Belonging. Healing. Formation. Safety. Accompaniment.

Mission. Renewal.

Report for the

2025 Synod of Young Adults



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF PHOENIX

Prayer for the Synod:

Adsumus Sancte Spiritus

Every session of the Second Vatican Council began with the prayer Adsumus Sancte Spiritus, the first word of the original Latin, meaning, "We stand before You, Holy Spirit." As we embrace this Synodal Process, the following prayer invites the Holy Spirit to be at work in us so that we may be a community and a people of grace.

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;

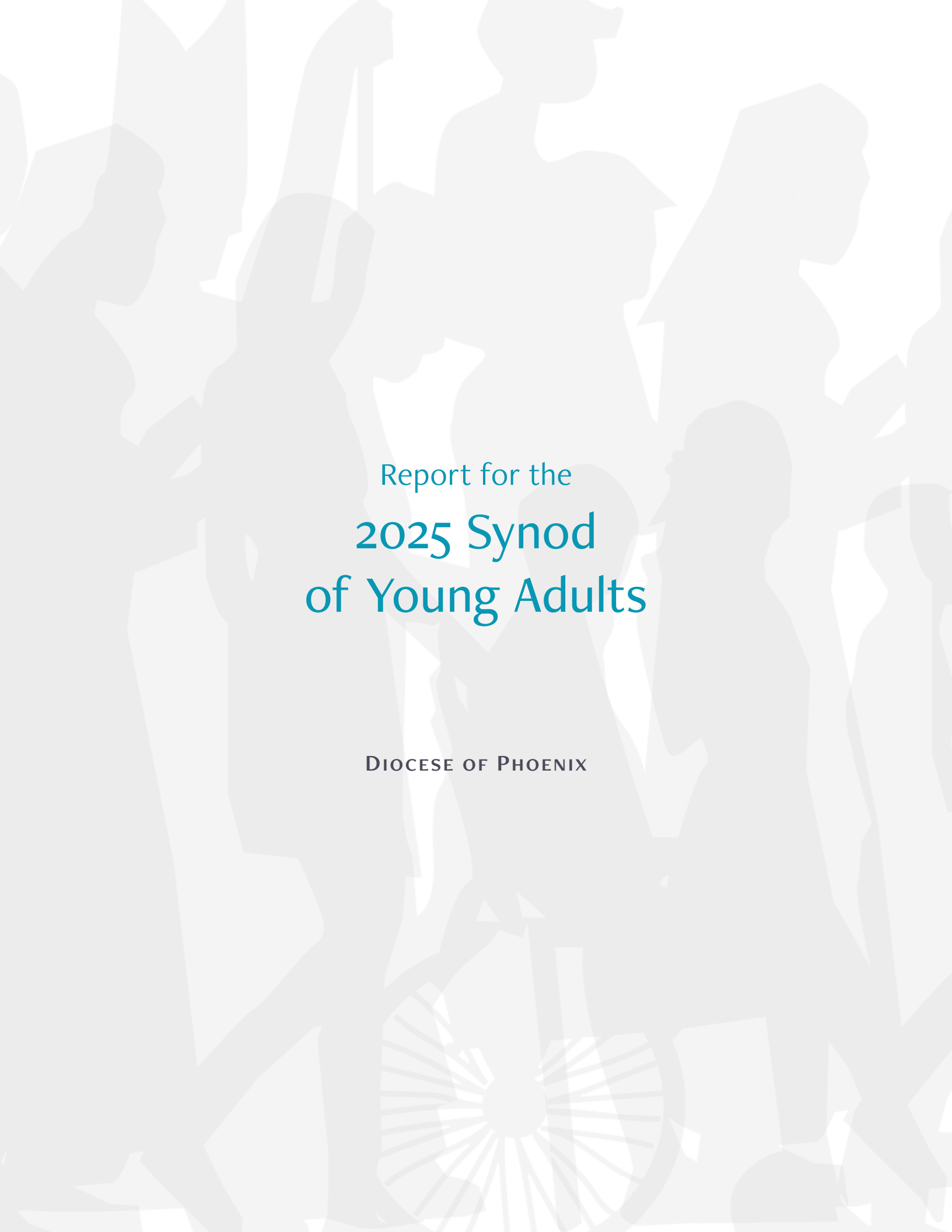
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever. Amen.





