

# Participant Handout for Listening Session

## Welcome

### Opening Prayer

Good and gracious God, in the event of Pentecost  
you enlivened your infant church with the gift of the Holy Spirit.  
Renew that gift within us – as individuals, parishes, as the  
Diocese of Davenport, and as the universal Church.  
Unleash upon us and within us the breath of the Spirit  
which brought life to your creation, that same Spirit who  
animates faith, hope, and charity which mark us  
as disciples of Jesus Christ.  
We invoke that Spirit as we pray through Christ our Lord. Amen



### Agenda and Opening Comments

### Welcome by Bishop Zinkula

### Chapter Videos and Discussion

#### Chapter 1

Pope Francis tells us that “we cannot passively and calmly wait in our church buildings,” that “mere administration is not enough” to capture hearts and transform our culture today. We have to go in search of the lost and wounded and minister to them. Inspired by a rich relationship with Jesus, we are invited to move beyond our comfort zones and be engaged with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Pope Francis says, “I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting, and dirty because it has been out on the streets...” (49). Pope Francis goes on to encourage us to “abandon the complacent attitude that says: ‘We have always done it this way.’”

**Question 1:** In what ways does (name of) parish reflect this vision of constantly going out beyond the four walls of the church to reach those who are not with us on a regular basis?

#### Chapter 2

We are experiencing many challenges which makes it very difficult to evangelize effectively- inequality and violence, the rejection of objective truth, an economy of exclusion, the idol of money, scandals in the church and the world, and a disposable culture. There are also spiritual challenges in our age- atheism and fundamentalism, sterile pessimism, the breakdown of the family, and a lack of respect for the dignity of every life. These challenges invite us to adopt a “missionary spirituality” capable of transforming our age and cultivating discipleship in the kingdom of God.

**Question 2:** What are the greatest challenges to evangelization in (name of) parish?

### **Chapter 3**

The task of the Church amidst the challenges of our time is to proclaim the “joy of the Gospel.” The vocation of all baptized Christians is to share- in their own way- the story of how their lives have been transformed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is what it means to be a “missionary disciple.” We share the story of God’s unmerited grace, mercy, and compassion in the person of Jesus. This story is shared person-to-person, bringing the love of Christ into the everyday experiences of life. The dismissal rite at the end of Mass reminds us of our responsibility to share the presence of God in our lives.

As a missionary disciple, it is important to know the story of God, know your own spiritual story, and to know how these two stories intersect.

**Question 3:** To what extent does (name of) parish (and school) form evangelizing disciples of Christ- including youth, young adults, and the on-going formation of people of all ages.

### **Chapter 4**

Pope Francis reminds us that “authentic faith...always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it (183). The Christian life is about engaging others, transforming the social order and pursuing the common good, all inspired by our own personal and transformative encounters with Christ. This involves a particular solidarity with the poor, the vulnerable and the marginalized. Not only do we need to lend our lives to their causes but also to be evangelized by them for “in their difficulties they know the suffering Christ” (198). The pope beckons us to “get involved by word and deed in people’s daily lives...to take on the smell of the sheep,” and in that way, “the sheep are willing to hear their voice” (24).

**Question 4:** To what extent does (name of) parish and you, as a parishioner, reach out to those on the “margins,” e.g. to those who are poor, sick, elderly, those of cultural diversity, or those who might feel disenfranchised.

### **Chapter 5**

Pope Francis says, “Spirit-filled evangelization is not the same as a set of tasks dutifully carried out...but a new chapter of evangelization full of fervor, joy, generosity, courage, boundless love and attraction!” (261). Spirit-filled evangelizers both pray and work, they are “contemplatives in action.” They evangelize because they have been touched by the love of Jesus and they simply cannot contain Christ’s presence welling up in them. They have a passion for Jesus, a passion for his people, and a desire to bear fruit for the kingdom.

**Question 5:** What resonates with you in the Pope’s words? What challenges you?

### **Final Comments / Next Steps / Thank You**

#### **Closing Prayer**

*Pray together the Our Father*