



Synod
2021
2024

For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission



Catholic Diocese of
SAGINAW

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

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Format and content adapted from and used with permission from The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

Overview of Listening Session

Start Time (minutes)	Duration (minutes)	Description	Comments
6:00 PM	10	Welcome, Introduction, and Ground Rules	Host
6:10 PM	20	Prayer	Prayer Leader
6:30 PM	60	Small Group Discussion: The Fundamental Question - Round #1 (20 min) - Round #2 (20 min) - Group Discernment (20 min)	Table Leaders
7:30 PM	25	Large Group Feedback	Each table shares the Group Discernment
7:55 PM	5	Sending Forth Prayer	Participants to complete an evaluation form before leaving.

Introduction: Journeying Together

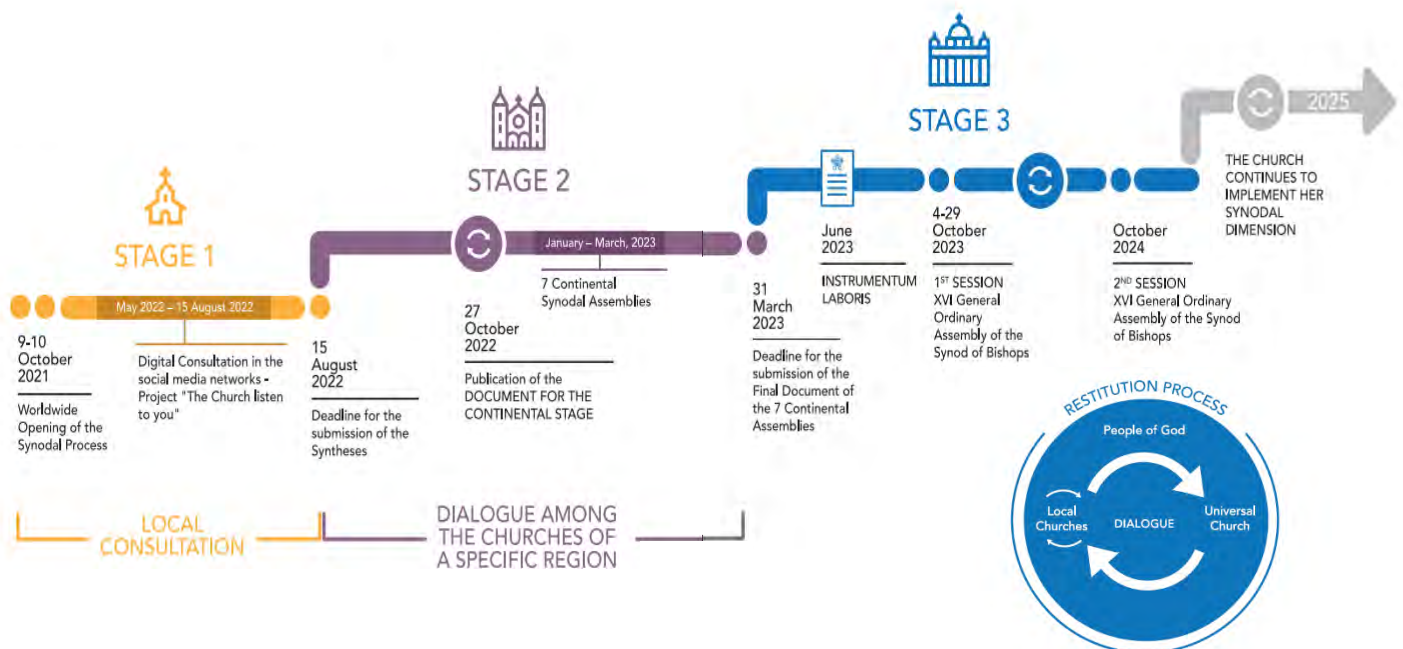
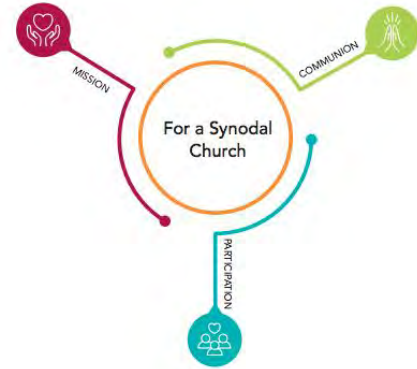
The entire Catholic Church is called to participate in the upcoming Synod of Bishops. This Synod is entitled: "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission."