Report for the

2025 Synod of Young Adults

Diocese of Phoenix

Executive Summary

The Synod of Young Adults was convoked in April 2025 by Bishop John P. Dolan as a central initiative of *TILMA*, his seven-year pastoral plan for evangelization (2025–2031), inspired by Our Lady of Guadalupe and inaugurated during the Jubilee Year of Hope. Rooted in Pope Francis' call to be "pilgrims of hope," the Synod sought to listen attentively to young adults and discern how the Church can more effectively accompany them in matters of faith, vocation, marriage, family life, and mission.

Scope and Process

From August to November 2025, the Diocesan Synod Preparatory Commission scheduled 80 Synodal Listening Sessions in parishes, ministries and communities across the Diocese. In total, nearly 1,000 young adults gave their input to four questions about faith, family, and marriage both in listening sessions using the "Conversations in the Spirit" model, as well as through an online survey in the final weeks of November. Over 230 pages of qualitative data were prayerfully reviewed and synthesized by the Synod Commission, ensuring fidelity to the voices of participants.

Key Findings: Five Converging Priorities

Across diverse backgrounds and life situations, young adults expressed remarkable unity around five interconnected core needs:

1. Belonging

A desire to be known, welcomed, and integrated as full members of parish life. Young adults seek to be seen, valued and loved; they long for intergenerational community, authentic relationships, and parishes that feel like spiritual homes—particularly for young adults with families.

2. Healing

Many carry wounds from family instability, personal trauma, mental health struggles, and painful experiences within the Church. They long for parishes that are places of mercy—"field hospitals" where wounds can be named without shame, vulnerability is accompanied by compassion, and paths toward healing are clearly offered.

3. Formation

Young adults ask for thoughtful deeper, more practical formation in Scripture, Church teaching, the Eucharist, and moral life—especially as it relates to relationships, marriage, sexuality, vocation, family life, and the challenges of modern culture. Deeper understanding of the Mass and the sacraments is repeatedly identified as transformative, turning Sunday worship from obligation into encounter.

4. Accompaniment

Beyond programs and sacramental moments, young adults desire sustained personal accompaniment: mentors, pastors, and communities who will walk with them patiently through discernment, uncertainty, and growth. They express concern about being left alone once sacramental milestones pass and ask for a sustained pastoral presence that respects diverse vocations and life circumstances.

5. Safety

The Church is envisioned as a refuge of reverence, stability, and trust in an anxious and fragmented world—addressing spiritual, emotional, and physical needs, particularly for children and families. Safety also includes the freedom to ask questions, admit struggles, and grow at the pace of grace without fear of exclusion or judgment—especially for young families and those "in process."

Pastoral Significance

Taken together, these findings reveal a unified vision. The Synod affirms that young adults are not seeking entertainment or diluted teaching, but depth, holiness, and a Church that walks with them as missionary disciples. Their voices align closely with the vision of *TILMA*: a Church that listens, heals, forms, accompanies, and sends forth missionary disciples under the maternal mantle of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Responding to these voices with courage and creativity will be essential for the Diocese of Phoenix as it seeks to witness that the Gospel is not only true, but beautiful, livable, and worth giving one's life to.

Next Steps

This report will be formally presented at the Diocesan Synodal Assembly on February 14-15, 2026, and subsequently to Diocesan consultative bodies and Diocesan leadership. An action plan will be developed to respond concretely to the insights gathered, shaping pastoral priorities for young adults and young families throughout the Diocese in the years ahead.

Young Adults do not want to be treated as guests or "the future of the Church," but as present, active disciples with gifts to share now.

