

CWG II: The Challenge to Form a Culture of Invitation and Hospitality to Unmarried Couples
Holy Family Parish Listening Sessions, August 12, 2016 + 4 Participants
Reported by: Dennis Horn, Synod Delegate

1. Becoming younger adult friendly; utilizing technology/social media to reach out to the younger generation.

2. Become their friend first. Love them first. Show them the love and mercy of Christ. Speak truth with love. Maybe even creating specific ministries/training on how to approach these couples and bring them back to the Church. They long for love and community just like everyone else.

Let them know they are not the only ones in their situation and that it is never too late to choose a different way of living.

REALLY IMPORTANT: Show them the beautiful fruits of the sacrament of marriage. I highly recommend the marriage dvd series Beloved by the Augustine Institute, and any courses teaching the beauty of Theology of the Body. I think understanding the beauty of sexuality, what love truly is, and the sacrament of marriage through the Catholic lens is important if we want our youth to live out the Catholic faith. We have so many resources that are not being used, and so many people that are not educated on these things. We need to teach the truth, God's will, boldly. Youth long to live boldly.

3. Many people are very *legalistic* and point fingers to expose others sins. We are all sinners trying to get to Heaven. We should all be supportive of each other and help lift each other out of these struggles. Helping to change this would start with what the Pastor preaches on Sunday, and how each parish's staff treats the church community.

4. Providing the resources such as **proper/quality** education on the sacraments/church teaching (like I said, utilizing newer/updated resources, technology, because we are reaching out to a younger audience), creating communities for these couples to support and be supported by (other young couples in the process/already married). Quality is so important. We cannot settle.

I think that just as a church should have a youth minister for middle school/ high school, the church should also have a young adult minister/ ministries aimed at college youth, young couples, young families, etc.

Welcoming cohabitating couples with open arms and leading them to the truth and way of life in Christ. Christ came to save sinners, not perfect people.

5. Yes. I would look to examples of other parishes/ Catholic organizations who have successfully done so and follow their example. We have the resources out there. The question is are we willing to pay the price to use them?