**New Synod Phase Begins**

The initial listening phase of the diocese’s historic consultation of the faithful has ended.

Over 22,000 completed an electronic survey that closed Oct. 31, and more than 11,000 attended small-group sessions at parishes, schools and other sites earlier this year in San Diego and Imperial Counties. They shared their experiences and hopes for the Church.

The discernment phase begins now. Commission members, mostly lay leaders, will analyze the data to develop proposals to address the major concerns expressed by the faithful.

These will be submitted to Cardinal Robert McElroy, who plans to begin to implement them early next year, in consultation with the diocese’s pastors.

This consultation is part of a worldwide journey the Catholic Church began in October of 2021. The synod, as it’s called, was scheduled to end next fall but Pope Francis has extended it to 2024 to allow more time for reflection and discernment from both the local and universal Church.

The goal of the synod is to renew the Church by increasing participation at all levels, particularly by young people. This would be achieved by fostering a “synodal” culture where the faithful and hierarchy work together to discern what God is calling the Church to do at this crucial time.

More information is available on the web pages sdcatholic.org/synod and sdcatholic.org/sinodo (Spanish).