Report

Introduction

From August 15 to November 22, 2025, 80 Synodal Listening Sessions (63 in English, 17 in Spanish) were scheduled in locations across the Diocese by the Synod Preparatory Commission. The Commission also provided young adults a chance to share their voice through an online survey during the final few weeks of November.

In total almost 1,000 young adults responded to the bishop's invitation to share their thoughts, experiences, and hopes in response to four questions—the core of which centered around marriage, family, and children.

Upon the completion of the Synodal Listening Sessions, the Commission compiled the input and met for two full days, December 4-5, at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona, to begin the assessment stage of the Synod of Young Adults in the Diocese of Phoenix. The Commission began its work by celebrating the Eucharist, invoking the Holy Spirit and then listening to what the young adults reported. The process the Commission followed in its work utilized the Synodal method of "Conversations in the Spirit."[1] To not insert their own opinions or fall into bias, they utilized a Large Language Model (LLM) artificial intelligence program to summarize over 230 pages of data and place it into categories according to the question being addressed. After calling on the Holy Spirit and prayerfully reviewing the summaries, they carefully read through every single report so that the young adult participants' input was heard and respected. This approach enabled them to verify that the summaries accurately represented the original statements and update them as necessary to ensure that all relevant information was included.

The report that follows comes directly from what was said by the young adults in the Synodal Listening Sessions and in the online survey. It will be presented to Bishop Dolan and brought to a formal Synodal Assembly at Saints Simon and Jude Cathedral in Phoenix on February 14, 2026. The finalized report will be presented by Bishop John Dolan to the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Presbyteral Council at the end of that Diocesan Synod. An action plan will then be developed in response to the hundreds of voices that made up the synodal process.

The Synod of Young Adults in the Light of *TILMA*

When Bishop John P. Dolan first shared his pastoral letter *TILMA* with the people of the Diocese of Phoenix, he invited the whole Church in this local community into a seven-year journey of evangelization under the mantle of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

1 "Conversations in the Spirit" is a structured, prayerful, and deeply listening-focused dialogue method used for communal discernment. It emphasizes active listening, speaking from the heart, and creating a trusting, respectful atmosphere for the Holy Spirit to guide, aiming to uncover shared insights.

In his pastoral plan, Bishop Dolan explains that *TILMA (Testifica, oh Iglesia, a la Luz del Misterio del Amor — Testify, o Church, to the Light of the Mystery of Love)* is meant to guide parishes, schools, Diocesan ministries, and all the faithful toward "a comprehensive and sustainable culture of evangelization," seen through the lens of Juan Diego's encounter with Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Diocese and of the Americas. The first year coincides with the Jubilee of Hope, echoing Pope Francis' invitation to rediscover that "hope does not disappoint" (Rom 5:5). This focus on hope, testimony, and evangelization—especially among those who feel distant, unseen, or discouraged—naturally led to one pressing question:

> How are *young adults* in the Diocese of Phoenix experiencing the Church, and what do they need from her in this moment of history?

The Synod of Young Adults was born as one concrete expression of *TILMA*'s call to listen, walk with, and evangelize in a new way. If the Diocese is to testify to the "Light of the Mystery of Love," then it must first listen carefully to those who are often on the peripheries: young adults who are discerning vocation, navigating an unstable culture, and searching for a place to belong.

Under Bishop Dolan's leadership, the Diocese set out to hear from young people across different regions, cultures, and life situations—students, single adults, young professionals, newly married couples, young parents, and those who feel distant from parish life. Their stories, questions, hopes, and wounds were gathered in listening sessions, small-group conversations, surveys, and informal encounters. The purpose was not to produce a sociological report, but to discern: to ask where the Holy Spirit is moving among young adults, and how the Church is called to respond in the coming years of *TILMA* and beyond.

