



PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL

Listening Session: Complete Event Guide

“What opportunities and challenges exist for us?”

Opening Prayer - 10 minutes

Begin with prayer and reflection, inviting the Holy Spirit to be part of this process.

Process Overview - 5 minutes

Provide an overview of the listening process, explaining the rounds, how the listening works and how feedback will be recorded. Once this is outlined, please send people to small groups. The PFAC and PFLT will ideally provide notetakers and facilitators to manage discussions and, if they are unable to provide them, to train others to serve in these roles.

The facilitator in each group will guide the session with three rounds of listening. In the first round, each person will take an equal turn sharing their thoughts. There is no discussion or response in this round; all participants simply listen to what each person has to say. Once the first round is complete, hold a short time of silence so each person can listen to how the Holy Spirit speaking. Each person is invited to share very briefly what stood out for them from the first round. This pattern is repeated with a second and third round of listening.

Background Information & Questions We’re Asking - 20 minutes

Then provide an overview of the questions, why they are being asked, the way the PFAC has been working and how the input from this session will help guide future planning. This is also the time to highlight relevant information drawn from the parish viability metrics and demographic reports provided to the community in advance of the meeting.

Small Group Listening and Discussion ~90 minutes (for entire listening process)

Please be sure to make space for everyone to share their thoughts, while also keeping an eye on the time. To ensure time for all participants to speak, small groups should have no more than 8 participants. Start with very brief introductions, pose the first question, and then invite people to a few moments of silence before sharing begins.

Round One

Round One - 20 minutes

Each person shares once, with equal time for each participant.

What challenges do you see that exist in the wider community? An example could be having a large homeless or undocumented immigrant population with specific needs.

Round One Summing Up - 3-5 minutes

Each person shares once - this could be one word or one sentence.

What did I hear? What is one main theme that is staying with me from listening to what people shared?

Short Break - 5 minutes

At this point in the conversation the group will have been gathered for almost an hour. Have the facilitator read the next prompt and ask the group to reflect on and pray over it during the break. Inform them of the time that the next round of listening will begin.

Round Two

Round Two - 20 minutes

Each person shares once, with equal time for each participant.

What challenges do you see that exist in the parish? An example could be having a large number of families with teenagers but not being able to hire a youth minister.

Round Two Summing Up - 3-5 minutes

Each person shares once - this could be one word or one sentence.

What did I hear? What is one main theme that is staying with me from listening to what people shared?

Pause for Prayer - 3 minutes

Have the facilitator read the next prompt and allow 3 minutes for everyone to consider and pray over it before sharing.

Round Three

Round Three - 20 minutes

Each person shares once, with equal time for each participant.

Having heard information from the community demographics report, what opportunities do you see (in our parish and in the wider community) to more effectively serve and accompany others? Is there anybody that we can do a better job of reaching?

Round Three Summing Up - 3-5 minutes

Each person shares once - this could be one word or one sentence.

What did I hear? What is one main theme that is staying with me from listening to what people shared?

Free Conversation in Small Groups - 10 minutes

Facilitator opens up the conversation to invite any feedback people would like to share, flowing out of the conversation.

Concluding Prayer - 10 minutes

Bring everyone back together as a large group for concluding prayer. Be sure the notetakers turn in their notes before leaving.