

COMMUNION | PARTICIPATION | MISSION

# Synod 2021-2023

An Invitation to Conversation



## WHAT IS THIS SYNOD ABOUT?

### AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

A synod is a gathering to discuss topics relevant to the theology and life of the Church. Through the 2021-2023 synod, Pope Francis has invited the whole People of God to participate in conversations about the journey of the Church in our time. This synod is focused on synodality, which means it is about how we can all take part in listening to and following the voice of the Holy Spirit today. We are especially called to listen to the voice of God amongst those who are most marginalized. Synodality is a style of being Church, one in which every voice can speak, in which each person listens to what is being said, and in which we discern together where the Spirit is calling the Church.

The goal of this synod, as Pope Francis has said, is "to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to be nourished, 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." (PD, 32) The hope is that the synod will be only the beginning of an ongoing process of becoming a more synodal Church, one that values the voice and participation of all in proclaiming the Gospel. Let your voice and dreams be heard by joining a synod conversation group.

"Synodality is the call of God in the 3rd millennium... It is a shift of culture and a move toward protagonism for all the people of God."

- Sr. Nathalie  
Becquart

## Synod Prayer

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.





# Discussion Questions

We encourage listening groups to spend some time in fellowship and prayer before beginning their discussions. Perhaps gather for a meal or at least spend a few moments getting to know each other. You may wish to use the formal synod prayer as well as your own materials. Appoint one person to act as facilitator and one to take notes and report on the major themes discerned by the group. This should not be just a summary report - allow key insights from the Spirit to guide what you highlight in your report.

The fundamental question that guides this consultation of the People of God is:

A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, "journeys together:" How is this happening today in your particular Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our "journey together"?

In order to respond to this question, you are invited to consider several further questions:

- Reflecting on your own experience of the Church, can you recall instances of the community "journeying together?" If so, what did those experiences look like? If not, what do you imagine that might look like?
- As you reflect on these experiences of your local community, what joys did they provoke? What difficulties and obstacles have they illuminated? What wounds have they brought to light? What insights have they called forth?
- As you listen to these experiences, where do you hear the voice of the Spirit? What is the Spirit asking of us? What are the points to be confirmed, the prospects for change, the steps to be taken? Where do we hear consensus? What paths are opening up for our particular Church?