

#### 4. TWO POSSIBLE SESSION PLANS

**An Adapted Reflection – A Synodal Church: Journeying Together to Announce the Gospel** See **"During An Accessible Presentation"** for important practical considerations and strategies.

*To facilitator, catechist, or mentor: Use the example of planning a trip to explore the experience of synodality and being a synodal church. This is just one way to develop the conversation using PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System). Be creative and pay attention to the communication and learning styles of the individuals you're journeying with. When asking a general question that you aren't going to call on people to answer, remember to pause and wait for people to at least share their reaction in their own way.<sup>4</sup>*

What does it mean to say that our parish is synodal? That's a new word we don't hear every day! I think it's a nice word to say, though. What do you think? Let's say it together, "synodal."

A Church that is *synodal* travels together on the same path, and they stop together to rest and take care of themselves and think about the next step of their journey.

Think about a trip your family or a group of friends went on together. What was the first step? You had to decide where to go. Is that right? What other decisions were made to plan the trip? Some possible ones:



- Why are you going on this trip? Is it for a vacation and have fun? Is it to visit family? Is it to help someone?

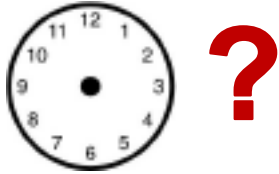


<sup>4</sup> I want thank Monica Maniscalco, M.Ed., Executive Director of Training & Education at Legacy Life Solutions and a catechist at St. Philip the Apostle Church in Saddlebrook, NJ for her contributions to this adapted reflection.

- How would you get there? Fly, drive, train, or walk?



- How long would it take to get there?



- Did you need to make stops on the way? Either to sleep, eat, or move around?



- What do you do if you get lost? How do you know that? How do you figure out how to get back on the right road?



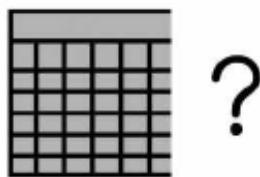
- What kind of clothes do you need to bring? Clothes for cold weather, warm or moderate?



- What supplies will you need? Food? Camping equipment? Money? Books? Games?



- How many days will the trip be? This will mean how much clothes, supplies and equipment you will need.



*Do you need tickets for getting there?*



- Who will pay for the costs of the trip?



- What will you do when you get where you're going?



*To the facilitator, catechist, or mentor: Now relate the trip just discussed with a project that your parish is working on together. The project is a trip working together to do the things Jesus taught us. A particular activity would be a destination for your community. A possible introduction:*

Each of the projects our parish works on is like a trip together, sharing what Jesus teaches us follow him and how to live. After thinking about the ways your parish works together in different ways, and the way you feel at mass.

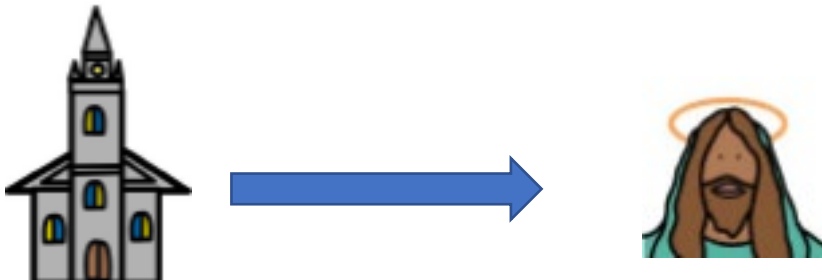
*Provide quiet time to think about the primary questions, introduced again with alternate wording.*

Remember we talked about the primary questions Pope Francis has asked us to think about? [ *Below is an alternate way to ask these questions that should be more relatable. "How is this 'journeying together'" happening today in our parish? And what changes do we think the Holy Spirit is asking us to make to grow in our 'journeying together'?*]

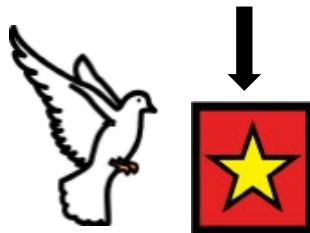
Here's our TWO BIG QUESTIONS

## 2 BIG?

- "How does our parish work together, following Jesus?"



