

**DEEPENING
OUR SYNODAL JOURNEY**

17 May 2024



Synod
2021
2024

For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission



SYNOD

Conversation in the Spirit

A dynamic of discernment in the synodal Church



Synod 2021-2024



Silence and prayer
listening to the Word of God

"Taking the word and listening"

Each person takes turns speaking from his or her own experience and prayer, and listens carefully to the contribution of others.

Silence and prayer



PERSONAL PREPARATION

By entrusting oneself to the Father, conversing in prayer with the Lord Jesus and listening to the Holy Spirit, each one prepares his or her own contribution to the question about which he or she is called to discern.



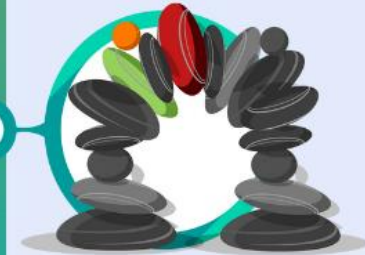
Silence and prayer

"Building together"

Together we dialogue on the basis of what emerged earlier in order to discern and gather the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit: to recognize intuitions and convergences; to identify discordances, obstacles and new questions; to allow prophetic voices to emerge. It is important that everyone can feel represented by the outcome of the work. "To what steps is the Holy Spirit calling us together?"

"Making space for others and the Other"

From what the others have said, each one shares what has resonated most with him or her or what has aroused the most resistance in him or her, allowing himself or herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit: **"When, listening, did my heart burn within me?"**



Final prayer of thanksgiving

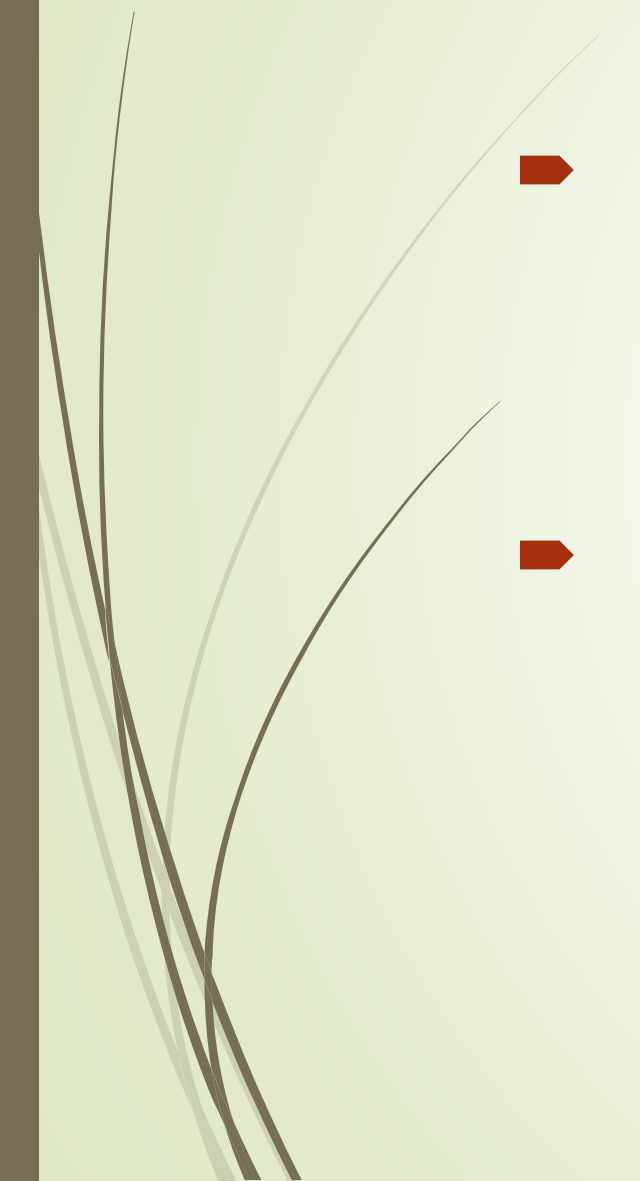


PRIORITY THEMES FOR THE SYNOD ON SYNODALITY

- **A communion that radiates:** How can we be more fully a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of all humanity?
- **Co-responsibility in Mission:** How can we better share gifts and tasks in the service of the Gospel?
- **Participation, governance and authority:** What processes, structures and institutions in a missionary synodal Church?



