

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Dear Mr. Knobbe,

Thank you for your letter and your concern. I am happy to address some of the concerns outlined regarding the forthcoming Synod and the participation of the faithful at St. Martin de Porres. I am sorry that you have been misinformed as to our efforts at St. Martin de Porres Parish and School regarding the forthcoming Synod.

St. Martin de Porres has scheduled two listening sessions with the faithful participating in person. Dcn. Jack Gardner, the Director of Evangelization, was asked to convene a group of the faithful, by invitation, through our Evangelization Department. Dcn. Andrew Thomas, the Director of Religious Education, was asked to convene a group of the faithful, by invitation, through the Catechesis Department.

Many parishes in the Diocese of Fort Worth have undertaken a variety of efforts to ensure the Holy Father's desire is being fulfilled. Efforts within the Diocese of Fort Worth are at the discretion of the pastor as to the best manner to engage the faithful in their parish. Each diocese is permitted and encouraged to implement the synodal process as they see fit, hence the different approaches in different dioceses.

The Diocese of Fort Worth has a rich history of convening local synods as requested by the Holy See. Our last synod prior to this one was in 2018 regarding youth. It is uncommon to hold a local synod more frequently than every ten years. However, the Holy Father has requested, and we have responded. The faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth, in union with the Holy Father, are regularly heard and routinely participate in the life of the Church. Simply because the Universal Church does not bend to the temporary desires of individuals does not mean that individuals are not heard.

I was hoping to offer the March, Our Catholic Life Lecture Series with Q and A, as an additional opportunity to engage the faithful in the synodal process. Upon learning of your group's intention to hijack this opportunity through, "Calls to Action," and agenda driven pet projects, I determined that it would be an abuse of the opportunity. The Synod is not an opportunity for a "townhall". This is not an opportunity to foment discord or seek directed change-of-outcomes regarding specific issues. The synodal process is a beautiful process for a depth of communion as the Church, for those who are in communion with the Church. Since Deacons Jack and Andrew are regularly engaging the faithful of St. Martin de Porres Parish, they were the natural groups to specifically undertake this process.

I determined that the better use of the March, Our Catholic Life Lecture Series with Q and A, would be to return it to its purpose. We will be discussing the topic of, "*A life of peace, learning to live our daily life fulfilled.*" A life lived in anger is not a life of fulfillment. I encourage you

and all your followers to attend and first listen to the Lord before deciding what the Lord needs to listen to from us.

Individuals are welcome to participate in the Synod directly by sending their feedback directly to the Holy See. A QR Code will be printed in the print bulletins next week directing individuals to the proper website. A simple online search will also provide this information.

Please know that specifically during this Lenten Season, you and your followers are in my prayers. May our Lent be fruitful and may we turn back to the Lord.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Stephen Hauck". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "F" and "S".

Rev. Stephen Hauck, Pastor

St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church and School