

ADSUMUS PRAYER

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.

**Prayer to the Holy Spirit to be prayed
before synod conversations.**

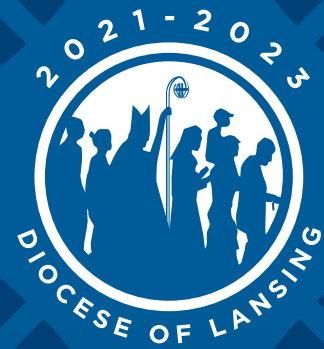


DIOCESE OF LANSING
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S Y N O D
FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH
COMMUNION · PARTICIPATION · MISSION

CONVERSATION GUIDE

WHAT IS A SYNOD?

In May 2021, Pope Francis invited bishops from every diocese in the world to begin a process, called a synod, to spend time with the entire People of God reflecting upon communion, participation, and mission. It will culminate in a meeting of bishops in Rome in 2023.

The term “synod” means to be on the same path with other disciples who follow Jesus Christ, the Way who leads us to abundant life.

“By walking together, and together reflecting on the journey made, the Church will be able to learn from what it will experience which processes can help it to live communion, to achieve participation, to open itself to mission,” said the Pope at the launch of the synod process. Thus, the Holy Father wishes us:

- To listen, as the entire People of God, to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church;
- To listen together to the Word of God in Sacred Scripture and the living Tradition of the Church;
- To listen to one another, and especially to those at the margins, in discerning the signs of the times.

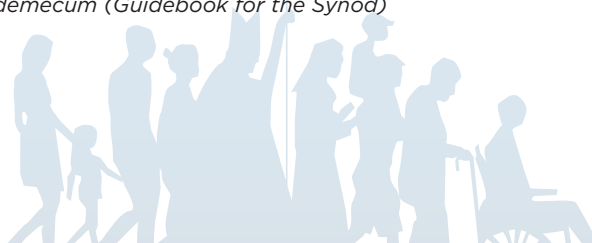
Given this, Bishop Boyea is asking us to have conversations with those in our lives who are struggling with the practice of their Catholic Faith; those who are disconnected or, even, lapsed from the Faith; and those who have never been Catholic. We want to hear what they have to say too. This short guide has been created to assist you with those conversations. Thank you. God bless you.

SYNODAL CONVERSATIONS

What the Synodal process asks:

- To be open to what the Holy Spirit is revealing in this encounter;
- To prayerfully encounter the other person who, sadly, may be living far from the teachings of the Church;
- Dialogue with that person in a way that is cooperative and with the purpose of building relationship and exchanging perspectives;
- Acknowledge with sensitivity any trauma, abuse, or a deep hurt that person has suffered as the result of previous encounters with members of the Church;
- Be patient with that person who may be speaking out of woundedness.

“Humility in listening must correspond to courage in speaking: Everyone has the right to be heard, just as everyone has the right to speak. Synodal dialogue depends on courage both in speaking and in listening. It is not about engaging in a debate to convince others. Rather, it is welcoming what others say as a way by which the Holy Spirit can speak for the good of all (1 Corinthians 12:7)” Section 2.3, Vademecum (Guidebook for the Synod)



SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATIONS

Prior to asking the individual the following questions please note their age, sex, zip code, race or ethnicity, marital status, faith of origin and present faith identity. Suggested conversations then include:

1. How would you describe your present relationship with God?
2. How much of a connection do you presently feel towards the Catholic Church? This could refer to your connection to ordinary Catholics in your life, your local parish, your local diocese, the Universal Church or other Catholic entities.
3. Tell us about a positive experience you've had with the Catholic Church?
4. Tell us about any times when you've had a negative experience with the Catholic Church?
5. Would you say that the Catholic Church helps you or has helped you to understand the Good News of Jesus Christ? If so, in what way?
6. How could the Catholic Church better help you grow closer to Jesus Christ and His Church?
7. Is there anything you would like the bishops of the Church, or other Church leaders, to know about you?
8. Is there anything I didn't ask that you think would be helpful for me to know?
9. Feel free to ask any further questions that seem necessary or appropriate.

If you are comfortable, close your time of conversation by asking if there is any intention that person would like you to pray for.