LIVING SYNODALLY

- **Deepening synodality in a missionary perspective – within our existing communities, parishes, places of ministry**
 - **Broadening experiences of synodality – going out to the peripheries to encounter those who are excluded**
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SYNODAL PROCESS SIMPLY DESCRIBED

**WALKING
WITH . . .**

**LISTENING
TO . . .**

**BEING LISTENED
TO . . .**

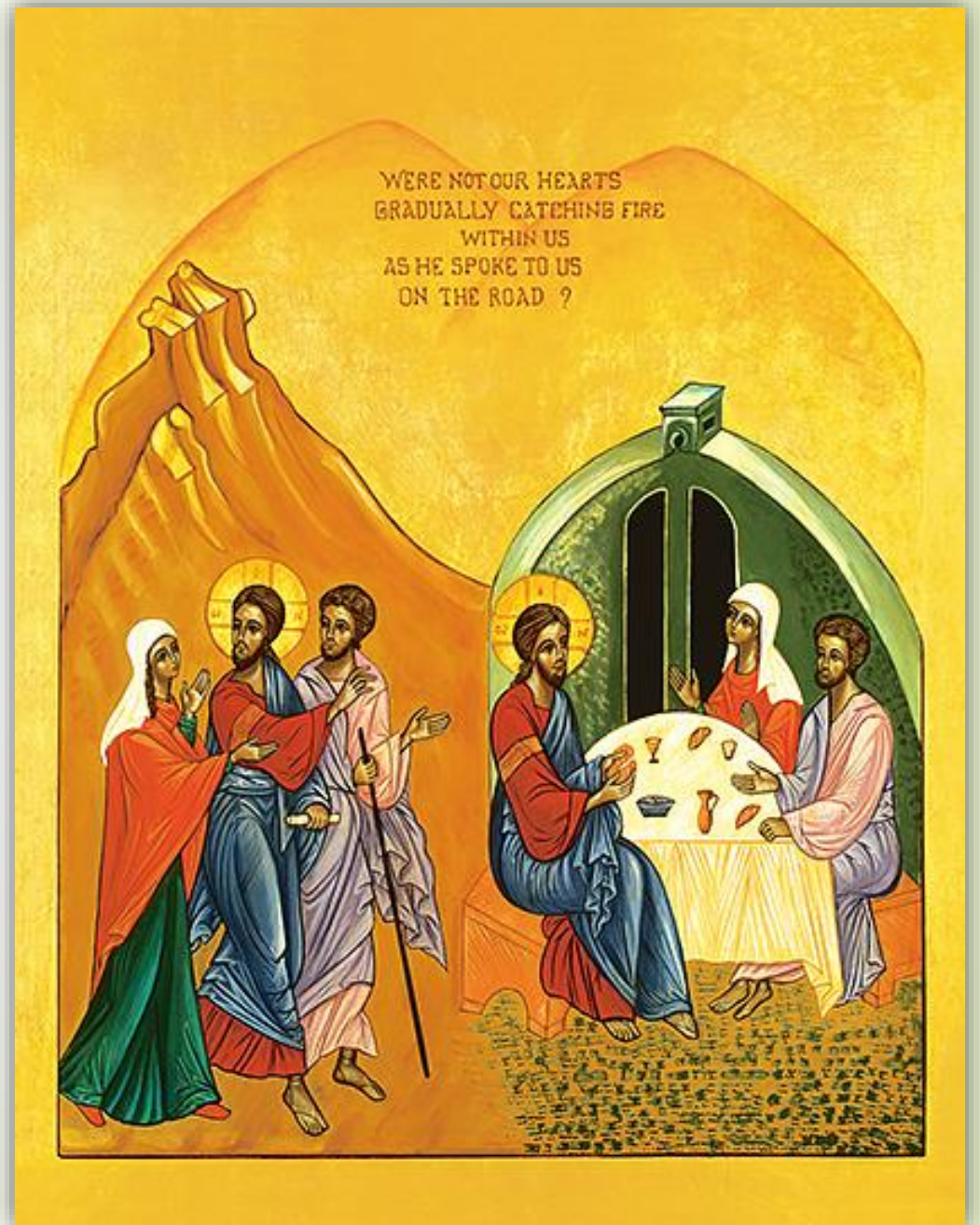
Then they said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?'

Lk 24:32

Walking with. . .

Listening to. . .

Being listened to. . .





