

# PREPARING OUR HEARTS AND VOICES

As we prepare to enter into  
this experience of Church  
we invite you to prepare through  
reflection and prayer.



## For a synodal Church

communion | participation | mission

"The Synodal Process is first and foremost a spiritual process.  
It is not a mechanical data-gathering exercise or a series of meetings and debates.  
Synodal listening is oriented towards discernment."\*  
We are being invited to listen to the Holy Spirit in the voices of the faithful.

### ATTITUDES TO CULTIVATE

#### Listening

We are called to listen humbly and to speak courageously; to listen in a manner that invites others to share authentically while we ourselves share our experiences and hopes with mercy and charity.

#### Newness and Conversion

We are invited to embrace the action of the Holy Spirit, particularly in the ways in which the Spirit inspires us to new views and new ways of being Church.

#### Allowing God to Lead

We are called to allow the Spirit to direct us. To set aside our own expectations so that we can listen more clearly to what God desires of us.

#### Focus on others

"The Synodal Process is an opportunity to open up, to look around us, to see things from other points of view, and to move out in missionary outreach to the peripheries".

### LEAVE BEHIND

#### Self-centeredness

We need one another. When we set aside self-centeredness "we are able to learn from each other, journey together, and be at the service of one another."

#### Division and Discord

We are challenged to suspend our judgments and ideologies in order to enter into dialogue that promotes mutual understanding and unity.

#### Fear

"For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control." 2 Tim 1-7 We are reminded that change is a necessary part of growth and fear inhibits growth.

#### Self-doubt

The participation of each person is essential for the synodal process to achieve its objective. You are called by virtue of your Baptism, to listen to the Holy Spirit in your life and to share your experience of God and His Church for the good of all His people.

## REFLECT

In what ways do I hear God calling me to listen and embrace the thoughts, desires, struggles and hopes of others, especially those on the margins?

What do I need to leave behind in order to enter this process with an open heart, an open mind, and a willingness to share my experiences boldly and honestly?

In what ways is God inviting me to allow this experience to transform me and to strengthen my relationship with Him and with the Church?

## PRAY

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.

We ask special blessings on the Church of Newark.

May we cherish this opportunity to pray, listen, and discern so that we  
may continue the mission of Christ as missionary disciples.

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.**

For more information visit <https://www.rcan.org/synod2023> or use the QR code

... "We recall that the purpose of the Synod, and therefore of this consultation, is not to produce documents, but "to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands" ...