- What changes do you think the Spirit is encouraging our parish to make so we can do this better?



There are some SMALLER QUESTIONS that will help us with our BIG QUESTION.

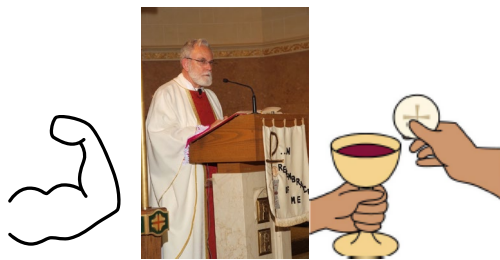
smaller ?+ ?+ ?s → **BIG ?**

At Mass:

We celebrate that God is with us every day.



We are made stronger by hearing the Word of God and receiving Communion.



And being together and caring about each other.



- *What is your experience at mass?*



- Is attending mass important to you?



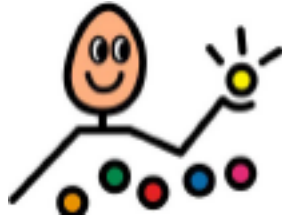
- Do people at mass say hello to you?



- Do you feel needed?



- What is your favorite part of mass?



- Is there something you don't you like about mass?



- Here's a list of things Jesus teaches us are important.



To the facilitator: work on one example at a time. The ideas below are possible options, but feel free to adapt.



- Which of these does your parish do?
- Do you help?
- Would you like to?

- Helping to feed people who are hungry?



- Welcoming people from other places and celebrating our diverse human family!



- Taking care of the earth.



- Sharing nice clothes with people who need them.



- Visiting people who are sick?



Working together as a parish – who decides?



- Is it one person or is it a group of people?

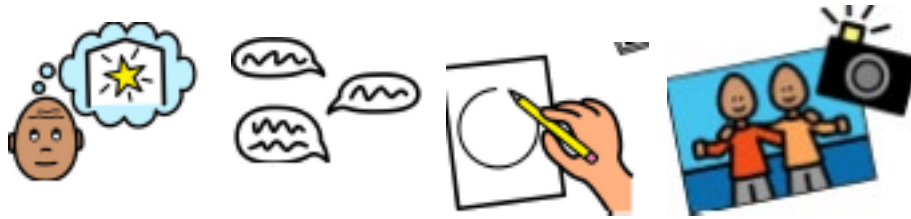


- How is it done?





- Is there anything else you'd like to share?



**THANK YOU!**

## Full Agenda Possibility



Opening Prayer: before beginning, ask to think about our primary questions during prayer.



SIMPLE scripture reflection connecting with synodal process, again. Remind people to be thinking of primary questions in mind during this. Suggestions: either Mk 10: 46-52 (NRSV) (my preference because it illustrates different roles and reactions) or Luke 24: 13-35. Both recommended for scriptural approach in “Suggested Tools” for reflection, sharing and responding. Additional ideas: have it acted out or told in narrative.



Ask people to think of an important experience they had in in parish. “How did you feel? Happy, sad, excited, or scared?” Give them a few minutes to think.



Then ask, “What do you remember the most about the experience?” Again, still just think about it.



- For people who prefer expressing in pictures, below are two different options:
  - Offer different pictures of people doing things together in the Church.
  - Ask them to draw their Church and the people, including themselves and then to explain their picture. Have paper, pencils, markers, and crayons on hand.

- The group support person can help with this. They can prompt and guide the individual. It may be helpful for them to move to a quiet space away from the group to do this active reflecting with the support person. And then return to the group table for the sharing.



Round 1: Invite people to share the “fruits of their prayer.” Be prepared for different ways of sharing. There is no discussion during this time, only sharing – listening to each other deeply and noticing movements of the Spirit within as they listen to each other. Some questions that may help explore this more. Ask people to answer just one question first to make sure everyone has a chance.