TWO IMAGES OF THE CHURCH

TWO WAYS OF BEING CHURCH



SYNODAL PROCESS

Diversity

Unity

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Incompleteness

Openness

# SYNODAL PROCESS

Silence

Encounter

Conversation  
in the Spirit

Prayer

Action

# SYNOD THEMES

- **Multiplicity of interventions, plurality of positions**
- **Polarization and distrust, need for dialogue, revitalizing communion and reconciliation**
- **Church's need to listen to the laity, women and men, all called to holiness by virtue of their baptismal vocation – to catechists, children, youth, older persons, those not feeling safe in ecclesial spaces**

# SYNOD THEMES

- **Synodal culture to become more intergenerational, with spaces for young people to speak freely for themselves**
- **Family as the pillar of every Christian community – parents and grandparents and all those who live and share their faith in the family are the first missionaries – important to nuance that all families are not places of safety**
- **Pastoral structures need to be re-organized so they can readily recognize, call forth, and animate lay charisms and ministries, inserting them into the missionary dynamism of the synodal Church**

# SYNOD THEMES

- **Women and men clothed with the same baptismal dignity (Gal 3:28), receive equally variety of gifts of the Spirit**
- **Women's cry for justice – sexual violence, economic inequality, tendency to treat them as objects, trafficking, forced migration and war**
- **Where dignity and justice undermined in relationships between men and women in the Church, weakened credibility of our proclamation to the world – need for relational renewal and structural changes**



# SYNOD THEMES

- **Need to ensure liturgical texts and Church documents attentive to use of language that takes into equal consideration men and women, includes range of words, images and narratives that draw more widely on women's experience**
- **Need to ensure that engagement in ministries in the Church (including ordination to priesthood and diaconate) reflects that persons are called by the Spirit and by virtue of their baptism**

# SYNOD THEMES

- **Social justice** = In some parts of the world, the Church is poor, with those who are poor, and for those who are poor – risk of viewing those living in poverty in terms of "them" and "us"
- **Ecological Justice** = Church teaching, liturgy, and practice must more explicitly and carefully integrate the biblical and theological foundations of integral ecology





# SYNOD THEMES

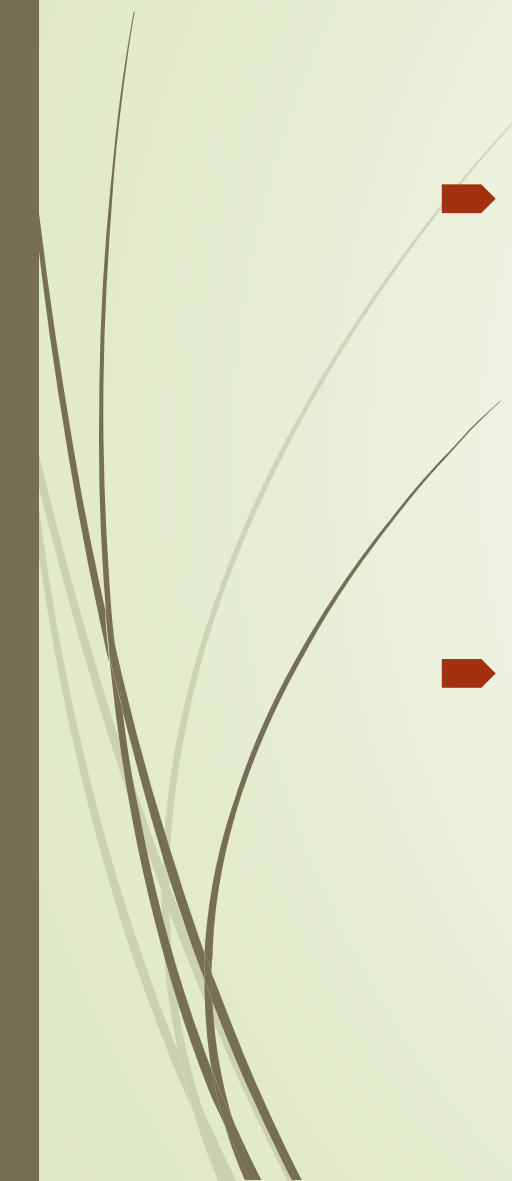
## Matters of

- **identity and sexuality (including members of LGBTQ+ communities)**
- **the end of life**
- **complicated marital situations**
- **ethical issues related to artificial intelligence**