In the Synodal Listening Sessions, young adults were asked to reflect on and respond to the following four questions:

1. What is your hope for your personal involvement with the Church?
2. When you think about the future — things like relationships, family, and raising kids — what gives you hope, and what challenges or concerns might hold people back?
3. Marriage and family life, especially in the Church, seem less common today — what do you think is behind that, and what might give people hope to rediscover their value?
4. What helps you experience a sense of meaning or connection during Sunday Mass or what might you hope to experience if you were to attend?

While these questions addressed distinct aspects of life and faith, the responses consistently converged around five core needs:

- Belonging
- Healing
- Formation
- Accompaniment
- Safety

These were not expressed as abstract ideas, but as lived realities in their parishes, homes, and friendships. Rather than standing apart from the findings, the four questions served as *pathways* through which these five priorities emerged. The following narrative weaves together their voices in these five areas.

Belonging

Questions most directly illuminating this theme:

- Question 1 (personal involvement with the Church)
- Question 4 (experience of Sunday Mass)
- Question 2 (hopes for relationships and family)

Repeatedly, young adults describe a deep hunger to belong—to know and be known in the Church, not just as names on a registry or faces in the pews, but as integral members of a family. Many speak about walking into a parish on Sunday and feeling invisible: perhaps greeted at the door, but unsure where to go after Mass, how to meet others, or how to find a place to serve. They do not want to be treated as guests or "the future of the Church," but as present, active disciples with gifts to share now. They want to be integrated into parish life, not confined to a side ministry or occasional social event. Their responses reveal that involvement is not primarily about activity, but about relationship and integration.

One young adult articulated this hope clearly: "I hope that the church can be a home for others.... I would want life to flow from the parish where we all see each other as a family and for relationships and life to naturally flow from the parish and the Church." Another echoed this desire in simpler terms, saying, "I hope to find community with other people my age." But they also realize that their tendency to move from parish to parish is hard, and perhaps frustrating, for Church leadership to understand. One young person explained, "Young adults struggle to own a home—how are we supposed to be tied to one parish?"

> **"The youth are plagued by anxiety and depression and feel like they are not being heard by the Church."**

This desire for belonging extends into their hopes for marriage and family life. For some, yearning for belonging is intensely intergenerational. Young adults repeatedly noted that seeing intergenerational community—faithful marriages, young families, elders who have persevered in faith—gives them hope that lifelong commitment is possible. As one participant noted with joy, "Young marrieds having children gives me great hope!" In contrast, parishes lacking visible community contribute to hesitation and isolation. They cherish the idea of a parish as a "home" where children, young adults, parents, and elders share life together. They want to see couples who have weathered decades of marriage, parents raising children in the faith, and widows and widowers whose faith has endured loss. These relationships, they say, help them believe that a healthy sacramental marriage, a stable family, and faithful discipleship are truly possible in today's world.

Belonging is also experienced at the liturgy. One participant recalled a moment of affirmation that stayed with them: "At one parish, the priest warmly said how grateful he is for children. That's never happened in nearby parishes." Young adults notice whether families with small children are welcomed or frowned upon. A mother who feels compelled to leave every time her baby cries, or a father who

senses judgment when he wrangles toddlers in the pew, will quickly conclude that the parish is not a place for their family. As one young person put it, "Young families are not treated with much forgiveness in Church." And another, "Someone told me, 'You know the cry room isn't soundproof...'" On the other hand, when parishioners smile, offer a helping hand, and encourage parents, young adults recognize the Church as a community that embraces life in all its messiness. When Mass is embedded within a welcoming community, young adults experience the Church as a spiritual home rather than a place of obligation.

Young adults are seeking people to walk with, a parish that feels like home.

In all of this, the desire is clear: young adults are not seeking merely a friendly greeting; they are seeking to be seen, valued and loved people. They are seeking people to walk with, a parish that feels like home.

