“Opportunities and Challenges” Listening Sessions

Synthesis Report

North Snohomish County Parish Family 5

Immaculate Conception, St. John Vianney, St. Mary, St. Cecilia

October 2026

Questions that were posed to parishioners:

1. What challenges do you see that exist in the wider community?
2. What challenges do you see that exist in the parish?
3. Having heard information from the community demographics report, what opportunities do you see (in our parish and in the wider community) to more effectively serve and accompany others? Is there anybody that we can do a better job of reaching?

Overview of the Synthesis Report

After conducting the “Opportunities and Challenges” listening sessions in our parish family in September of 2026, Parish Family Advisory Council members analyzed the notetaker sheets and identified the most common themes that were mentioned by parishioners across the three parishes and the mission. These common themes are summarized in this report, categorizing them by the three questions that were posed to parishioners at the listening sessions. We hope that this report will serve parishioners by highlighting the hopes and concerns that are shared throughout the parish family.

Challenges in the Wider Community

In discussing the challenges that exist in the wider community, the issues of homelessness and drug addiction were some of the most frequently mentioned by parishioners of our parish family in the North Snohomish County. “Homelessness is the biggest problem in this part of the county, caused by loss of jobs, economics; drugs are also a big problem.” Given the vast geographical boundaries of our parish family in the North Snohomish County region, the challenges of population growth and traffic congestion are difficult for a growing community. Another challenge is the issue of outreach, especially with the youth and adults who are lost spiritually, and those in the wider community who experience a lack of faith. “The teen population is lost. There are challenges with the environment of the kids and how they are being shaped.”

Challenges in the Parish Family

The question of what challenges exist in our parish family brought forth discussion of the need for an improved method of communication with our parishioners to help them be more aware of parish events, faith formation programs, and other news. Participants at the listening sessions expressed a need for more youth programs at the parishes. Transportation was another point of concern, especially for those who struggle to drive in the dark or don’t have a reliable means of transport. “It is hard for families to travel where classes, youth groups, etc. are held.”

Parishioners mentioned the issue of our facilities with regard to the limited capacities of our buildings and the parking lot at St. Mary being overcrowded. “We are struggling with parking; we need to do something because the community is growing and the parking lot is full.” Another challenge brought up was a lack of sense of community, identity, and culture. The lack

of vocations to the priesthood creating a shortage of priests in our Archdiocese has presented a significant challenge in our parish family, due to the lack of availability of priests and the risk of priest burnout.

Opportunities to More Effectively Serve and Accompany Others

In discussing the opportunities to more effectively serve and accompany others, it was noted that an improvement to our communications would help parishioners and those outside of the community to be more aware of the events and programs in our parish family. To reach the wider community and the existing Catholic community, more outreach and hospitality ministries could be formed. An improvement to our hospitality would help us to better receive newcomers into our parishes and would also help to blend parishioners within our parish family as they mix and mingle outside of their respective parishes. The volunteer pools we currently have need to be put to use more and there should be a call to serve to encourage all parishioners to get involved. "We are called to be disciples and reach the community. Just by modeling the faith we can reach others by not even realizing it."

Upcoming Listening Sessions in November 2026 – "Who do we want to become?"

- **Locations & Dates:**
    - St. John Vianney - Saturday, November 7th at 12:00pm
    - St. Mary Spanish - Sunday, November 8th at 2:30pm
    - St. Mary English - Friday, November 13th at 11:30am
        - Confessions will be canceled this day.
    - St. Cecilia - Wednesday, November 18th at 7:00pm
    - Immaculate Conception - Saturday, November 21st at 5:30pm

- **“Who do we want to become?” Listening Session Questions:**
    1. We will soon be one canonical parish, what is your vision for our Catholic life in this new reality?
    2. Which ministries, if begun or strengthened over the next five years, would have the greatest impact in serving our different communities? What existing ministries may God be calling us to reconsider or leave behind?
    3. Given that our churches have older buildings, overcapacity Masses, less money, and a growing population in need of evangelization, what changes would you make to ensure a vibrant Catholic community going forward?

Use this QR code to register for an upcoming listening session in November:

