

The Call to Journey Together

On October 10, 2021, **Pope Francis** opened a worldwide Synod, offering the theme, “For a Synodal Church: **Communion, Participation, and Mission**”.

Pope Francis invites the entire Church to reflect on our Church and how we can move forward together to live a more inclusive and united Church, being Christ to one another.

Catholic parishes around the world are entering into serious dialogue around the ten themes offered by the Vatican, listening to one another.

Walk together
as a Church

Why is MY voice important?

The purpose of the Synod is “to listen, as the entire People of God, to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church.” Every voice in the Church is a vital part of this process: youth, young adults, adults; men, women; those who are active parishioners, and those who feel separated from the Church. All are a part of the Body of Christ.

The Synod Process

With this in mind, the Synod process is guided by this main question:

How does this “journeying together” take place today on different levels (from the local level to the universal one), allowing the Church to proclaim the Gospel; and what steps is the Spirit inviting us to take in order to grow as a synodal Church? (*Preparatory Document, p. 2*)

The Diocese of Fresno has chosen the following questions for reflection for the Synod process:

1. **The Journeying Companions.** In the Church and in society, we are side by side on the same road.
 - a. When we say “our Church”, who is part of it?
 - b. Do I feel invited to be part of the journey?
 - c. When have I felt that I was or was not invited to the journey?
 - d. Have I seen or experienced persons or groups who have not felt invited to be part of the journey?
2. **Listening.** Listening is the first step, but it requires having an open mind, and heart, without prejudices.
 - a. In your experience, to whom does your local parish Church need to listen?
 - b. In your experience, to whom does the Church at large need to listen?
3. **Speaking Out.** All are invited to speak out with courage and boldness, that is, integrating freedom, truth and charity.
 - a. Are you aware if your parish has resources where you may share your concerns with truth, charity, and boldness?

4. **Celebrating.** “Journeying together” is only possible if it is based on communal listening to the Word and the celebration of the Eucharist.
 - a. How does prayer and liturgical celebrations (Mass and Communal Prayer) at my parish inspire and guide our “journeying together”?
 - b. Do you feel engaged in the liturgy and prayer life of your community?
5. **Co-responsible in the Mission.** Synodality is at the service of the Church’s mission, in which all her members are called to participate.
 - a. We are called to be missionary disciples; how are you as a baptized person called to participate in the mission of proclaiming the Gospel?
 - b. How is your parish living the mission of proclaiming the Gospel?
6. **Dialogue in Church and Society.** Dialogue is a path of perseverance that is ideally capable of gathering experiences of all persons, including those who feel they have been silenced or have been suffering in silence.
 - a. Does your parish engage with other believers and with non-believers?
 - b. Is there a place for your parish members to dialogue openly?
 - c. How has differing opinions been addressed at your parish?



7. **With Other Christian Denominations.** The dialogue between Christians of different confessions, united by one Baptism, has a special place in the synodal journey.
- What relations does your parish have with the brothers and sisters of other Christian denominations?
 - What areas do they concern?
 - What fruits have we drawn from this "journeying together"?
 - What are the difficulties?
8. **Authority and Participation.** A synodal Church is a listening Church that provides opportunities to listen to the Holy Spirit and the People of God, in order to discern together and walk forward on a common path.
- How does your parish identify the goals to be pursued, the way to achieve them and the steps to be taken?
 - How are the practices of teamwork, co-responsibility, and lay ministries promoted in your parish?
9. **Discerning and Deciding.** In a synodal style, decisions are made through discernment, based on a consensus that flows from the common obedience to the Spirit.
- By what procedures and methods do we discern together and make decisions?
 - How can they be improved?
10. **Forming Ourselves in Synodality.** Journeying together calls us to lifelong formation and growth in our Christian faith.
- How does your parish provide the tools you need to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?
 - How does your parish provide opportunities for praying together, listening to one another, and engaging in dialogue as a community of believers to further the mission of the Gospel?

How can I participate?

Join us for one of the Listening Sessions to be held at 6:00 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo (5049 W. Caldwell Avenue, Visalia 93277) on the following dates:

Wednesday, April 27 (Spanish)
 Friday, April 29 (English)
 Friday, May 13 (Spanish)
 Friday, May 20 (English)

Go to the parish website, www.gscparish.com, and click on the link to complete and submit the form directly to the parish office.

Submit your response in writing to the parish office at 506 North Garden St., Visalia, CA 93291

Call the parish office, 559-734-9522, if you have questions. Office hours are M-F, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00-5:00 p.m. and on Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

You may also submit the form directly to the Diocese of Fresno by going to this link:

<https://form.jotform.com/RoseHernandez/synod-individual-response>

Or by scanning this QR code:



SCAN ME

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.

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.



Synod
2021
2023
For a synodal Church
communion • participation • mission