Pope Francis has called the entire People of God to journey together. This Synod is not just another meeting with oral presentations and written reports. It is a process of journeying together by listening, dialoguing, praying, discerning, and making decisions together for the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Pope Francis is asking each local diocese to gather - clergy, religious and laity together- to listen to each other's joys and hopes, and griefs and anxieties (c.f. Gaudium et Spes no. 1). The "goal" of this journeying together is not to create a new vision or pastoral plan with objectives. Rather, the goal of our journeying together is to be present with one another, to listen and learn with each other, and to grow closer to the Lord and His Church.

Additional information:

- Vatican Synod website <https://www.synod.va/en.html>
- USCCB Synod website <https://www.usccb.org/synod>
- Saginaw Diocese Synod website <https://www.saginaw.org/synod2023>



Diocese of Saginaw Report Summary

Catholic Diocese of Saginaw Synod Summary Report: <https://saginaw.org/synod-summary-report>

ONE – A Deep Need and Desire for Healing

1. Merging and Closing of Parishes
2. Distrust of the Diocese and Global Church
3. Clergy Sex Abuse Scandal
4. COVID-19 Pandemic
5. Loss of Identity

HOLY - A Clear Call for Formation, Evangelization, Deepening of Faith

6. Formation
7. Evangelization
8. Deepening of Faith
9. On-going Clergy Formation

CATHOLIC – A Desire to be Universal and Welcoming

10. Welcoming and Outreach
11. Youth and Young Adults
12. Ecumenical

APOSTOLIC – A Desire for a Deeper Relationship with Jesus

13. Vocations
14. Liturgy

Synthesis Report Summary

XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops – First Session issued October 28, 202, https://www.synod.va/content/dam/synod/assembly/synthesis/english/2023.10.28-ENG-Synthesis-Report_IMP.pdf

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A Synodal Church in Mission

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4. People in Poverty, Protagonists of the Church's Journey
5. A Church "out of every tribe, tongue, people and nation"
6. The Eastern Churches and Latin Church Traditions
7. On the Road Towards Christian Unity

PART 2 – ALL DISCIPLES, ALL MISSIONARIES

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10. Consecrated Life and Lay Associations and Movements: A Charismatic Sign
11. Deacons and Priests in a Synodal Church
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PART 3 – WEAVING BONDS, BUILDING COMMUNITIES

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19. Groupings of Churches within the Communion of the Whole Church
20. The Synod of Bishops and Ecclesial Assemblies

PROCEEDING ALONG THE JOURNEY

Participant Ground Rules

05

Conversation in the Spirit

A dynamic of discernment in the synodal Church

Synod 2021-2024

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
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

"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?"**

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?"

Final prayer of thanksgiving

for further information
www.synod.va

Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and other social media icons.

Ground Rules

- We are here today to have a conversation to build relationships and exchange perspectives between participants. We want to expand our possibilities by helping to reflect on our collective experiences. Please avoid arguing or comments that seek to advance a personal agenda.
- We will treat what anyone says with reverence and respect.
- During individual sharing, one person speaks at a time, uninterrupted.
- We will listen with an open mind.
- We only speak once until everyone has had an opportunity to share.
- Respect the times of silence when we stop the sharing to reflect and pray.
- When we report themes and experiences it will be done without attributing specific comments to individual participants.

The role of facilitators is to guide the conversations. Please follow their instructions. They will be taking notes. The notes from all the small groups will be summarized into one diocesan report. A final ten-page diocesan report will be compiled and sent to the USCCB by April 8, 20224.

PRAYER

Opening Song

Open My Eyes



1. O-pen my eyes, Lord. Help me to see your face.
2. O-pen my ears, Lord. Help me to hear your voice.
3. O-pen my heart, Lord. Help me to love like you.
4. I live with - in you. Deep in your heart, O Love.



1. O-pen my eyes, Lord. Help me to see.
2. O-pen my ears, Lord. Help me to hear.
3. O-pen my heart, Lord. Help me to love.
4. I live with - in you. Rest now in me.

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Reading

Acts 2:42-47

Silent Reflection (church)

Prayer for the Synod (As a group at your table before you start your discussion)

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.

Large Group Feedback

- Each facilitator will share a summary of the group discernment.

Closing Prayer

Listen with the ear of your heart

Listen with the ear of your heart and hear the voice of God,
calling us to respond creatively and share the gifts we have.

Brothers and sisters, we are all one family,
building God's Kingdom here on earth today.
Living the message of the Gospel in our lives,
we must strengthen one another in faith.

Sow the seeds of faith, hope and love:
what you plant will yield abundant fruit.
Work for peace and justice, freedom for all;
then shall the whole world live in harmony.

Whatsoever you have done unto the least of these,
in the same way you have done unto me.
Eat this bread and drink this cup in memory of me.
When you gather in my name, I am there.

Benedictine Monks of Weston Priory – USA