Healing

Questions most directly illuminating this theme:

- Question 2 (hopes and concerns about the future)
- Question 3 (decline of marriage and family life)

Beneath the desire for community, there is a deep need for healing. Many young adults carry wounds that shape their relationship with God, with the Church, and with one another. Responses to the questions about the future and about marriage revealed the depth of healing needed among young adults. Many named wounds from family instability, broken relationships, mental health struggles, and personal trauma. Some speak candidly of growing up in divided households, amidst divorce, conflict, or emotional distance. Others recall experiences of being bullied, shamed, or neglected. These early wounds often resurface as fears of commitment, low self-worth, mistrust of others and institutions, and anxiety about marriage, parenting, and family life. There are likewise doubts about the capacity to live a faithful vocation. More than a few worry that they are "too broken" to be good spouses, parents, or religious.

Young people are not seeking diluted doctrine, but formation that is intelligible, coherent, and connected to real life.

Some spoke with disarming honesty about discouragement. One young adult admitted, "I don't have a lot of hope right now. I'm working very hard to just maintain the status quo." Others voiced fear about the future of faith itself, saying, "I'm afraid of my children leaving the faith." However, they also spoke about supporting one another in difficulties. For example, one young person offered, "I want to support younger couples because of challenges like infertility and finances."

There are also wounds linked directly to the Church. Some recount moments when they felt judged or dismissed by priests, parish staff, or fellow parishioners or experienced or silence around difficult topics. One shared, "I was heavily involved in my home parish for a long time, but after a disagreement with my priest, I no longer felt comfortable attending the parish." Another recounted rejection surrounding children at Mass, recalling dirty looks and comments from others, concluding simply, "I cried."

Others mention scandals and institutional failures that shook their trust. One person stated, "Scandals have a big influence of why people are not coming to Church." They describe feeling as though there is no space to bring their questions, doubts, or struggles—especially around mental health, sexuality, or irregular family situations—without fear of being labeled or pushed away. Such experiences can intensify mistrust and discourage deeper involvement, even when faith remains important.

In addition to these personal and ecclesial wounds, young adults describe the weight of modern life: financial insecurity, high cost of living, job instability, and overwhelming digital culture. Social media, pornography, hookup norms, and constant comparison contribute to loneliness, addiction, and a

fractured sense of identity. Many speak of anxiety and depression as daily realities, compounded by a sense that they must keep up an image of competence and success. One session states: "The youth are plagued by anxiety and depression and feel like they are not being heard by the Church." This directly connects anxiety and depression to the well-being of young people and highlights a perceived lack of support from the Church.

When reflecting on why marriage and family life seem less common today, young adults consistently pointed to unresolved wounds—both personal and cultural—that make vulnerability and long-term commitment feel risky. One person observed, "Outside traumas that may have been experienced and unaddressed may also prevent others from having the capacity to receive love," directly connecting unresolved wounds to difficulties in trust and commitment. And another said, "Unresolved trauma also causes concern on raising a family," highlighting how past wounds and trauma impact individuals' ability to form healthy relationships and families. Yet their responses were not marked by cynicism. Rather, they expressed hope that the Church could become a place of mercy, where wounds are acknowledged, and healing is accompanied patiently.

In their responses, the young adults' cry is not one of despair. It is a plea for the Church to become a place of mercy, a "field hospital" where wounds can be named without shame and brought to the Lord for healing. They long for parishes that offer safe spaces—retreats, small groups, counseling referrals, spiritual direction—where vulnerability is honored, and healing is allowed to unfold slowly, in community.

Formation

Questions most directly illuminating this theme:

- Question 1 (personal involvement)
- Question 3 (marriage and family life)
- Question 4 (Sunday Mass)

Across the questions, one of the most striking themes that emerged is the desire for serious, practical, and faithful formation. Many acknowledged feeling under-formed in Scripture, the sacraments, and Church teaching, especially as these relate to relationships, sexuality, vocation, and family life. Young adults are not asking the Church to lower expectations or dilute teaching. Instead, they ask the Church to teach more deeply and clearly, and to show them how to live the Gospel in real life.

