



For a synodal Church  
communion | participation | mission

### Those Responsible:

- *The People of God*, called to participate
- *The Diocesan Bishop*, responsible for the discernment process
- *The Synodal Team*, coordinates and animates
- *Pastors*, responsible for enabling the participation from the parish level

### Keep in Mind:

- This is not about responding to a questionnaire or random list of questions
- We are here to foster dialogue and discernment

# Ground Rules for Participants

- We will create an environment in which all persons and viewpoints are welcome and respected and in which no one should fear repercussions for any thoughts, ideas, or feelings that are shared.
- We will openly communicate how the Holy Spirit is speaking to us.
- We will not debate Church politics or Church doctrine that comes from the Living Tradition, Sacred Scriptures, and the Catholic Catechism; nor will we debate secular politics.
- We will not attempt to convert others to our way of thinking.
- We will not set specific goals or strategies.

# Ground Rules for Participants

## Good Communication Begins with Good Listening

- To fully address this two-part question together first requires listening to the Holy Spirit, who like the wind “blows where it will; you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes” (Jn 3:8). Be open to surprises that the Spirit will surely prepare for us along the way. This openness will initiate an energy that allows participants to begin to reap some of the fruits of journeying with companions.
- Listening is transactional, not a passive activity. We are sending messages, while at the same time, we are receiving messages. Healthy communication requires respectful, active listening.
- Suspend judgment.

## Responsible Speaking Leads to Good Communication

- Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your words and trust what follows.
- Speak purposefully and authentically. Do your best to keep your comments concise and relevant to the questions at hand and be conscious of sharing time with other participants.

## Be Aware that Not Everybody Communicates in the Same Way

## Take Responsibility for Personal Needs



# Together, listening to the Holy Spirit, let us be led by God.

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.



# Scripture Reading and Reflection



*Jesus, the crowd in its diversity, the apostles: this is the imagery and the mystery that must be constantly contemplated and explored in depth so that the Church may increasingly become what she is.*

# The fundamental question for the consultation of the People of God

A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, “journeys together.” How is this “journeying together” happening today in your local Church?

What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our “journeying together”?  
(PD, 2)

# Themes to Explore

- ***Companions on the Journey***
- ***Listening***
- ***Speaking Out***
- ***Celebration***
- ***Sharing responsibility for our common mission***
- ***Dialogue in Church and society***
- ***Ecumenism***
- ***Authority and Participation***
- ***Discerning and Deciding***
- ***Forming Ourselves in Synodality***

# To respond to these questions and themes, ask yourselves:

What experiences in our particular Church does the fundamental question or one of the themes call to mind?





Explore what people recall, share, and reflect upon in greater depth.

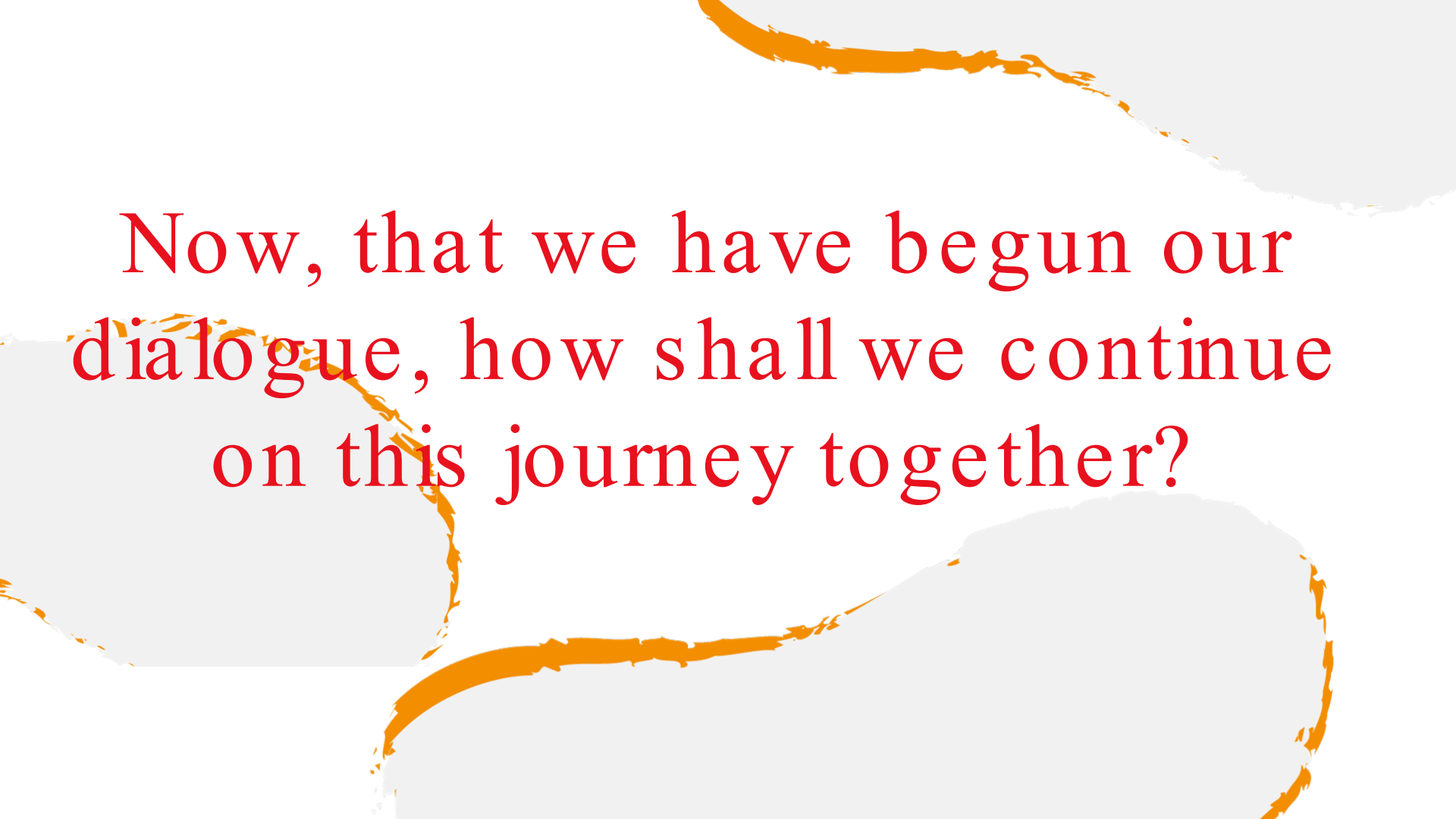


- What joys did these recollections provoke?
- What difficulties and obstacles have been encountered?
- What wounds have been brought to light?
- What insights are elicited?

Finally, and most important, gather the fruits.



- Explore what the Spirit is asking of us?
- What concepts and feelings are confirmed?
- What are the prospects for change?
- Where do we register a consensus?
- What paths are opening up for our particular Church?



Now, that we have begun our  
dialogue, how shall we continue  
on this journey together?