

# Synod Summary

Saint Brigid Parish - San Diego, California



## MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE WITH EUCHARIST

Participants were asked to *"tell us about a meaningful experience you or someone close to you had when participating in the Eucharist."* Major themes related to a meaningful experience with the Eucharist included:

- **Broad range of feelings and emotions** - such as a connection with God and others, joy, peace, and reverence when receiving the Eucharist at Mass, praying in adoration, and/or serving as a Eucharistic Minister
- **Sacraments** - remembering a First Communion for themselves or a loved one, and witnessing the Anointing of the Sick or attending the Funeral of a loved one
- Other themes included **retreats**, learning about or witnessing a **Eucharistic miracle**, and being part of the **Body of Christ**

See page three for specific comments from Saint Brigid's parishioners.

## What is a Synod?

A synod is a gathering or listening session. Pope Francis has invited all the world's Catholics to participate in this synodal process. Phase 3 of the Diocesan synod is focused on *Building Eucharistic Communities*.

## Demographics

### 262 Participants

34 small group circles including 29 C2C groups and 5 Youth groups (middle school and high school)

108 (41%) participants are young adults (ages 18-39)

36 (14%) participants are youth (ages 12-18)

13 (5%) participants are Spanish-speaking

The detailed summary can be found at [saintbrigidparish.org/synod](http://saintbrigidparish.org/synod)





## CHALLENGE WITH EUCHARIST

Participants were asked to “tell us about a challenge you or someone close to you had when participating in the Eucharist.” Major themes related to a challenge with the Eucharist included:

- Frustration and confusion about **who can receive the Eucharist** such as non-Catholics, fallen-away Catholics, and divorced Catholics
- **Jesus’s true presence** in the Eucharist - lack of understanding and belief, and a desire for more education
- **State of grace** - overall confusion (should I or shouldn’t I), guilt for oneself, and judgment towards others
- Other themes included general “**rules**” about receiving the Eucharist and not being able to receive the Eucharist during **COVID**

See page four for specific comments from Saint Brigid's parishioners.

## HOW CAN I BE THE LIVING PRESENCE OF JESUS?

Participants were asked to “as you leave this experience, how can you be the living presence of Jesus in our parish or community?” Major themes related to being a living presence of Jesus included:

- **Be like Jesus** (i.e. follow the ten commandments or be a good neighbor), and **be a good person** (i.e. be kind and lead by example)
- **Evangelization** such as sharing the Good News or sharing about my own personal faith experience
- **Serving at the parish or in the community** - helping the homeless and/or using my gifts
- Other themes included **meeting people where they are at, being in community, praying for others, and attending Mass more often**

See page five for specific comments from Saint Brigid's parishioners.



## Eucharistic Revival - at the parish and beyond

At **Saint Brigid Parish**, we formed a Eucharistic Revival team in June 2023 that meets every 1-2 months to pray, explore, and implement ways to bring about Eucharistic Revival at our parish. Two big initiatives this Fall were bringing the Jesus and the Eucharist Study, a 7-session video and small group discussion series, to our 30+ Connection to Christ (C2C) small groups and having these synod discussions. Feedback from these discussions will help shape how we continue moving forward. To learn more visit [saintbrigidparish.org/eucharistic-revival](http://saintbrigidparish.org/eucharistic-revival).



The **National Eucharistic Revival**, initiated by the US Catholic Bishops, is a three-year movement that seeks to renew the Church by enkindling a living relationship with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. This movement is not a program or something we can manufacture but rather the work of the Holy Spirit. There are four pillars of the movement: 1) Personal Encounter - bring people to Jesus, 2) Reinvigorating Devotion - receive and worship Jesus, 3) Deepening Formation - learn and preach the truth about Jesus, and 4) Missionary Sending - go out and bring Jesus to the world. To learn more visit [eucharisticrevival.org](http://eucharisticrevival.org).

# MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE

Some additional comments from Saint Brigid Parish parishioners related to a meaningful experience with the Eucharist:

- **Feeling/Emotion:** "overwhelmed with emotion;" "haven't experienced the 'beyond' but I'm always inspired and remind myself to trust God and his process;" "feeling of peace, sometimes I want to cry;" "funny taste, the wine is sweet but hard on my throat;" "little girl I watch looked so lovingly and adoringly and whispered 'Jesus;' reminded me to look at Christ that way;" "connection to God, friends, family, and those that have passed away;" "feel sad for those missing out."
- **Sacraments:** "my First Communion - I remember my mom and I crying because of how powerful it was;" "felt blessed at First Communion because God was in me;" "my dad who isn't super religious got Confirmed and it was really cool;" "watching a priest give Eucharist in the hospital - sense of peace."
- **Adoration:** "fills my heart; Jesus talks to me in person;" "music is nice, but sometimes distracting;" "talk to God without the distractions of the world;" "usually feel peace until recently - tried to get up but knees gave out - mentally wanted to leave but God wouldn't let me;" "first time crying in prayer - I thought 'Jesus does hear me';" "having a rough night, tempted to engage in negative activities - went for a walk and stumbled upon adoration."
- **Eucharistic Minister:** "sometimes it seems like the person receiving and I are the only two people there - feel a wonderful connection;" "I feel 'melted' or shall we say loved;" "when I was asked to be an EM - nervous at first but powerful;" "bring Eucharist to the homebound - a beautiful experience; it increased my faith."
- **Mass:** "attending daily Mass;" "Easter Vigil Mass - unlike any other;" "Latin Mass - reverence was incredible;" "altar serving made Church feel more real;" "Mass started to take my anxiety away."
- **Retreat:** "SEEK conference - powerful;" "Steubenville - I felt the presence of the Lord, He was right there;" "Steubenville was weird, people were speaking in tongues and passing out but I could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit."
- **COVID:** "after COVID I felt more graces going to Mass and receiving the Eucharist;" "felt a real spiritual hunger/emptiness that was immediately gone after receiving the Eucharist;" "receiving Jesus 'in the flesh' compared to online Mass."
- **Eucharistic Miracle:** "heard story of parishioner who went to Lanciano, Italy but on her return God said 'you don't have to travel anywhere, I'm right here';" "at nightWATCH after the pandemic saw huge flashes from the monstrance;" "hearing of miracles changed my outlook on the Eucharist."
- **Body of Christ:** "stuck by the diversity of people who come to receive the Eucharist at Mass - young, old, sick, limping, but we are equal in that moment of sharing;" "unity of people during Communion."
- **RCIA:** "currently in RCIA now so haven't received yet, but see the emotion on people's faces and look forward to that day;" "have a strong longing, overwhelmed with need to receive the Eucharist."



