



For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

Timeline of the Worldwide Synod

What is a Synod?

- The word “Synod” comes from Greek words that mean “Journeying Together”
- Pope Francis has asked the whole Church to reflect on our journey together, how we listen to the Holy Spirit speaking to each of us, and how we make decisions as a Church
- “The objective of this Synodal Process is... to provide an opportunity for the entire People of God to discern together how to move forward... in the long-term.” (from *Vademecum*, a Vatican handbook on the Synod)

Synod Timeline

- April 2021 – Pope Francis proposed a new, collaborative approach to preparing for this Synod
- October 2021 – Pope Francis presided at the official opening of the Synod process
- Until May 2022 –
 - Parishes hold small group “listening sessions” around 10 questions provided by the Vatican (our diocese has combined these into four questions). Great care is to be taken to include all ages, inactive Catholics, those served by the church, etc.
 - Dioceses gather data from parishes and submit a short report to the US Bishops in June
 - The US Bishops send a combined report to the Vatican in August
- August & September 2022 – The Vatican prepares a working document based on the reports of all the national bishops’ conferences
- September 2022-March 2023 – Continental meetings in Africa, Oceania, Asia, Middle East, Europe, Latin America, and North America to respond to the working document (who will be involved in these meetings – beyond bishops – has yet to be determined)
- June 2023 – The Vatican prepares a second working document based on the continental meetings
- October 2023 – The Synod gathers in Rome to discuss and make decisions on the second working document (attendees – again, beyond bishops – have yet to be determined)
- **From this world-wide, collaborative process will come direction for the future of the Church**