

Family 30 Challenges and Opportunities

Executive Summary

Across all documents, the community is clearly saying the same thing in different words: There is deep faith and goodwill, but fragmentation, capacity constraints, and cultural disconnection are preventing the parish family from functioning as one unified body. The most urgent needs are unity, communication, priest and volunteer capacity, inclusion of the Hispanic community, and clearer pathways to engagement—especially for youth and families. This is not a crisis of belief. It is a crisis of structure, integration, and accompaniment.

Core Themes (Consistent Across All Documents)

1. Community & Societal Challenges (Outside the Parish)

Repeated across listening sessions:

- Homelessness, immigration insecurity, food insecurity
- Cost of living and inflation
- Drugs, violence, mental health struggles
- Loneliness, isolation, and social fragmentation
- Cultural and language divisions (“us vs. them” dynamics)

These are not abstract concerns—they directly shape parish needs and expectations.

“Many people arrive with unmet basic needs: housing, food, work, and mental health.”

“There is a lot of loneliness, and people feel disconnected.”

2. Parish-Specific Challenges (Internal)

a. Capacity & Burnout

- Not enough priests, deacons, or trained lay leaders
- Priest burnout is explicitly named

- Too many Masses for existing clergy
- Overreliance on the same small group of volunteers

This is a structural overload problem, not a motivation problem.

b. Communication & Transparency Gaps

- Poor communication between parishes (Holy Spirit, St. John the Baptist, San Juan Bautista)
- Confusion about changes, decision-making, and the “Partners in the Gospel” process
- Desire for clarity, consistency, and shared messaging (bulletins, social media, announcements)

People are not resisting change—they don’t understand it.

c. Cultural & Language Barriers

- Strong and repeated call for:
 - More Masses in Spanish
 - Bilingual priests and catechists
 - Cultural respect without loss of Catholic identity
- Hispanic community feels under-included or tolerated rather than fully integrated
- Anglo and Hispanic communities often operate in parallel, not together

Unity is desired, but it must be intentional and structured.

“There are not enough priests; the pastor has too much work.”

“The same people are always helping.”

“There is poor communication between the parishes.”

3. Youth, Family, and Faith Formation Gaps

This is one of the loudest signals in the data:

- Loss of youth and young adults after sacraments
- Gaps in youth ministry, teen engagement, and young adult pathways
- Need for:
 - More catechists
 - Better-prepared catechists
 - Ongoing formation after First Communion and Confirmation
- Parents need support, formation, and clearer expectations

Without structural investment here, long-term vitality declines.

“Young people receive the sacraments and then disappear.”

“We need more catechists who are prepared.”

4. Facilities & Logistics (Very Practical Pain Points)

These appear repeatedly and should not be dismissed:

- Church size constraints; overcrowded Masses
- Parking shortages
- Lack of air conditioning
- Inadequate space for children and catechesis
- Long Masses and unclear end times

These issues directly affect attendance, hospitality, and reverence.

“The church is full and very hot.”

“There is not enough parking.”

Opportunities & Desired Direction

Despite the challenges, the tone across sessions was hopeful and forward-looking.

Participants emphasized unity, hospitality, leadership development, cultural respect, and the creation of clear pathways from welcome to belonging to service.

Across all listening sessions, the opportunities converge clearly:

1. Unity With Purpose

- Build real unity between parishes, not just administrative consolidation
- Joint events, shared ministries, shared resources
- One parish family identity (“Familia 30”), not competing communities

2. Clear Engagement Pathways

- Move people from “welcome” → “belonging” → “service”
- Make ministries visible, accessible, and well-organized
- Clarify expectations and entry points

3. Focused Outreach

Priority groups repeatedly named:

- Youth, teens, young adults
- Immigrants and undocumented families

- Homeless and economically vulnerable
- Homebound elderly
- Divorced, widowed, childless adults

4. Leadership & Formation

- Develop more catechists, leaders, and volunteers
- Promote the diaconate
- Invest in bilingual and bicultural leadership
- Emphasize formation, not just programming

5. Hospitality & Encounter

- Social gatherings, shared meals, cultural events
- Hospitality teams and base communities
- Emphasis on relationship, not just attendance

Faith is seen as active, communal, and lived (“la fe sin acción está muerta”).

“There is a lot of faith and desire to serve.”

“Faith without action is dead.”

Conclusion

Family 30 is spiritually alive and eager to serve, but is constrained by limited clergy and volunteer capacity, fragmented communication, cultural and language divides, and weak engagement pathways—especially for youth and families—creating an urgent need for intentional unity, clearer structure, and deeper accompaniment.

The parish family is not resisting change; it is asking to be guided through it. With intentional unity, transparent communication, cultural respect, and strengthened pastoral and lay leadership structures, this community is well positioned to respond faithfully to the call of the Holy Spirit and live fully as one parish family.