

SYNOD 2021-2023

'JOURNEYING TOGETHER'

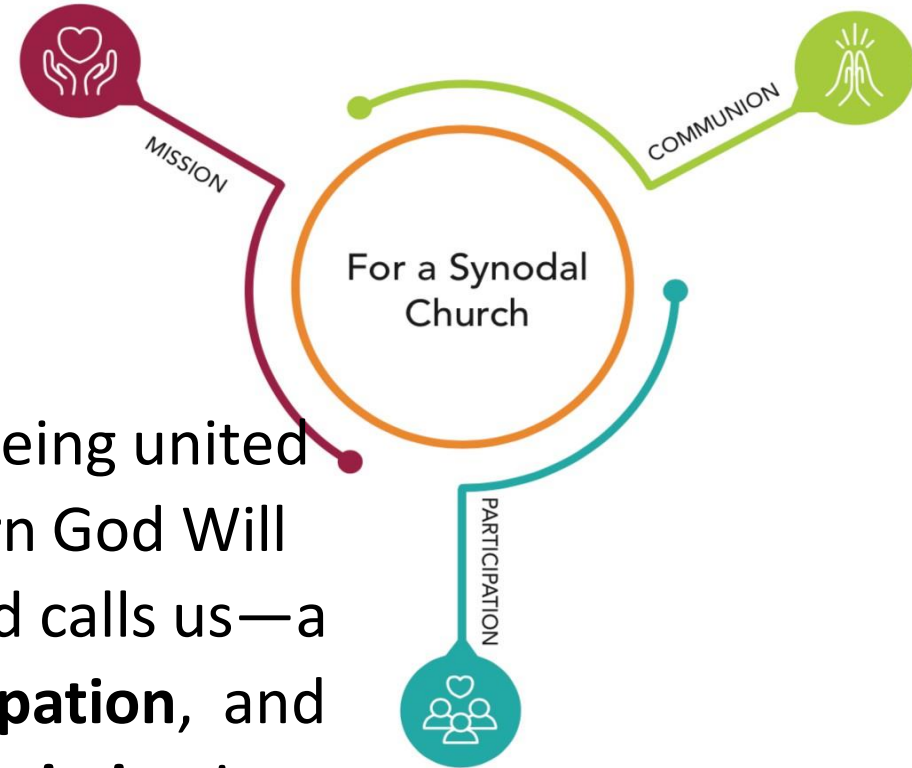


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ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



Theme for this Synod

- The theme of the Synod is “For a Synodal Church: **Communion, Participation, and Mission.**”



- Enlightened by God’s Word and being united in prayer, we will be able to discern God Will and pursue the path to which God calls us—a deeper **communion**, fuller **participation**, and greater openness to fulfilling our **mission** in the world.



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What is the meaning of 'Synod' ?

- Originally, it is a Greek word, *synodos*, meaning a meeting or assembly. It is derived from two words *syn* - “together” and *hodos* - “way” or “journey”.
- Symbolically, it indicates the path of which the ***People of God walk together***.
- It refers to the Lord Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (Jn 14:6), and to the fact that originally, Christians were called the “followers of the Way” (Acts 9,2; 19,9.23; 22,4; 24,14.22).



The Objectives of the Synod:

- Synod invites us to **listen**, as the entire People of God, to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church... especially to those at the margins.
- “The **purpose of the Synod**, and therefore of this consultation, is not to produce documents, but “to plant dreams, **draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to be nourished**, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another, and **create a bright resourcefulness** that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands for our common mission.”