# CHALLENGING EXPERIENCE

Some additional comments from Saint Brigid Parish parishioners related to a challenging experience with the Eucharist:

- **Who can receive?:** "after my divorce I felt guilty about receiving Communion but then felt I should receive. I've never had any formal guidance from church;" "My father couldn't receive because he was divorced, left the Catholic Church;" "non-Catholics say 'why can't I just receive?' its so hard to explain;" "my grandma wasn't married in the Church - it is sad for me to see her not receive." "because of my disbelief and insecurity I have trouble telling friends they can't receive, I want to be confident in my belief."
- **True Presence:** "hard to explain;" "lack of understanding;" "challenge to dispel doubt that Jesus is in the Eucharist but I'm trusting in education and personal experience to counter doubts;" "I've come to terms with accepting it is a mystery;" "transubstantiation is hard to grasp;" "hard to see a lack of reverence from parishioners, EMs, and at times priests;" "scientifically feel shame because I don't know answer;" "lack of formation."
- **State of Grace:** "when is it appropriate to receive the Eucharist - which sins prevent me or make me unholy?" "not worthy of Eucharist without going to Confession;" "I have religious scrupulosity which causes me anxiety but God is helping me." "What if I know the recipient is in a state of unconfessed sin; should I withhold the Eucharist?"
- **Feelings:** "I'm upset family doesn't understand what they are missing out on when they don't attend Church;" "I believe in the real presence, but it's hard to stay focused;" "sometimes I don't feel His presence;" "people taking the Church and Eucharist for granted;" "kids and grandkids don't go to Church anymore."
- **COVID:** Many middle schoolers had to wait to receive their First Communion and then had it at an outdoor Mass; "watching Mass online didn't do anything for me."
- **Mass:** "challenge to attend Mass when events, travel, and visitors distract;" "I've missed a lot of Church because of baseball practice."
- **Guidelines:** "'unwritten rules' around the Eucharist (no eating before Mass); I've been a Catholic all my life and only recently learned about some of these;" "not going to Communion - are people judging me, do they think I'm in mortal sin?"





# LIVING PRESENCE OF JESUS

Some additional comments from Saint Brigid Parish parishioners related to being the living presence of Jesus in my parish or community:

- **Be like Jesus:** "Love God, self, and neighbor;" "The Eucharist should compel us to be the hand, feet, eyes, and ears of Christ;" "Less of me, more of Jesus;" "People will know we are Christians by our love;" "Jesus was inclusive and worked with people on the margins;" "make me a living tabernacle;" "I can't, I'm not Jesus but a sinful human;" "share the light - be what you just received at Mass;" "ask myself what would Jesus do (WWJD)?"
- **Evangelization:** "share my story and listen to their story;" "express my views;" "share faith at work;" "be intentional about teaching to gaps in theology;" "share rosaries with others;" "share the message of salvation;" "Defend the faith for agnostics and to atheists."
- **Be a good person:** "just be nice!;" "be kind, considerate, and spread the love;" "be a good role model to family and society;" "lead by example, actions speak louder than words;" "get beyond myself and be patient and charitable to others;" "people should be attracted to what I'm doing; if they are not, I'm missing the point."
- **Serve:** "God has given me a purpose; use my gifts to better those around me;" "help the homeless because they are a person;" "I try and do my part at St. B's.;" "bring faith to others by serving the poor, marginalized, and outcast." "Be involved; become more active at the parish, join a ministry."
- **Community:** "participate in C2C;" "I feel the need to belong to a Catholic group;" "be a part of the young adult group, be out in the world - bonds each other."
- **Prayer:** "pray in the mornings;" "one of the highest forms of prayer is to lovingly gaze in silence at Christ;" "offering my prayers for family and friends;" "pray on how to be a witness of joy in suffering." "when personal things arise - go to prayer, instead of despair."
- **Mass:** "work on centering my life around the Eucharist vs. money and status;" "daily Mass;" "be respectful when it comes to Mass, and be on time;" "go in peace glorifying the Lord with my life."

