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## Synod survey goes online in Philadelphia archdiocese

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**[Editor's Note:** *Updated Friday with comments from Philadelphia archdiocese.*]

Responding to requests from parishioners for an opportunity to lend their voices to the upcoming global bishops meeting on the family, the Philadelphia archdiocese has launched its own version of the much-discussed questionnaire.

The survey appeared on the archdiocese's website Thursday, though somewhat unexpectedly, as technical issues led to a test version being posted ahead of schedule, archdiocesan communications director Kenneth Gavin told *NCR* Friday morning. He said they expect to have the questionnaire back on their site later in the day.

As did the version yesterday, the survey will include an introduction and summary of the preparatory document for the 2014 Synod of Bishops -- on the theme of "The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization" -- as well as a link to the document's full text.

"Archbishop [Charles] Chaput, in an effort to provide an opportunity for the clergy and faithful of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia to engage in this consultation in as wide a manner as possible has authorized the use of this instrument for local participation," the introduction reads.

"Archbishop Chaput is encouraging maximum participation in this initiative so that we may provide the Vatican with information," Gavin said.

At the just-concluded U.S. bishops' fall meeting, the archbishop acknowledged during a Monday discussion of the synod that he had received requests from parishioners asking the archdiocese to make a survey available so they could contribute their thoughts to the conversation.

"I have several e-mails coming in telling me people expect to do this because the Holy Father wants it. So I think there's an expectation on the part of our people to be able to respond," Chaput said to his fellow bishops, according to the *Boston Globe*.

The desire for pew-level input to a Vatican meeting originated with a preparatory document sent from Archbishop Lorenzo Baldisseri, general secretary of the Synod of Bishops, to bishops' conferences worldwide. At the end of the draft document was a questionnaire asking 39 questions on nine themes.

In his letter explaining the document, Baldisseri requested that bishops' conferences distribute it with dioceses, "and ask them to share it immediately as widely as possible to deaneries and parishes so that input from local sources can be received regarding the themes and responses to the questionnaire." He requested a "synthesis of the responses" be sent to the Vatican by the end of January.

Dioceses and bishops' conferences in other parts of the world have already posted online versions of the survey, including in Australia, Belgium and England and Wales.

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The Philadelphia archdiocese's version of the survey, following the lead of several lay-led efforts, does not reproduce the questionnaire in its original format. Instead, it asks nine questions, each reflecting on one of the nine themes outlined in the preparatory document. Some are nearly word-for-word copies, while others summarize or highlight specific questions posed by the theme.

It also asks respondents to provide their name, as well as parishes they belong to and contact information. Gavin said the questionnaire will remain open to response until Dec. 2.

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