> **“Marriage has lost its meaning because of pressure and fear of failure.”**

In discussing marriage and family, young adults emphasized that rediscovering their value requires clear and compassionate teaching that explains *why* the Church proposes lifelong commitment and *how* it leads to human flourishing. They are not seeking diluted doctrine, but formation that is intelligible, coherent, and connected to real life. Several lamented the loss of understanding of marriage as a sacrament. One participant observed, “Many people don’t take marriage as a sacrament anymore... there is a loss of the importance and values of Holy Matrimony.” At the same time, others named sacramental meaning itself as a source of hope: “It gives me hope that marriage is a sacrament and a vocation. It is holy to raise a family.”

Some expressed concerns about the marriage preparation process. Some felt more could be done to help prepare young people for the permanent commitment they are making. Comments like, “Marriage prep is too focused on childrearing;” “Too many hoops to jump through with marriage prep turn people away;” and “Marriage preparation programs feel rigid and outdated,” were not uncommon.

They may know the basics of the faith but lack a deeper understanding of Scripture, liturgy and the sacraments, Catholic moral teaching, and the Church’s vision of the human person. Some say that they learned more about their faith through social media debates or “Catholic influencers” than from parishes, and they find the tone there often divisive, simplistic, or confusing. Yet, in this regard, as one person observed, “Social media is a huge driving force of unrealistic expectations, instant gratification and independence.”

They want formation that connects faith to relationships and vocation: how to date in a Christ-centered way, how to discern marriage, healthy relationships, a dedicated single life, priesthood or religious life. They also want practical suggestions on how to navigate engagement and to prepare for a lifetime of fidelity. They want help understanding Church teaching on sexuality, chastity, and gender in a way that is both truthful and compassionate, offering a hopeful path forward amid cultural confusion. One

of the Listening Sessions put it this way, "In the world individuality and sexuality is held in such high esteem; we need to show people that there is a possibility of living out being single and chaste; people struggling with same sex attraction feel like they don't have a place in the church; a more meaningful and imaginative marriage prep process is desired; waiting for marriage can be a challenge but it is never talked about; support for families with divorce and lower the stigma around it." This quote directly addresses the need for compassionate, hopeful, and truthful guidance on sexuality, chastity, and gender.

Young adults also look for formation that speaks to everyday responsibilities. They ask for pragmatic guidance on parenting and family life, on finances and stewardship, on mental health and emotional maturity, on setting healthy boundaries with technology, and on living as Christians in the workplace. They recognize that faith must permeate these areas of their lives if it is to truly shape who they are.

Formation also directly affects their experience of Sunday Mass. At the heart of their request is a longing to understand the Eucharist and the Mass more deeply. When they discover what the Church professes about the Real Presence, and when they learn the biblical and spiritual meaning of the liturgy, their experience of Sunday worship changes. Mass becomes less of an obligation and more of an encounter with Christ and a sending forth into mission. They want homilies that break open Scripture, explain Church teaching clearly, and connect it to the ordinary struggles of life—free of ideological motivation or overtones. As one young adult put it, "homilies help me understand how faith connects to real life." Young adults shared that understanding the Liturgy transforms participation. One reflected, "I find that if I just take time to read the Gospel before Mass then I am better prepared... I get more out of Mass." Another added plainly, "If people understood more about the Mass, they would have a better experience."

Young adults repeatedly emphasized that they do not want only information, but formation that shows how truth is lived—in relationships, vocation, work, and family life. In short, they are asking the Church not simply to tell them what is true, but to show them how to live and witness to the truth.

Accompaniment

Questions most directly illuminating this theme:

- Question 1 (personal involvement)
- Question 2 (future hopes and concerns)
- Question 3 (marriage and family life)

If formation answers the question *"What is true?"*, accompaniment answers the question *"Who will walk with me as I try to live it?"* Here, young adults are especially insistent: they do not want to be left alone to navigate the complexity of modern life and choice of vocation.

In responses about involvement, many expressed gratitude for priests, religious, married couples, and mentors who know them personally and walk with them through discernment. They light up when they speak about couples who have mentored them, priests who know them by name, religious sisters who ask about their discernment, or older parishioners who invite them into their homes. These relationships make faith tangible. Seeing a married couple pray together through hardship, or a priest who is present and approachable, helps them believe that holiness is within reach.

