

2 December 2021

Dear Friends,

In early October, Pope Francis launched the Church on a two-year path of worldwide consultation, which is called Synod 2021-2023: “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission”

*What is a synod?* In Church terminology, the word “synod” means a meeting of the faithful to discuss the doctrinal and pastoral needs of the Church. It comes from the Greek word that means “meeting”, but its roots have the connotation of going along the path or way with one another.

These types of meetings range from a gathering of bishops from around the world, to a local gathering of people from throughout a diocese. This worldwide synod is historic, in that Pope Francis is calling all the faithful of the whole world to gather together for this two-year synodal process. Not to gather in the same geographic place, but to gather with the same purpose.

The purpose of the Synod is primarily about listening. First, listening to the Holy Spirit. Second, listening to one another. The goal is to discern how all of us—as the entire Body of Christ throughout the whole world—are being called by the Holy Spirit to better accompany one another along the way. And, don’t forget: *Jesus is the Way!* (John 14:6)

The Synod will go through different phases over the next two years: parish, diocesan, national, continental, and universal. The parish phase has already begun. *How so?* Our focus on prayer and having a retreat experience every day these past few months is the preparation that’s necessary for getting better at listening to the Holy Spirit and participating in the Synod together. *Please keep it up!*

The parish phase will continue through early May, and will be led by Jim Chambers, who has agreed to serve as Synod Coordinator for MQP. *Thank you, Jim!* He has begun receiving resources and training from the Archdiocese. Furthermore, he will need many people to help—so please be on the lookout in parish media for more information about the Synod at MQP, and ways that you can participate!

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Let’s keep praying for peace, unity, and healing, and let’s keep making personal decisions each day with our own thoughts, words, actions, and prayers that contribute to peace, unity, and healing in our world!

Mary, Queen of Peace and Mother of the New Evangelization, pray for us!

