



Synod
2021
2023

For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

What are the aims of this synod?
Attitudes for participating
Avoiding pitfalls

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‘The mission of the Church requires **the entire People of God** to be on a **journey together**, with each member playing his or her crucial role, united with each other.’

‘...to provide an opportunity for the entire People of God **to discern together** how to **move forward** on the path towards being a more synodal Church in the **long-term**.’

(Vademecum for the Synod on synodality, 1.3)

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‘The Second Vatican Council reinvigorated the sense that **all the baptised**, both the hierarchy and the laity, are **called to be active participants** in the saving mission of the Church (*LG*, 32-33).’

‘The path of synodality seeks to make **pastoral decisions that reflect the will of God** as closely as possible, grounding them in the living voice of the People of God (*ICT, Syn.*, 68).’

(Vademecum for the Synod on synodality, 1.3)

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The fundamental question

How does this “journeying together” take place today on different levels (from the local level to the universal one), allowing the Church to proclaim the Gospel? **and what steps is the Spirit inviting us to take** in order to grow as a synodal Church?

(Vademecum for the Synod on synodality, 1.3)

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‘In this light, the objective of the current Synod is **to listen**, as the entire People of God, **to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church**. We do so by listening together to the Word of God in Scripture and the living Tradition of the Church, and then by listening to one another, and especially to those at the margins, **discerning the signs of the times.**’

‘...the whole Synodal Process aims at fostering a lived experience of **discernment, participation, and co-responsibility**, where a diversity of gifts is brought together **for the Church’s mission in the world**.

(Vademecum for the Synod on synodality, 1.3)

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‘...it is intended **to inspire people** to dream about the Church we are called to be, to make people’s hopes **flourish**, to **stimulate trust**, to **bind up wounds**, to weave **new and deeper relationships**, to learn from one another, to **build bridges**, to **enlighten minds**, **warm hearts**, and **restore strength** to our hands for our common mission (*PD*, 32)’.

‘This journey together will call on us **to renew our mentalities and our ecclesial structures in order to live out God’s call** for the Church amid the present signs of the times.’

(Vademecum for the Synod on synodality, 1.3)

Attitudes for participating



- Making time for sharing
- Humility in listening and courage in speaking
- Dialogue leading us to newness
- Openness to conversion and change
- Willingness to undertake a common exercise of discernment
- Opening of ourselves to authentic listening

(From *Vademecum for the Synod on synodality*, 2.3)

Attitudes for participating



- Leaving behind prejudices and stereotypes
- Avoiding clericalism
- Trying to build bridges instead of retreating to self-sufficient
- Overcoming ideologies
- Openness to hope
- Dreaming of a joyful future

(From *Vademecum for the Synod on synodality*, 2.3)

Attitudes for participating



A fruitful and creative dialogue will require of participants:

- to develop an innovative outlook
- to be inclusive
- to have an open mind
- to listen to each and all
- to journey together
- to be an active part of a co-responsible Church
- to reach out through ecumenical and interreligious dialogue

*(From *Vademecum for the Synod on synodality*, 2.3)*

Avoiding pitfalls



Progress on our journey could be hampered by the following temptations:

1. Falling into the trap of corporativism, instead of opening ourselves to the actions of the Holy Spirit
2. Focusing on the immediate rather than reaching out to the peripheries and thinking 'long-term'
3. Seeing only problems and missing the light

(Vademecum for the Synod on synodality, 2.4)

Avoiding pitfalls



4. Focusing only on structures and obstructing the individual and collective renewal of the whole 'Body of Christ'
5. Looking inwardly instead of forging a dialogue with those involved in the social, political, economic and cultural spheres, as well as with Christians of different denominations and believers of different faith traditions

(Vademecum for the Synod on synodality, 2.4)

Avoiding pitfalls



6. Losing focus on synodality and discernment

7. Sowing the seeds of conflict and division

8. Treating the synod as a 'political battle'

9. Listening only to those who play an active part in the Church and forgetting about those on the periphery

(Vademecum for the Synod on synodality, 2.4)



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‘In order for this to happen, it is necessary to make significant efforts to involve the highest number of people possible in a meaningful way. (...) Superficial or scripted input that does not accurately and richly represent the experience of the people will not be helpful, nor that which does not express the full range and diversity of experiences.’

(Vademecum for the Synod on synodality, 4.1)