying in the Spirit and going forth in the Spirit on mission.



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- **Question:** How will the Synod Priority for Year 2 be implemented at St. Pascal's?

**Answer:** The Synod Priority for Year 2 will be implemented using a variety of means and resources throughout the year.

Small Groups will play an important role in our implementation efforts and the teaching content for Small Groups in Year 2 will focus on the Mass, especially the Eucharist, and its effect on our lives. Archbishop Hebda invites all the faithful to participate in Small Groups this year either as a leader or a member. Small Groups in Year 2 at St. Pascal's will build on our experience with Small Groups in Year 1 during Lent, the Easter season, and the summer. We look forward to recruiting and forming new Small Group leaders and recruiting new Small Group members, especially from parish ministries involved with the Mass (e.g., sacristans, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, proclaimers/petitioners, altar servers, ushers, cantors, choir members, musicians, liturgical environment ministers, etc.) and ministries that seek to offer radical hospitality (e.g., hospitality ministers, Social Justice and Caring Committee, Women's Club, Men's Club, etc.), later this summer and to launching new Small Groups for interested adult parishioners who were unable to participate before and resuming existing Small Groups this fall.

The SET will be planning other activities over the course of the year with a focus on the Mass with the coordination and support of other parish staff members (e.g., Pastoral Associate for Music Sharon Balcom, Liturgy Assistant Keri Mader, etc.) and resources (e.g., Adult Faith Formation). Such other activities may include speakers, presentations, or focused formation events on the Eucharist and the Mass, and possibly even day trips to experience parishes or sites of religious significance in the area, Archdiocesan liturgies or events, or exploring the visual arts and architecture integral to the Mass.

### **Archdiocesan Synod** (content below new as of 06/15/24)

- **Question:** What is the Synod?

**Answer:** In 2019, Archbishop Hebda initiated a Synod process grounded in parish life and intended to discern and establish clear pastoral priorities to promote greater unity and more vigorous proclamation of the Good News in the Archdiocese. The Synod process began with Prayer and Listening Events at parishes, including St. Pascal's, during 2019-2020 and Parish Consultation in fall 2021. An Archdiocesan Synod Assembly followed in June 2022 at which 40 Synod Propositions coming out of the Listening Events and Consultation were discussed and voted on by members of the Assembly.





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- **Question:** What was the result of the Synod?

**Answer:** In November 2022, Archbishop Hebda published his Post-Synodal Pastoral Letter, *You Will Be My Witnesses*, to the Faithful of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. In his Pastoral Letter, the Archbishop shared his thoughts about the Synod process and how to begin the work of Synod implementation. To that end, the Archbishop, among other things, asked pastors to form a Synod Evangelization Team (SET) for each parish to assist the pastors in the implementation of Synod Priorities for the parish going forward. In December 2022, Fr. John Mitchell formed the SET for the parish of St. Pascal Baylon (composed of Jaci Bush, Nicole Fisch, Julie Moore, Deacon Rich Moore, Kim Roering, John Scanlon, and Mary Weyandt) to assist him in developing and implementing at the parish level the Synod Priorities.

- **Question:** What are the Synod Priorities?

**Answer:** The Archbishop established one Synod Priority at the parish level for each of the next three years. The Synod Priorities for the next three years are:

Year 1 (July 2023 – June 2024) – Small Groups;  
Year 2 (July 2024 – June 2025) – the Mass; and  
Year 3 (July 2025 – June 2026) – Parents as Primary Educators.