- Think of an important experience for you in your parish. How did you feel? Happy, sad, excited, or scared?



- What do you remember most about i



- Encourage the individuals who selected pictures or drew their answers to explain them to the group. The support person should prompt as needed, but not do the sharing for the person. The point is to encourage them to talk or share for themselves, to the extent they are comfortable doing so and want to.



A period of silence to consider what have heard and considerations (“interior movements”).



Round 2: People are invited to share what was important to them that they heard during Round 1 sharing.



Followed by silence again.



Round 3: Invite to share what made them feel an emotion during the sharing.

- Are there any new insights?
- Any questions left?

Group reviews experience: difficult, new insights, what have they learned about 'the synodal way of proceeding'.

"How was God present and at work during their time together?"



Participants should decide on feedback to facilitation team as outlined in *Vademecum* Appendix D.



Closing for all in the Listening Session/Gathering. One person from each group shares briefly about their experience.



Facilitation Team to share next step and how information will be used.

Note: Guidelines recommend synthesizing at each step along the way. We don't want to lose sight of any 'divergent' thoughts and should still carry these forwards. They may appear in other gatherings as well.

## REFERENCES AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### **Vatican:**

*For a Synodal Church: Vademecum,*

*For a Synodal Church: Preparatory Document*

*Suggested Tools for reflecting, sharing, and responding to the questions of the Synod*

### **Latin American and Caribbean Church:**

*Methodological Guide* and support materials

### **Australian Church:**

*Plenary Key Documents*

Australia Easy English: <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/resources/tools/>

*Synodal Documents.*

### **Best Practices for Planning Accessible Events and Presentations:**

NCPD Program *LAMB (Language, Accessibility, Meaningful Participation, and Belonging) Assessment Key*, English and Spanish

[https://ncpd.org/files/resources-toolkits/LAMB\\_Assessment\\_Key\\_English.pdf](https://ncpd.org/files/resources-toolkits/LAMB_Assessment_Key_English.pdf)

[https://ncpd.org/files/file\\_uploads/LAMB-](https://ncpd.org/files/file_uploads/LAMB-)

[Una Herramienta de Evaluacion para una Participacion mas Inclusiva 5-10-21.pdf](https://ncpd.org/files/file_uploads/LAMB-Una_Herramienta_de_Evaluacion_para_una_Participacion_mas_Inclusiva_5-10-21.pdf)

*Guidelines: How to Write about People with Disabilities 9<sup>th</sup> Edition*, 2020. [rtcil.org/guidelines](http://rtcil.org/guidelines)

Full range of accessibility guidelines summarized succinctly with links for more in depth information, including captioning options, demystifying screen reading accessibility, and best practices for audio description and Microsoft applications, etc.. Ass. Of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)

<https://www.aucd.org/conference/template/page.cfm?id=50274>

Web Accessibility in Mind, PowerPoint, Word, and PDFs:

<https://webaim.org/techniques/powerpoint/#layouts>

<https://webaim.org/techniques/acrobat/converting#word>

Web 3 Accessibility Initiative for more on all stages of planning accessible events and presentations:

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/teach-advocate/accessible-presentations/#fyi>

### **Photos:**

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) Boardmaker 7. Tobii Dynavox LLC, Pittsburgh, PA, USA. © Tobii Dynavox AB.

JerseyCatholic.org re: Christmas Eve 2020 St.John's Soup Kitchen in Newark; Mercy House Coat Drive.

Blog, Sr. Thea Bowman, Franciscan sister of Perpetual Adoration.

<http://blogs.shu.edu/archdiocese-immigration/iii-the-new-people-of-newark-a-new-world-a-microcosm-of-the-universal-church/>

Additional photos from parishes in the Archdiocese of Newark provided by the Sequeira and McDonald Families, Glass Darkly Films, and Anne Masters.

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