



Prayer for the Synod on Synodality

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.

Pope Francis opened a “Synod on Synodality” in Rome on the weekend of October 9-10, 2021. The theme for this synod is “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission”.

This two-year synod is going to be unlike any other!!! From 2021 to 2023, it will be a **journey of sharing, reflecting, and listening at all levels across the entire Church!**

A synod is a gathering, traditionally of bishops, that helps the Church to walk forward together in the same direction. The word “synod” comes from the Greek syn-hodos, meaning “the same way” or **“the same path.”** Synods were common in the first centuries of Christianity, giving bishops the opportunities to meet and discuss issues of importance for the life of the Church. In 1965, Pope Paul VI instituted the Synod of Bishops at the universal level of the Church. He wanted a way of continuing the **collegial exchange** that had been **experienced at the Second Vatican Council**, where bishops from across the globe had gathered together between 1962 and 1965. Since then, synods have been organized every two or three years, bringing together bishops, experts, and various delegates to discuss various topics like the Eucharist, the Word of God, the Middle East, the new evangelization, the family, young people, and the Amazon. In each case, bishops vote on a Final Document, then the pope writes his own text – called an “apostolic exhortation” – **to open new pathways and shed new light** on what was discussed at the synod, so that it can **radiate across the entire Church**.

What’s unique about this synod on synodality?

Unlike past synods, this one isn’t about addressing a particular issue but about becoming who God calls us to be as a Church, all of us together, amidst the reality of today’s world! This Synod is totally **unprecedented**, for at least three reasons.

1. It is no longer only a **one-month Synod of Bishops** but a **two-year synodal process for the entire People of God, all the baptized!** All are invited and no one is to be left behind or excluded!

2. It is a synod that aims on giving the entire Church a ***lived experience*** of synodality. It's not just about filling in a questionnaire, but of gathering the fruits of what the Holy Spirit is saying to us here and now.
3. The aim of the synod is not just to talk about synodality, but to put synodality into practice from now onwards, in every diocese, parish, and country across the whole world. This calls all of us, at every level of the Church, to renew our way of being and working together moving forward.

So what is synodality anyway?

Fundamentally, *synodality is about journeying together*. This happens through listening to one another in order to hear what God is saying to all of us. It is realizing that the Holy Spirit can speak through anyone to help us walk forward together on our journey as the People of God.

[The above explanation adapted from the Salt + Light Media website <https://slmedia.org/blog/what-is-the-synod-on-synodality>]



**HOLY SPIRIT:
A Parish of Disciples**



"Without the Spirit, there is no synod."

"I am certain the Spirit will guide us and give us the grace to move forward together, to listen to one another and to embark on a discernment of the times in which we are living, in solidarity with the struggles and aspirations of all humanity."

-Pope Francis
