

Let Us Dream... The Path to a Better Future

Synod on Synodality 2021 to 2023

Communion, Participation, Mission

Definitions -- What is Synod on Synodality?

- **Synod** – Meeting of Bishops (Council) i.e. Vatican II
- **Synodality**- The manner in which the People of God “Journey Together” in fulfilling the life and mission of The Church
 - A Way of Being Church
 - A Communion of All God’s People Participating & Discerning Together
 - The People of God Listening to Each Other and ALL listening to the Holy Spirit
 - A Prophetic Witness to the World
 - A Way of Living

Definitions -- What is Synod on Synodality?

- ***Sensus fidei*** – the faith of the entire people of God
- ***Sensus fidei*** -- gives everyone a share in the dignity of the prophetic office of Christ (cf. [*Lumen Gentium*](#), 34-35), so that they can discern the paths of the Gospel in the present time.

The Next Synod of Bishops Will Be Different

- Celebrated *not only in the Vatican* (as previous Synods since Vatican II)
- This time the *People of God* will celebrate a “decentralized” Synod
- *In each Particular Church* (or Diocese) on *ALL* Five Continents

- Following a two-year itinerary divided in three phases
 - ***Diocesan*** - Consultation of the People of God
 - ***Continental*** - Dialogue & Discernment on Each Continent
 - ***Universal*** – the Assembly of Bishops in Vatican City (Rome)

“One listening to the others; and ALL listening to the Holy Spirit”

What is Pope Francis asking of Us?

- Ensure everyone be given the opportunity to participate & be heard regarding the life and mission of The Church
 - Including those who are not active Catholics, and those in the margins of society and least often heard.
- Listen with a sincere heart and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- Ensure people are free to speak what's in their hearts and mind without judgement
- Live synodality in our families, neighborhoods and beyond

What is Pope Francis asking of Us?

- Unite The Church and The World by engaging, listening, and learning from each other and therefore decreasing the fear that is dividing us.

“Fear is such a powerful emotion that if we allow it to control us, it drives compassion straight out of the heart.” St. Thomas Aquinas

"This process was conceived as an exercise in mutual listening. I want to emphasize this. It is an exercise of mutual listening, conducted at all levels of the Church and involving the entire People of God. The Cardinal Vicar, the auxiliary bishops, priests, religious and laity have to listen to one another, and then to everyone else. Listening, speaking and listening. It is not about garnering opinions, not a survey, but a matter of listening to the Holy Spirit, as we read in the book of Revelation: "Whoever has ears should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches"

*(2:7). "Pope Francis
To the Faithful of the Diocese of Rome*

Timeline of Synod– Sept 2021 to Oct 2023

- **May 21, 2021** – Each bishop asked to assign a “point person” in their diocese to lead the process
- **Sept 7, 2021** -- Release of the Preparatory Document and Handbook – Guide to facilitate the listening and consultation with the People of God
- **Oct 9/10, 2021** - Pope Francis will officially inaugurate the synodal path with a mass in Rome
- **Oct 17, 2021** - All dioceses are invited to offer an opening mass
- **Oct 17, 2021 - April 2022** the period where the local bishops are called to undertake a consultative process with the People of God in the local Church
- **Sept 2022** - 1st Working document

Timeline – Sept 2021 to Oct 2023

- **Sept 2022 - March 2023** - continent and regional assemblies/meetings
- **March 2023** - 7 final documents from the assemblies.
- **June 2023** - 2nd Working document
- **Oct 2023** - Final Document & Synod meeting.
- **The Future** --- Whatever surprises we discover at the end of the Synod, we should keep in mind to always live Synodality so we continue to transform and renew the path of The Church. The work of the Holy Spirit is ongoing and never stops!

What do We Want to do in our Pastorate?

Let's begin the journey.....

A few of my thoughts

1. Pray the Synod Prayer daily & at Sunday mass for success of the Synod
2. Learn how to live Synodality in the church, home, workplace, school...
2. Make a personal commitment to listen
3. Allow each member to be heard on important issues with courage and freedom

This will require creative ways to allow everyone to share thoughts so each person has an opportunity to be heard.

4. Pray again!
5. Come together after discernment to decide on the path the Holy Spirit is calling us to follow.

What do We Want to do in our Pastorate?

- Have an inaugural mass on Oct 17th possibly as an NECC event.
- Pray a Synodal prayer during every Sunday mass for awareness, inspiration and success of the Synod (The Fire THIS TIME!)
- Ask people to join a listening session. Zoom or in person. (break into smaller discussion groups and compile information to share with pastor, bishops, others)
- Hold listening conversations monthly
- “Synod Journals/Notebooks” to document thoughts
- Use other formats to educate/announce to parishioners via word of mouth, parish website, Facebook page, mass announcements, bulletin board, phone trees, NECC, Cardinal Sheehan school etc....

What do We Want to do in our Pastorate?

- Ask the Catholic Review and other news sites to do a series of articles to inform & facilitate participation
- Ask our bishops to set up their office & live for 1 wk.(or more) in each parish in their diocese to allow for opportunities to be with parishioners to get to know them, eat meals with them, listen to them, minister to them, and begin to journey with them as the family that God calls us to be for the world.

What do We Want to do in our Pastorate?

- **YOUR IDEAS??????**

What do We Want to do in our Pastorate?

- **Questions?**

- Parish contact person's email _____

... We recall that the purpose of the Synod, and therefore of this consultation, is not to produce documents, but to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands ... Synod Preparatory Document

References

- [Synod of Bishops will begin in the local Churches - Vatican News](#)
- [Listening to the Faithful: Vatican releases Synod Preparatory Document - Vatican News](#)
- [Synod 2021 – 2023 – Official Website](#)
- [Vademecum-EN.pdf \(synod.va\)](#) - Official Handbook
- [Documento-Preparatorio-EN-21.pdf](#) - Official Preparatory Document
- [EN-ADSUMUS.pdf \(synod.va\)](#) - Prayer of invocation to the Holy Spirit
- [The Fire...THIS TIME! prayer.pdf](#)

References cont.

- [Synodality in the life and mission of the Church \(2 March 2018\) \(vatican.va\)](#)
- [Sister Becquart: there is no synodality without spirituality - Vatican News](#)
- [Pope to Rome's faithful: Synodality expresses the nature of the Church - Vatican News](#)