When reflecting on the decline of marriage, young adults identified sustained accompaniment as a source of hope. Walking with couples and families over time, rather than only preparing them for a moment, was repeatedly named as essential for rediscovering confidence in marriage and family life. They long for relationships and structures that "continue long after the celebration"—ongoing support for new marriages, communities for young families, spiritual direction that continues beyond a retreat, friendship and guidance when discernment is uncertain or messy.

> **"Support and acceptance make all the difference."**

Nevertheless, they often feel societal pressures that also make their way into parish settings. They said things like, "There is so much pressure to get married and have kids young;" "Marriage has lost its meaning because of pressure and fear of failure;" and "My sister-in-law left because she felt so much pressure from being a mom." The general feeling from many can be summed up in the statement expressed, "People shouldn't rush into marriage."

Many expressed hope, however, drawn from visible witnesses in parish life. One participant shared, "I draw a lot of hope for the future seeing the young couples in our parish... two returned to the Church once their first child was born." Another said, "Seeing healthy Catholic families gives me hope." Such accompaniment makes faith credible and concrete. As one young person observed, "Support and acceptance make all the difference."

At the same time, many note that accompaniment in the Church often clusters around sacramental milestones: intense engagement during OCIA, confirmation, or marriage preparation, followed by relative silence afterward. Questions about relationships and family life revealed a strong fear of navigating vocation alone. Young adults desire accompaniment before, during, and after major life transitions—dating, engagement, marriage, parenting, or extended singleness.

This desire is closely tied to their hopes for personal involvement in the Church. One young adult expressed it this way: "My hope for my personal involvement with the Church is to grow in holiness and help bring the Gospel to others." Another added, "I hope to evangelize to those God places in my path... through my vocation and my friendships."

Young adults also ask the Church to remember those who do not fit the expected path: those who are single longer than they imagined, those who feel called to a dedicated single life, those discerning religious life without clarity, those in complicated family situations, those with differing sexual identities and those who have experienced divorce. One young person states, "people want to understand that they are not defined by the fact that they come from a divorced family..." we need to "talk about divorce and how to support these families." They want pastoral care that recognizes the diversity of vocations and life circumstances, without reducing anyone to a category. As one young person put it, "We are all the Body of Christ, and everyone deserves to belong," and another, "I hope to see more young people and feel more accepted."

Authentic accompaniment, they say, is "marked by a listening heart." They need mentors and pastors who hear their stories, acknowledge their fears, and guide them patiently—neither ignoring Church teaching nor wielding it as a weapon. They want the Church to walk with them at the pace of grace.

Safety

Questions most directly illuminating this theme:

- Question 2 (concerns about the future)
- Question 4 (experience of Mass)

Finally, young adults speak about the Church as a place they hope will be safe— spiritually, emotionally, and physically. In an anxious and fragmented world, that often feels chaotic and harsh; they long for parishes that offer a refuge of peace, beauty, and stability. Many described modern life as marked by pressure, noise, and isolation. One participant named this challenge directly: "Isolation and loneliness hold people back."

While young people were generally hopeful regarding family and raising children, they did express some real challenges that made them pause. The comments, "the economy makes it hard to imagine raising a family" and "I feel pressure to settle down, but I can't afford to" express well a major challenge.

They describe arriving at church from workplaces filled with pressure, from digital spaces filled with noise, and from neighborhoods marked by division or isolation. In that context, a quiet chapel, a reverent liturgy, a parish courtyard where people greet one another with warmth can feel like water in a desert. They long for spaces where they can turn off their phones, rest in silence before the Eucharist, and remember who they are as beloved sons and daughters of God. Experiences of Sunday Mass strongly shape this sense of safety. A reverent liturgy, welcoming environment, and freedom to be imperfect or "in process" help young adults experience the Church as a refuge.

