



Talking Points

National Synthesis for the 2021-2023 Synod:
For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission

- Through this Synod, the Catholic Church is currently engaging in a global listening process open to everyone and aimed at renewing our ability to live out our mission and build up our communion in our own particular times and places.
- The *National Synthesis* is the culmination of ten months of intentional listening throughout the Church in the U.S. While not a complete articulation of the many topics and perspectives shared in the listening process, the Synthesis is both a product of an intensive process of prayer, reflection, and discernment and an expression of what the bishops have heard from the wider body of the Church.
- The purpose of the document is not to suggest specific directions or next steps. It neither provides specific recommendations nor comments on Church teaching or practice. Rather, it tries to authentically express what emerged throughout the listening process.
- While the objectives for the Synod are clear, and the larger global process is ongoing, any immediate changes are not guaranteed. It is for each diocese and parish to dialogue and discern together any insights, opportunities, and challenges.
- The National Synthesis, while a culmination of the first phase of the Synod, is more than anything a starting point for the continuing listening and discernment necessary for the U.S. Church to fully embrace synodality. We must continue to listen, discern, and reflect on the realities of the People of God in the United States.
- This document is meant to be brought in conversation with those synodal consultations held in the diocese and parish. The *National Synthesis* should be discerned in dialogue with your diocesan synthesis and parish consultations to more fully realize where the Spirit is calling us in our local context.
- As we move forward to dialogue and discern, together, those things on the hearts and minds of the People of God in the U.S. we do not know where the synodal path will lead us, but we must remain open to the Spirit at work and how we can continue to embrace synodality in our local context.

- The National Synthesis is not meant to be a complete articulation of the many joys, hopes, fears, and challenges of the People of God in the U.S., in fact, many pressing issues were not named, and many important perspectives were not heard. Those reveal areas where the Spirit is calling us to more attentive listening, dialogue, and accompaniment. This is the work we must look to now: how can we continue listening and engage in respectful encounter and prayerful discernment?

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