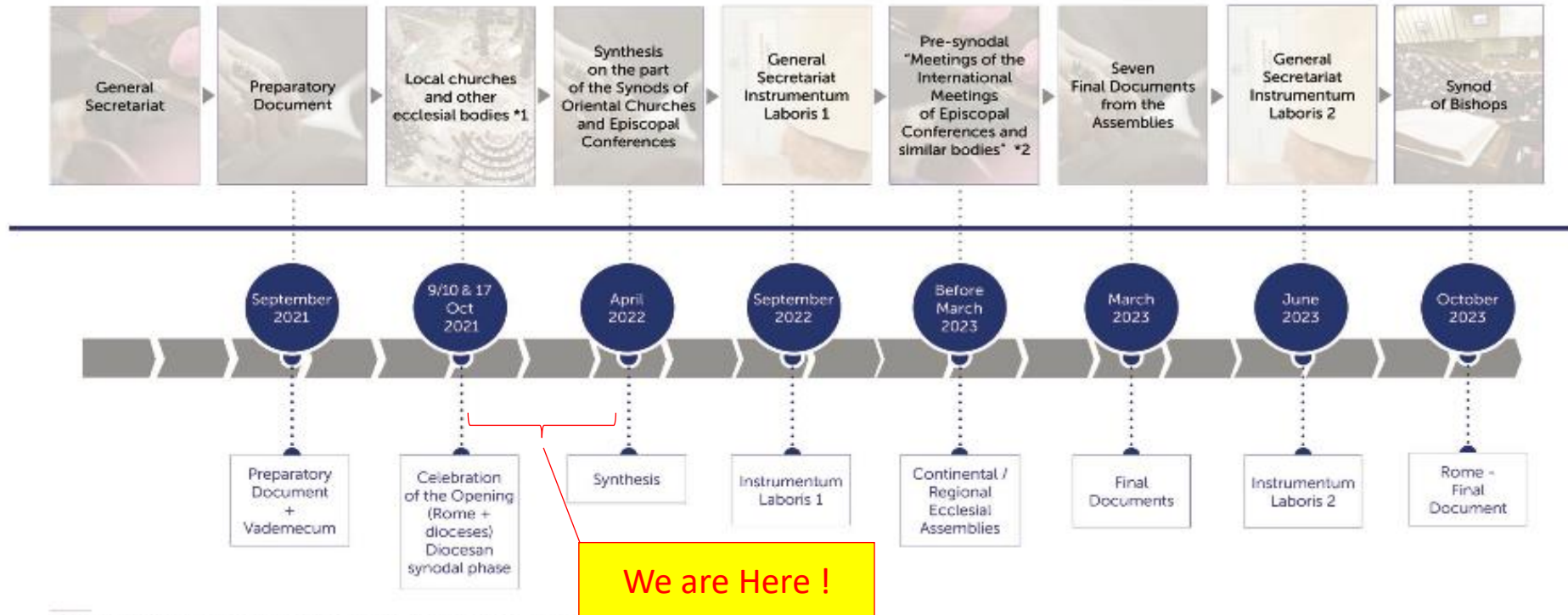


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The Synodal Process

FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH: COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION AND MISSION XVI ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS



*1 Dioceses, Consecrated Life (IUSG-USG, UNIONS & FEDERATIONS), Associations of the Faithful, Institutions of Higher Education
 *2 Africa (ISeCAM), Oceania (FCBCO), Asia (FABC), Middle East (CPCO), Europe (CCEE), Latin America (CELAM), North America (USCCB + CCB)



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What is Synodality?

- “The Synodal Process is first and foremost a *spiritual process*”.
- It does not primarily compose of data-gathering or series of meetings and debates or about changing doctrine or church structures, but rather encountering each other as brothers and sisters in Christ in post- pandemic world.
- **Synodal listening** is inclined towards *discernment*, which requires us to learn and apply *personal and communal discernment*.
- Therefore, we listen to each other, to our faith tradition, and to the signs of the times to discern what God is saying to all of us.
- As Pope Francis said: “*to listen to God, so that with him we may hear the cry of his people; to listen to his people until we are in harmony with the will to which God calls us.*”



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What is Synodality ?

- Synodality will allow the People of God to **journey together, listening** to the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, to **participate** in the mission of the Church that Christ establishes between us.
- This **invitation starts with listening** – listening to each other’s joys, hopes, sorrows and anxieties. **Listening** to each other is the **basis of dialogue, friendship and community life.**
- Synodality is communion with one another: **praying, listening, and conversing** together under the guidance of the **Holy Spirit.**



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What is different in this Synod ?

- While recent Synods have examined themes such as the new evangelization, the family, young people, and the Amazon, the present Synod focuses on the **topic of synodality** itself—and is unique for two reasons..
 - First, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, wants the entire Church, i.e. the faithful, clergy and religious to be involved - to pray, to listen and talk together using the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 - Second, this Synod is a unique gift for our local Church. It is a **gift of time** – to allow us to **pause and reconnect** with our parish communities. It is an opportunity to invite people, not only back to obligatory Masses but also to the parish life.



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Attitudes for participating in the Synodal Process

- **Being synodal requires time for sharing**
- **Humility in listening must correspond to courage in speaking:**
Listen to everyone. It is not debating to convince others.
- **Openness to conversion and change** – We can be resistant to what the Holy Spirit is trying to inspire us to undertake. We are called to abandon attitudes of complacency and comfort that lead us to make decisions purely on the basis of how things have been done in the past.
- **Dialogue** leads us to **newness** – Willing to change our opinions based on what we have heard from others.



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Attitudes for participating in the Synodal Process

- **Leave behind prejudices and stereotypes;** be inclusive – The first step towards listening is freeing our minds and hearts from prejudices and stereotypes that lead us on the wrong path, towards ignorance and division.
- **Overcoming ideologies** – Avoid the risk of giving greater importance to ideas than to the reality of the life of faith that people live in a concrete way.
- **Overcome the scourge of clericalism (domination)** – The Church is the Body of Christ filled with different charisms in which each member has a unique role to play. Everyone listens to one other out of love, in a spirit of communion and our common mission.



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Attitudes for participating in the Synodal Process

- **Cure the virus of self-sufficiency** – Together, we form the body of Christ. We are able to learn from each other, journey together, and be at the service of one another.
- Reach out through **ecumenical and interreligious dialogue** - Dream together and journey with one another throughout the entire human family.
- Dream and spend **time with the future** / Give rise to **hope**: Do what is right and true to be beacons of hope & not prophets of doom.



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Attitudes for participating in the Synodal Process

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Temptations of wanting to lead ourselves instead of being led by God.
- Temptation to focus on ourselves and our immediate concerns.
- Temptation to only see problems
- Temptations of focusing only on structures
- Temptations not to look beyond the visible confines of the Church



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