



For a synodal Church

communion | participation | mission

Parish Leaders  
Briefing  
11 Oct 2021

## *PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT*

- 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.

# What is Synodality? Background for this Synod

- 'Synod' means/indicates the path along which the People of God walk together.
- Synodality denotes the particular style that qualifies the life and mission of the Church, expressing her nature as the People of God.
- Synodality ought to be expressed in the Church's ordinary way of living and working.

# What is the aim of this Synod?

## Objectives of the Synodal Process

- How does this "journeying together" take place today on different levels, allowing the Church to proclaim the Gospel?
- What steps is the Spirit inviting us to take in order to grow as a synodal Church?
  1. 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.
  2. 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.

The theme of this Synod,  
For a Synodal Church: Communion,  
Participation, and Mission



# Communion

- God GATHERS US together as DIVERSE PEOPLES of ONE FAITH, through the covenant that he offers to his people.
- The communion we share finds its deepest roots in the LOVE AND UNITY OF THE TRINITY.
- Together, we are inspired by listening to the WORD OF GOD, through the living TRADITION of the Church, and grounded in the SENSUS FIDEI that we share.

# Participation

- A call for the involvement of all who belong to the People of God to engage in the exercise of deep and respectful listening to one another.
- All the faithful are qualified and are called to serve one another through the gifts they have each received from the Holy Spirit.
- The whole community, is called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on making pastoral decisions which correspond as closely as possible to God's will.

# Mission

- Our mission is to witness to the love of God in the midst of the whole human family.
- To better witness to the Gospel, especially with those who live on the spiritual, social, economic, political, geographical, and existential peripheries of our world.

# The Experience on the Local Level

- To gather the wealth of the experiences of lived synodality in its different articulations and facets, means according to the specific local realities.
- What is expected is a maximum inclusion and participation.

# The unfolding of the Synodal Process at a local level must also involve:

❖ **Discernment**

❖ **Accessibility**

❖ **Cultural awareness**

❖ **Inclusion**

❖ **Partnership**

❖ **Respect**

❖ **Accurate syntheses**

❖ **Transparency**

❖ **Fairness**

Who can participate?

- All the baptized.

**THIS  
PEOPLE**



**Or**



**THESE  
PEOPLE**



# Attitudes for Participating in the Synodal Process

- ❖ Being synodal requires time for sharing
- ❖ Humility in listening must correspond to courage in speaking
- ❖ Dialogue leads us to newness
- ❖ Openness to conversion and change
- ❖ Synods are an ecclesial exercise in discernment
- ❖ We are signs of a Church that listens and journeys
- ❖ Leave behind prejudices and stereotypes
- ❖ Overcome the scourge of clericalism
- ❖ Cure the virus of self-sufficiency
- ❖ Overcoming ideologies
- ❖ Give rise to hope
- ❖ Synods are a time to dream and “spend time with the future”

# Helpful

- ❖ **An innovative outlook**
- ❖ **Being inclusive**
- ❖ **An open mind**
- ❖ **Listening to each and every one**
- ❖ **An understanding of “journeying together”**
- ❖ **Understanding the concept of a co-responsible Church**
- ❖ **Reaching out through ecumenical and interreligious dialogue**

# Not Helpful

- 1. The temptation of wanting to lead ourselves 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 of focusing only on structures.**
- 5. The temptation not to look beyond the visible confines of the Church.**
- 6. The temptation to lose focus of the objectives of the Synodal Process.**
- 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.**

# THE IMPORTANT QUESTION

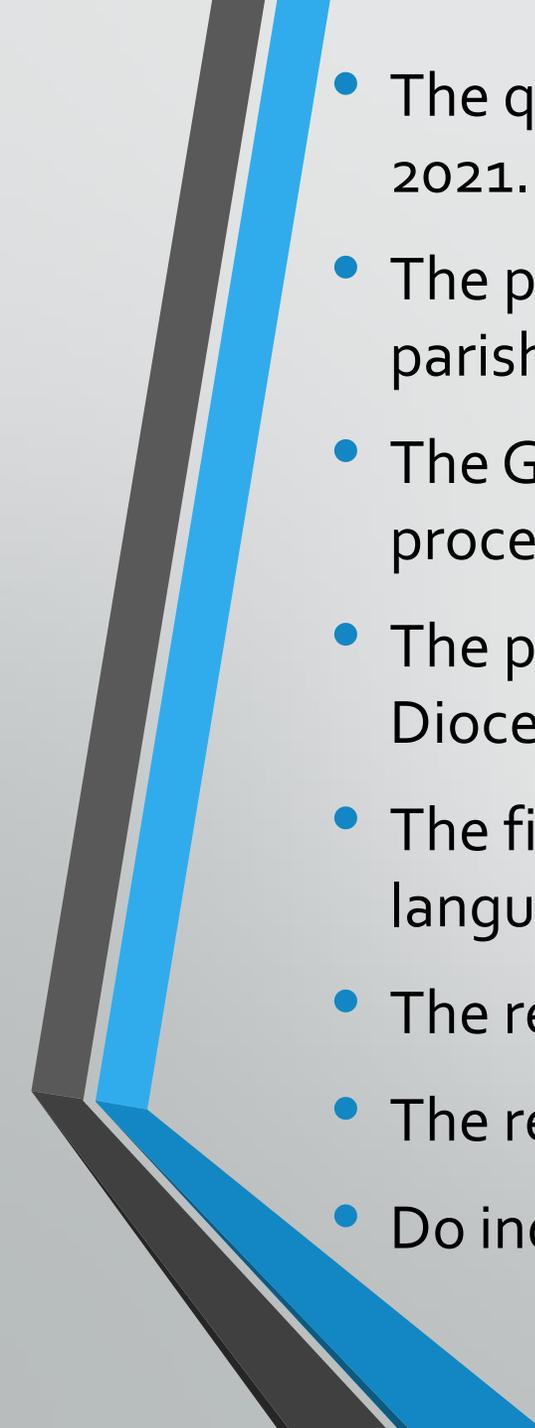
*A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, “journeys together.”*

- *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”?*

# ::Guidelines::

- Parishes in the Melaka Johor Diocese can only use the questionnaire that has been prepared by the Melaka Johore Diocese Synod Team
- These questionnaires are available in 4 languages, namely English, Bahasa Malaysia, Tamil and Mandarin
- All Catholics in the Diocese are encouraged to participate but only one reply from each person is needed.
- If you are involved in the ministry you can contribute in the ministry report as well
- All the questionnaires are to be submitted to the respective parishes
- Questionnaires can be answered as individuals, family, BEC, Ministry, Religious Congregations or as groups

The main objective of this exercise is to listen and to discern God's action and will for the Church

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- The questionnaires can be distributed and filled out from now until 15 November 2021.
  - The parish Synod Teams can use Google Forms or printed copies for their parishioners
  - The Google forms are to be prepared by the parishes to facilitate the compilation process
  - The parish synod teams will then compile the reports and submit to the Diocesan Synod Team by 30 NOVEMBER 2021
  - The final parish report should be between 3 to 5 pages inclusive of the different language groups and ministry reports.
  - The report has to follow the sequence of the questionnaire
  - The report should give a brief account of the response of the parish.
  - Do indicate the number of people who took part in the exercise.



# QUESTIONNAIRE