



## 2021-2023 Synod Listening Session – Participant Guide

### Schedule:

Hospitality  
Welcome and Introductions  
Opening Prayer  
Ground Rules for Discussion  
Overview of the Synod Process  
Discussion: The Fundamental Question  
Break  
Discussion: The Core Questions  
Closing Prayer

### Opening Prayer:

Leader: In the name of the Father (+), and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Response: **Amen.**

Leader: Come, Holy Spirit

Response: **Fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love.**

Leader: Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

Response: **And you shall renew the face of the earth.**

Leader: O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit instructed the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Spirit we may know what is right and always rejoice in his consolation, through Christ our Lord.

Response: **Amen.**

### Psalm 100

Leader: Our response is: Serve the Lord with Gladness

Response: **Serve the Lord with Gladness**

Leader: Cry out with joy to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness Come before him, singing for joy.

Response: **Serve the Lord with Gladness**

Leader: Know that he, the Lord, is God. He made us, we belong to him, We are his people, the sheep of his flock.

Response: **Serve the Lord with Gladness**

Leader: Go within his gates, giving thanks. Enter his courts with songs of praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name.

Response: **Serve the Lord with Gladness**

Leader: We make our prayer complete and perfect by praying together Our Father...

Leader: In the name of the Father (+), and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Response: **Amen**

### Fundamental Question:

*A Synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, “journeys together.” Take a few minutes to reflect on the following questions:*

- *How is this “journeying together” happening today in your parish?*
- *How is the Holy Spirit inviting your parish community to grow in “journeying together?” (Preparatory Document, no. 26).*

*In your own experience, think about:*

- *What experiences, in your local parish, does this question bring to mind?*
- *What are the joys of your parish life?*
- *What are the difficulties and obstacles to parish life that you have encountered?*

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*Where in these experiences do you hear the voice of the Holy Spirit?*

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### Core Questions:

#### Listening

The questions we will consider under Listening are:

- How is God speaking to us through the voices that are in our midst?
- How is God speaking to us through voices we sometimes ignore, including those on the peripheries?
- What space is there to listen to the voices on the peripheries, especially cultural groups, women, the disabled, those who experience poverty, marginalization, or social exclusion?

## Speaking Out

The questions we will consider under Speaking Out are:

- What enables or hinders you from speaking up courageously, candidly, and responsibly in our local Church and in society?
- What space is there in our parishes for the voice of people including active and inactive members of our faith?

## Sharing Responsibility for Our Common Mission and Sharing Authority and Participation

The questions we will consider under this core question are:

- How are the baptized members of your parish able to participate in the mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel?
- What hinders people from being active in your parish?
- How is authority or governance exercised in your local parish?
- How are teamwork and co-responsibility put into practice in your local parish?

## Discerning and Deciding

The questions we will consider for Discerning and Deciding are:

- How does your parish use the methods of listening and speaking (consultation) to make decisions?
- How does your parish promote participation in decision-making within the hierarchical structures of the Church?
- Does the decision-making methods of your parish help you to listen to all members of the community including those who are on the peripheries of parish life?

## Celebration

The questions we will consider for Celebration are:

- How does prayer and liturgical celebrations, especially Sunday Mass, inspire and guide your parish?
- How does your prayer life and celebration of the Mass inspire and inform your personal decisions and decisions in the parish community?
- How does the parish invite all baptized Catholics, including our ethnic communities, youth, families, and persons with disabilities and their families, into the active life of the parish, especially Sunday Mass?

## The Holy Spirit

- From your small group sharing, name one insight where you heard the voice of the Holy Spirit today?

## Prayer for the Synod:

The Adsumus prayer calls upon the Holy Spirit to guide a Church gathering. Every session of the Second Vatican Council began with the bishops and Holy Father praying this prayer. This prayer is attributed to St. Isidore of Seville (c.560- April 4, 636). For the 2021-2023 Synod, the Holy Father is proposing that the entire People of God pray this simplified version of the Adsumus.

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.