In this context, reverent worship and consistent parish life become sources of refuge. One young adult explained, "Reverence and tradition are the two things that lead me to experience a sense of meaning and connection." Another likened preparing for Mass to preparing the heart, saying, "Mass is like a game, so make sure you warm up by coming early and praying." Another looked to the regularity of the Liturgy as a source of calm, "Music, ritual, and repetition help me feel grounded."

Safety also includes spiritual and emotional security. It includes the ability to ask questions, acknowledge struggles, and seek help without fear of ridicule or exclusion. Young adults are more likely to return and to bring friends when they know that their questions will be taken seriously, that their wounds will be met with compassion, and that their struggles—whether with sin, mental health, or family breakdown—will not be used against them. They want parishes where "it is okay to be in process," where people are invited to conversion through love and truth, not fear.

In an age of rapid change, many find solace in the stability of tradition. Beautiful churches, consistent liturgical practice, inspiring music, and clear teaching offer a sense of rootedness. Rather than seeing tradition as a barrier, many young adults describe it as an anchor—a way the Lord holds them steady amid cultural storms.

For young families, and those discerning parenthood, safety means knowing that their children are welcomed and protected: safe environments, trustworthy catechesis, and a community that supports them rather than criticizing them. Parents and future parents ask the Church to help them guard their homes against the most corrosive aspects of technology and culture, and to equip them to raise children who can live joyfully as Christians in the modern world.

Moving Forward Under the Mantle of Our Lady

As Bishop Dolan has physically carried the intentions of the Diocese of Phoenix to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico on March 30, 2025, entrusting *TILMA* to her maternal care, he has symbolically carried with him the voices of the young adults of this local Church. Their hopes for belonging, healing, formation, accompaniment, and safety are not peripheral concerns—they are at the heart of what it means to evangelize in this time and place.

In the years ahead, as the Diocese of Phoenix walks this seven-year path toward the great anniversary of Juan Diego's encounter with Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Synod of Young Adults stands as an early, essential step. It is a sign that the Church of Phoenix is willing to listen, to repent where necessary, to renew structures and ministries, and to invest deeply in the spiritual lives of young people and young families.

Young adults are clear — they are:

- Not searching for entertainment, but for depth.
- Not for a lighter Christianity, but for holiness that is possible.
- Not for an institution that simply maintains itself, but for a family of missionary disciples who will walk with them toward Christ.

Taken together, the four Synod questions do not point to isolated concerns, but to a unified vision. Young adults' hopes for involvement, marriage, family life, and worship all converge in their desire for a Church where **belonging is real, wounds are healed, faith is formed, vocations are accompanied, and parishes are safe.**

A Church where belonging is real, wounds are healed, faith is formed, vocations are accompanied, and parishes are safe.

The Five Key Findings thus emerge not as abstract themes, but as the lived response of young adults to the Church's invitation to walk with them in this moment of history.

Under the mantle of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and guided by Bishop Dolan's pastoral vision in TILMA, the Diocese of Phoenix is invited to respond with courage and creativity. By becoming communities where belonging is real, wounds are healed, minds and hearts are formed, vocations are accompanied, and parishes feel safe and sacred, the Church can help a generation discover that the Gospel is not only true—it is beautiful, livable, and worth giving one's life to.

TILMA

Prayer for the Synod

Our Lady of Guadalupe,

You have always accompanied
the Church with your maternal care
and the comfort of a
mother's reassuring embrace.

Extend your mantle of love over
this Synod of Young Adults,
providing a sheltered and sacred space where
we may engage in deep listening
and authentic sharing of faith,
values and beliefs under
the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Where differences are respected and
transforming conversation can happen.
For we know it is only in these safe spaces that
open, honest sharing and reverenced dialogue
can happen, bringing to light the truth that
your Son so ardently wants us to understand.

We pray that each of us may gain insight into
how we can journey together during this
Jubilee year of Hope and on our
pilgrimage of life.
We ask this through the Trinity:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.





THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF PHOENIX