**raise new questions, need reflection**



# SYNOD THEMES

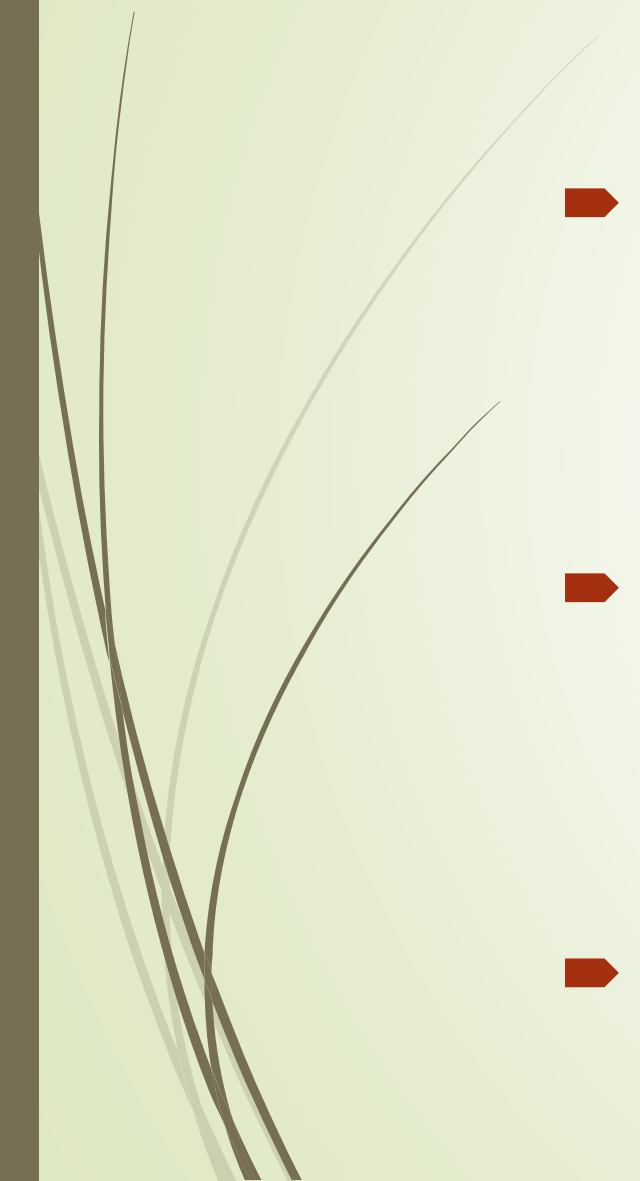
- **Digital environment – changes our learning processes as well as our perception of time, space, our bodies, interpersonal relationships and much of our way of thinking**
  - **Digital culture not so much a distinct area of mission as a crucial dimension of the Church's witness in contemporary culture**
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# FORMATION

- **Formation of the People of God: the exercise of co-responsibility, listening, and discernment; conducting ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, service to the poorest and care for our common home; engagement as "digital missionaries", facilitation of discernment processes, Conversation in the Spirit, consensus building and conflict resolution**
- **Formation for a synodal Church needs to be undertaken synodally: the entire People of God being formed together as they journey together**



# **SYNOD THEMES ACCOUNTABILITY**

- **Episcopal Conferences encouraged to work together at the regional level to create a culture of lifelong formation and learning**
  - **Implementation of structures and processes for regular review of performance of the bishop and parish priest**
  - **Clericalism = an obstacle to ministry and mission**
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# **SMALL GROUP CONVERSATIONS**

- 1. What key message do you want me to take back to Rome for the second Session of the Synod?**
- 2. What are the key messages you need to bring back to your own communities?**

**Spirit... spirit... spirit... spirit...**

**The crunch of word  
the splash of light  
the run of water**

**Spirit... spirit... spirit... spirit...**

**The breaking of word  
the flow of light  
the rush of water**

**Spirit... spirit... spirit... spirit...**

**Come Spirit  
scoundrel of grace  
invade and infect us  
with goosebumps and justice**





**Come Spirit  
spark in the chaos  
and unstop our ears  
to the song in creation**

**Come Spirit  
rascal of heaven  
bring us to the edge  
of all things created**

**Come Spirit of grace  
Come Spirit of life  
Come Spirit of creation**

**Come now... now... now... now**

**~ Roddy Hamilton**

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***Pentecost, Rebecca Brogan***





**Give us just a spark  
on this day, Imaginative God,  
to kindle our smoldering apathy  
until we burst into bonfires  
to melt all the injustice  
which threatens to consume the world.**

**Give us just a word  
this day, Poet of Pentecost,  
that we might be the voice  
of those dispersed by fears,  
that we might proclaim the good news  
to all we would meet.**

**Give us a cool breeze  
this day, Shattering Spirit,  
stirring and shaking us  
until we become a storm  
of hopes to clear the despair  
from all our neighborhoods  
and lands.**

**Give us yourself this day,  
God in Community,  
Holy in One.**

**~ Thom Shuman**

