



Steering Committee

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Archbishop Paul Etienne
Archbishop of Seattle
910 Marion St.
Seattle, WA 98104

April 8, 2026

Dear Archbishop Etienne,

As a synodal Church experiencing the harsh realities of the declining numbers of priests in active ministry, we believe that lay Catholics are called by their Baptismal vows to take on more vigorous and substantive leadership responsibilities.

Pope Leo himself has repeatedly endorsed a more vital role for the laity in his public remarks. It was in the spirit of both Pope Francis and Pope Leo that Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish and Heal Our Church organized a gathering of lay members from across the Seattle Archdiocese to gather in prayer, and with the welcome participation of several priests and women religious, to discuss this critical issue.

The spirit and the wisdom in the room were tangible and revelatory. Some very creative ideas were put forth with the sincere hope of better supporting our overstretched pastors and better utilizing the remarkable talents of lay men and women. Lay persons need to be more directly involved in the administration of parishes. Their involvement would greatly benefit our priests, freeing them to focus on pastoral care and spiritual guidance.

An invitation was extended to you to attend the gathering. Since you were not present with us at Our Lady of Guadalupe, it seemed appropriate to share a copy of the Report developed by the lay participants. It has been distributed to attendees and other lay Catholics. The response has been remarkable and affirming and could serve as a blueprint for the future of the Archdiocese.

We encourage you to read the ideas, concerns and hopes of these members of your faithful. We welcome your response and reiterate our past offers to dialogue. Embracing the full range of lay participation and leadership is the only way forward to sustain our beloved Church.

Respectfully, HEAL OUR CHURCH
On behalf of the HOC Steering Committee,

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