



And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight (Luke 24:30,31).

For a Synodal Church
Synod, 2021-2023

Mutual Listening - - opening our heart to how God speaks to us

The entire People of God shares a common dignity and vocation through Baptism. All of us are called in virtue of our Baptism to be active participants in the life of the Church. In parishes, small Christian communities, lay movements, religious communities, and other forms of communion, women and men, young people and the elderly, we are all invited to listen to one another in order to hear the promptings of the Holy Spirit, who comes to guide our human efforts, breathing life and vitality into the Church and leading us into deeper communion for our mission in the world. As the Church embarks on this synodal journey, we must strive to ground ourselves in experiences of authentic listening and discernment on the path of becoming the Church that God calls us to be (Vademecum 1.2).

I Timeline

1. Diocese of Orlando unique focus on "For a Synodal Church" begins with the Liturgical Year, First Sunday of Advent, November 28, 2021.
 - a. Bishop Proclamation regarding the People of God within the Diocese of Orlando recognizing Jesus through its unique focus on "For A Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission.
2. Diocese of Orlando unique focus on "For a Synodal Church" ends on Pentecost, June 5, 2022

II Listening Audiences

- Priests
- Deacons
- Seminarians
- Religious Sisters
- Principals of Schools
- Liturgical/Ministerial Leadership of Diocese/Parishes/Missions/Schools
- Employees (Diocese of Orlando entities, Catholic Foundation of Central Florida, Florida Catholic Media)
- Volunteers
- Catholic School Students
- Students in Faith Formation
- Parents of Catholic School Students and Students in Faith Formation
- Leaders of Religious Denominations
- Families
- Associations of the Faithful
- Various Gatherings of Different Cultures
- (All People of God!)



- III Existing Opportunities to Engage in Mutual Listening
- Priests' Advent Gathering, December 1 (Theme: The LORD is my shepherd, there is nothing I lack (Psalm 23:1).
 - Priests' Lenten Gathering, March 8 (Theme: ...your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven (Matthew 6:10).
 - Sisters' Retreat: January 14-16
 - Chancery Advent Retreat, December 6
 - Chancery Lenten Retreat, March 15
 - Principals' Meeting: December 2021
 - Executive Cabinet Meeting
 - Chancery Secretariat Meetings
 - Diocesan Finance Council Meeting
 - Diocesan Business Administrators' Meeting
 - Parish Finance Council Meetings
 - Parish Building Committee Meetings
 - Parish Staff Meetings
 - Parish Ministry Gatherings
 - Around the Dinner Table
 - Dialogue with Ecumenical and Other Faith Denomination Leaders
 - Catholic Charities of Central Florida In Service Meeting
 - Catholic Charities of Central Florida Board Meeting
 - Zoom Gatherings ("E-Synodal")
 - Catholic Schools Week
 - Catholic School Classes
 - Faith Formation Classes
 - Catholic Foundation of Central Florida Board Meeting, February 15 and May 10
- IV Communication regarding Synodal and Mutual Listening opportunities
1. Website page
 2. Social media to promote gatherings
 3. Parish submissions regarding their gatherings
 4. Bishop welcome video and updates
 5. Bishop columns
 6. Suggested text to parishes regarding Communion, Participation, Mission
 7. Flyer, Invite Templates for Gatherings
- V Liturgical Offerings
1. Staff of Offices of Liturgy and Music create template for "Liturgy of the Hours" for prayer gatherings and distribute to parish leadership.
 2. Liturgical Opportunity: Season of Lent
 - a) During Lent, a "Vigil to Dry Tears", modeled after Pope Francis' prayer service, is offered to God's people to console those who are suffering or hurting in any way, "to bind up wounds." Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy and in Him we experience the love of God who consoles, pardons, and instills hope. This could be held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of the Universe to encourage Diocesan participation.



VI Advent, Christmas Season, and Lent: Opportunity for Gatherings

1. Structure for Gatherings

- a) Begin Gathering with
 - (i) 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.

or

- (ii) Liturgy of the Hours or
- (iii) Liturgy of the Word/Lectio Divina using one of the Scripture Passages of the Synodal Document

Luke 24:13-32

- Acts 10
- Matthew 15:21-28
- Jn 4:1-42
- Acts 15

- (b) Welcome video from Bishop Noonan

- (c) Leader* invites listening: All participants are reminded we are called to listen and affirm, not to debate and dispute. trust in the Holy Spirit to transcend each one present and transform our heart to know God.

*Daniel Boyd of the Laity, Family and Life Secretariat has graciously agreed to offer preparatory training to those selected parish leaders whose pastor and/or



leader requests preparatory training prior to the gathering. To schedule a training contact Mr. Boyd's email is dboyd@orlandodiocese.org.

- (i) From the heart of each individual present, listen to what the Holy Spirit tells you about who you as Eucharist, God's Presence, in your daily living.
- (ii) From the heart of each individual present, listen to what the Holy Spirit tells you about how you might increase His Presence.
- (iii) Share with those in a table discussion.
- (iv) Reflect upon the goodness of the sharing and how we can journey together knowing all that has been shared. Do we recognize God among us?
- (v) Record any ideas as the Holy Spirit guides those present.
- (vi) Share with the larger group.
- (viii) Pause and be still. Listen for God's Word within your heart.
- (d) Close with a prayer of thanksgiving.
- (e) Offer the Sacrament of Penance after closing prayer of thanksgiving for those who choose to partake.

VII Regional Gatherings: Easter Season 2022

Each Dean calls forth a Regional Gathering where two – four representatives (selected by the pastors of the various churches in the Deanery) of various parishes, leadership, staff, associations of the faithful gather as one to mutually listen for God's whisper.

The Regional Gatherings format would be the same as smaller gatherings.

VIII Diocesan Gathering: Easter Season 2022

After the Regional Gatherings, two – four representatives from each Deanery would meet with Bishop Noonan and all Vicars to mutually pray and listen for the heart of God.

The format of the Diocesan Gathering would be the same as smaller gatherings; however, each Dean would offer with those present a summation of the unique sharing at the Regional Gathering.

IX Post Pentecost: Prepare a synthesis to submit on behalf of Bishop Noonan to the USCCB. Are there any hoped for outcomes to our listening?

- Increased participation in the celebration of Mass?
- Increased participation in the Sacrament of Penance?
- Greater generational respect?
- More family participation in faith journey?

X Notes: Some parishes may wish to expound upon the questions for small group gatherings. Additional questions proposed are:

1. The journeying companions – Who are we journeying with? Who do we mean when we say "our Church?"
2. Listening – To whom do we need to listen?
3. Speaking out – How do we promote free/authentic styles of communication without duplicity and opportunism?
4. Celebrating – How do prayer and liturgy inspire our "journeying together?"
5. Co-Responsible in the mission – How is each baptized person a protagonist in the mission?



6. Dialogue in Church and Society – How do we collaborate with other dioceses, religious communities, etc.?
7. With other Christian denominations – What relations do we have with other Christians?
8. Authority and participation – How is authority exercised within our particular church? How is the assumption of responsibility by the faithful promoted?
9. Discerning and deciding – How do we discern and decide together?
10. Forming ourselves in synodality – How do we form people to make them more capable of “journeying together?”