



## The Synod Process

### What is a Synod? What is the purpose?

Quotes below are from Archbishop Hebda's June 6, 2019 article in *The Catholic Spirit*. Find the full article at [www.archspm.org/synod](http://www.archspm.org/synod).

- "A Synod is a formal representative assembly designed to help a bishop in his shepherding of the local Church."
- The purpose is "to discern and establish clear pastoral priorities in a way that will both promote greater unity and lead us to a more vigorous proclamation of Jesus' good news."

### What is a Listening Church?

- The pre-Synod process has been designed to engage in a "sincere and respectful 'mutual listening' in which everyone has something to learn."
- "Moreover, it is not just listening to one another but to the Holy Spirit, the 'Spirit of Truth' (Jn 14:17), to know what the Spirit is 'saying to the Churches' (Rev. 2:7)."

### What is the Synod process?

- The pre-Synod process began fall 2019 engaging the People of God — laity, clergy, consecrated men and women and bishops — all walking together at the personal, parish, deanery, and Archdiocesan levels.
- The process culminates in the Archdiocesan Synod Assembly to be held Pentecost weekend, June 3-5, 2022, followed by a Pastoral Letter leading to a Pastoral Plan.

### Year 1 (2019-2020): The Church Listens

#### Prayer and Listening Events

- 30 Prayer & Listening events (19 open and 11 focus) held and attended by Archbishop Hebda.
- Over 8,000 faithful attended providing over 35,000 comments on what is working well in the Archdiocese and challenges and opportunities as we move forward together.

#### Synod Focus Areas

- Based on this feedback, along with other consultations and discernment, Archbishop Hebda determined the three focus areas that will shape the Year 3 Consultation process.
  1. Forming parishes that are in the service of evangelization,
  2. Forming missionary disciples who know Jesus' love and respond to his call, and
  3. Forming youth and young adults in and for a Church that is always young.

### Year 2 (2020-2021): The Church Prepares

#### Praying with Scripture

- Five-part video series on praying with scripture and growing in holiness, including 25 prayer companions with reflections.

#### Healing and Hope

- Five-part video retreat to encounter Jesus' love and mercy to bring healing and hope and to provide resources for next steps.

#### Faith and Culture

Videos with expert teachers, testimonials, and panel discussion on four topics:

- Sources of Catholic teaching,
- Sexual morality and the family,
- The dignity of women, and
- The priesthood (both baptized and ordained).

#### Synod at Home

Five-part video series to create a faith plan to live as an intentional disciple based on four pillars:

- Prayer & sacraments,
- Lifelong learning,
- Generosity & service, and
- Traditions & fun.

### Year 3 (2021-2022): The Church Engages

#### Fall 2021: Parish Consultation Process with Small Groups

- Small groups meet in every parish to learn, pray, and discuss the focus areas.
- Parish feedback on the focus areas will help inform the Deanery consultation.

#### January/February 2022 Deanery Consultation Process

- Pastors and parish representatives gather one Saturday to learn, pray, and discuss the focus areas.
- Deanery feedback will help determine the Synod topics.

#### June 2022: Archdiocesan Synod Assembly (Pentecost Weekend):

- Approximately 500 appointed delegates (including two from each parish) gather to learn, pray, and discuss the Synod topics and recommend pastoral priorities to Archbishop Hebda.
- After considering the Synod recommendations, Archbishop writes a Pastoral Letter (November - Feast of Christ the King) leading to a Pastoral Plan to move our Archdiocese into the future.



All these free resources are available at  
[archspm.org/synod.com](http://archspm.org/synod.com)

**Join a  
Synod small group  
at your parish this fall!**

*See reverse side for details.*

# Join a Synod Small Group at your Parish this Fall!



## What will be discussed in the Synod small groups?

- **Three Focus Areas:** Small groups will discuss the 3 focus areas that arose from feedback given in the Prayer and Listening events.
  - **Focus area #1:** Forming parishes that are in the service of evangelization.
  - **Focus area #2:** Forming missionary disciples who know Jesus' love and respond to his call.
  - **Focus area #3:** Forming youth and young adults in and for a Church that is always young.

*See [archspm.org/synod](http://archspm.org/synod) to read Archbishop Hebda's August 13, 2020 article in the Catholic Spirit for more details.*

## Why should I participate in a Synod small group?

- **Help Archbishop Hebda move the Archdiocese forward.**
  - Ideas generated in small groups will assist Archbishop Hebda in determining the Archdiocesan Synod Assembly topics.
  - Those topics will guide Archbishop Hebda as he creates the Pastoral Plan for the future of the Archdiocese.
- **Discover more about the Catholic Faith with your Church community through small groups.**
  - Build strong fellowship and community, connecting you with Christ, others, and your parish.
  - Dig deeper into the focus areas by examining Scripture, Church teaching, and today's cultural context.
  - Share how God has worked in your life and the life of others.

## How will Synod small groups work?

- **Purpose:** Small groups of approximately 8 people will gather to learn, pray, and discuss the Synod focus areas.
  - **Learn:** Discover what the Church teaches in today's cultural context.
  - **Pray:** Listen and reflect upon how the Holy Spirit is guiding you and your small group.
  - **Discuss:** Share insights into the focus areas from your own prayer and experience.
- **Facilitation:** A trained facilitator will promote a meaningful and charitable dialogue between group members.
- **Feedback:** A trained scribe will document the group's reflections on the Synod focus areas, which then will be provided to your parish and Archbishop Hebda.
- **Location/Dates:** Small groups will meet weekly at parishes across the Archdiocese for 6 sessions between September 19 and November 14. Each meeting will last 2 hours.

## How can I join a Synod small group?

- **Open invite small groups at your parish**
  - Come alone or with others and the parish will build a group for you. All are welcome!
  - Registration may be encouraged but not required.
  - Watch for more details regarding dates/times at your parish.
- **Existing small groups**
  - Already in a small group at your parish? Meet with your group using the Synod small group materials and provide feedback.
  - Contact your parish for more information.

*Your parish may offer additional types of Synod small groups.*

**Be a part of something bigger!**  
**Join the Catholic family gathering in every parish throughout this Archdiocese to participate in the first Synod in over 80 years.**  
**Don't miss this historic moment!**