



“ synodal Church: communion, participation and mission.”
 Diocese of Edmundston Anglophone Participation within the Diocese. The
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 (1 parish Assumption Grand Falls) and Notre-Dame-du-Madawaska
 (1 parish Immaculate Conception)
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Gatherings to the English speaking faithful of the Diocese of Edmundson we are now starting, due to the covid virus, we are a little behind the rest of our francophone sisters and brothers of our diocese, to have input the Synod on Synodality. I like to thank our bishop Mgr. Claude Champagne, o.m.i. and Sister Eden Thomas, r.h.s.j. for their guidance. Over the next weeks, months, you will be receiving up-date information, questioners, Zoom meetings and liturgy celebration if you wish to participate.

Our Anglophone committee members are: Frances Quinn (Immaculate Conception, Edmundston) Burnice McEvoy (Assumption, Grand Falls) Anne Dickson (St. Thomas Aquinas, Plaster Rock) Josh Campbell (St. Thomas Aquinas, Plaster Rock) Anita Andersen (St. Mary of the Angels, Perth-Adover), Brandon Bartlett i.v.dei (St Mary of the Angels, Perth-Andover) and Father Gilbert Doddatto, i.v.dei. (Moderator of Divine Mercy Unit).

Introduction to the Synod

The Synod on Synodality is a two-year process of listening and dialogue beginning with a solemn opening in Rome on October 9 and 10, 2021. The synodal process will conclude in 2023.

Pope Francis invites the entire Church to reflect on a theme that is decisive for its life and mission: “It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium.” This journey, which follows in the wake of the Church’s “renewal” proposed by the Second Vatican Council, is both a gift and a task: by journeying together and reflecting together on the journey that has been made, the Church will be able to learn through Her experience which processes can help Her to live communion, to achieve participation, to open Herself to mission.

The symbolism of the Synod logo (a copy Synod logo is at top of page)

The tree “A large, majestic tree, full of wisdom and light, reaches for the sky. A sign of deep vitality and hope, it symbolises the cross of Christ. The horizontal branches, opened like hands, carries the Eucharist, which shines like the sun.” The branches are also outspread like wings, symbolising the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit over the whole Synodal process.

In his homily, Pope Francis said that the Synod must be a process of spiritual discernment that “unfolds in adoration, in prayer and in dialogue with the Word of God” and not just another “Church convention, a study group or a political gathering, a parliament” but a truly “grace-filled event, a process of healing guided by the Spirit.” Jesus invites us today, explained the Pope, in the same way He did the rich man in Mark 10:17-24, to “empty ourselves, to free ourselves from all that is worldly, including our inward-looking and outworn pastoral models” and to discern what God’s message us for the Church in this time, and in which direction He wants to lead it

The People of God The 15 silhouettes depict a pilgrim Church on the move. The bright colours to signify the joy and enthusiasm with which the People of God set out – young and old, men and women, singles, couples, families, children of all ages, persons with disabilities, clergy, religious and lay persons. The Bishop walks not in front of his flock, but among his sheep, with young people leading the way. This refers to Jesus’ words, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children”. (Matthew 11:25)

Indeed, the word “synod” comprises two Greek words *syn* and *hodos* which, when combined, mean “journeying together”. Pope Francis pointed out that the Gospels frequently show Jesus as one who “walks alongside people and listens to the questions and concerns lurking in their hearts” and “meets us where we are, on the often rocky roads of life.” He challenged everyone to be “prepared for the adventure of this journey” instead of being “fearful of the unknown, preferring to take refuge in the usual excuses: “It’s useless” or “We’ve always done it this way”.

The theme The words “For a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission” run from left to right in the direction of movement of the People of God, underlining and strengthening it.

The Holy Father once again referred to the story of the rich man in Mark 10:17-24 to show what the synodal process should be: “First, Jesus *encounters* the rich man on the road; He then *listens* to his questions, and finally He helps him *discern* what he must do to inherit eternal life.” These three verbs characterise the Synod, said the Pope.

We must make time to **encounter** God and one another. “Time to devote to prayer and to adoration and to hearing what the Spirit wants to say to the Church. Time to look others in the eye and listen to what they have to say, to build rapport, to be sensitive to the questions of our sisters and brothers, to let ourselves be enriched by the variety of charisms, vocations and ministries.” Then we must **listen**. To truly encounter others, we must allow people to express themselves, to walk in faith even though they have had difficulties in life, and to be part of the life of the community without being hindered, rejected or judged”. Pope Francis implores us not to “soundproof our hearts” or “remain barricaded in our certainties” but to authentically listen to one another.

Finally, we must **discern**. Through His dialogue with the rich man, Jesus helped him discern that he could only find true happiness, not by filling his life with more religious observances or material possessions, but “by emptying himself, selling whatever takes up space in his heart, in order to make room for God.” The Synodal process can only be one of communion, participation and mission if it is one centred on God.

The footprint The footprint, symbolises the mark the Church leaves on the world as one united

Body of Christ walking together in the footsteps of Jesus who commands them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the Good News to the whole of creation.” (Mark 16:15) Let us embark on this Synodal journey as “pilgrims in love with the Gospel and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.”

Adsumus, Sancte Spiritus

Prayer of invocation to the Holy Spirit

for an ecclesial assembly of governance or discernment (thus synodal)

Every session of the Second Vatican Council began with the prayer Adsumus Sancte Spiritus, the first word of the Latin original meaning, “We stand before You, Holy Spirit,” which has been historically used at Councils, Synods and other Church gatherings for hundreds of years, being attributed to Saint Isidore of Seville (c. 560 - 1636). As we are called to embrace this synodal path of the Synod 2021-2023, this prayer invites the Holy Spirit to operate within us so that we may be a community and a people of grace.

The Synod 2021-2023 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.**