



SYNODALITY



Knights of the Southern Cross Formation Program 2022

Session 7 Fostering Wide Participation in the Synodal Process

Bishop Brian Farrell, Secretary of the *Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity* in an interview to the Lutheran World Federation in January 2022, stated that the aim of the synodal process is “a hugely increased participation of the whole people of God in the life, the governance and mission of the church... If the process is successful, I think there will be a different appreciation of the Catholic Church, which will be very beneficial in the search for Christian unity.”

The goal of the synod is to ensure the participation of the greatest number possible, in order to listen to the *living voice of the entire People of God*.

- This is not possible unless we make special efforts to **actively reach out to people where they're at**, especially those who are often excluded or who are not involved in the life of the Church.
- There must be a clear focus on the **participation of the poor, marginalized, vulnerable, and excluded**, in order to listen to their voices and experiences.
- The Synodal Process must be **simple, accessible, and welcoming** for all.

A basic question of the synodal process prompts and guides us: How does this “journeying together,” which takes place today on different levels (from the local level to the universal one), allow the Church to proclaim the Gospel in accordance with the mission entrusted to her; and what steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow as a synodal Church?

Let us remind ourselves at this stage in our program, of the fundamental question identified in The Preparatory Document on the Synod. The basic, fundamental question for the consultation of the People of God is :

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”? (PD26)

Further, the PD reminds us that as on any journey, we need to be aware of possible pitfalls that could hamper progress during this time of synodality. It is worthwhile to study and reflect on the lists provided in the PD of the following common temptations that must be avoided in order to promote the vitality and fruitfulness of the Synodal Process.

1. The temptation to want to lead we instead of being led by God.
2. The temptation to focus on ourselves and our immediate concerns.
3. The temptation to only see “problems.”
4. The temptation to focus only on structures.
5. The temptation not to look beyond the visible confines of the Church.
6. The temptation to lose focus on the objectives of the Synodal Process.



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7. The temptation of conflict and division.
8. The temptation to treat the Synod as a kind of a parliament.
9. The temptation to listen only to those who are already involved in Church activities.

“Synodality” asks us to be energetic and involved ambassadors of our faith through conscientious listening and sharing of insights to advance Jesus’ mission in the world. How do we see our parishioners becoming more aware of how much their faith and insights count — and need to be heard?

Reflection and Discussion

- 1 What paths forward in synodality are opening up for our local Church?
- 2 Where in these experiences does the voice of the Holy Spirit resound?
- 3 What are the areas for change for our Church and what steps can be taken?
- 4 Referring to the listed “temptations” .. what thoughts would you like to share on the relevance and/or importance of those for KSC members?

Prayer:

So then, together, listening to the Holy Spirit, let us be led by God, as we pray:

**We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather 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**