

Synod
2021
2023

For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

POPE FRANCIS WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Synod Submission Handbook

Diocese of Palmerston North



**EHARA TAKU TOA, I TE TOA TAKITAHĪ,
ĒNGARI E TOA TAKITINI.**

MY SUCCESS IS NOT MINE ALONE, IT IS OURS.
THE GREATEST SUCCESS WE WILL HAVE IS FROM WORKING TOGETHER.

... THE PURPOSE OF THE SYNOD 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 ..."

- SYNOD PREPARATORY DOCUMENT

A synod is a journey of discernment, in which we are called to pray and reflect upon the Holy Spirit's work in the Church, so that we may continue to fulfill our mission to evangelise in the world.

Pope Francis has invited us ALL to embark on a journey together, to "**Read, listen, share, dialogue with others, have your say in the consultation process**" that is now underway. Through listening and discernment grounded in the Holy Spirit, the entire people of God are called to contribute to a process by which the Church deepens in understanding of mission and looks towards the future.





We invite YOU to PRAY, LISTEN & SHARE

**"... WE ARE ALL INVITED TO LISTEN TO
ONE ANOTHER IN ORDER TO HEAR THE
PROMPTINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO
COMES TO GUIDE OUR HUMAN EFFORTS,
BREATHING LIFE AND VITALITY INTO
THE CHURCH AND LEADING US INTO
DEEPER COMMUNION FOR OUR MISSION
IN THE WORLD."
(VAD 1.2)**

Whether the response to this document is from an individual or a group, it should be the product of prayerful discernment. Discernment is a process of making decisions or arriving at answers in a prayerful way. Many of you will be familiar with it in the context of The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits.

Pope Francis often talks about discernment:

"Discernment is always done in the presence of the Lord, looking at the signs, listening to the things that happen, the feeling of the people, especially the poor."

(Pope Francis, August 2013)

A good discernment process brings clarity and inner peace. We need to continually fine-tune our listening to God amid the other interior and exterior voices in our lives.

The Main Questions

A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, 'journeys together'.

How is this 'journeying together' happening today in your particular Church?

What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our journeying together?

We invite you to:

RECALL YOUR EXPERIENCES – What experiences in our local Church come to mind when we talk about journeying together?

REREAD THESE EXPERIENCES MORE DEEPLY – What joys or hurts did they bring? What difficulties and obstacles have they involved? What insights have emerged?

GATHER THE FRUITS TO SHARE – What is the Spirit asking of us? What are we doing well? What needs to change? What paths are opening up for us?

As on any journey, we need to be aware of possible pitfalls that could hamper our progress during this time of synodality. In order to intentionally promote the vitality and fruitfulness of the synodal process, avoid leading the discussions away from God; inciting conflict or division; or focussing purely on problems and ourselves.

Five Themes

1. WELCOME + INCLUSION

- Who do you feel is included/welcome on the Church's journey (both in our country and around the world)? Who is not?
- How can we make it more inclusive and welcoming?

2. LISTENING

- How good are Catholics at listening openly to and working with others, without prejudice or judgement?
- What might stop Catholics from listening more carefully to some in society?

3. CELEBRATING

- In order to 'walk together' in our faith, we must listen communally to the Word and celebrate the Eucharist.
- How does this practice relate to our daily lives?
- How could it be more relevant?

4. LEARNING

- Do you consider Catholics open to change and new learning?
- Do you consider Church leaders to be open to new ways and willing to listen?

5. PARTICIPATION

- How exactly do we as Church members spread the Good News of Jesus Christ?
- How do we encourage participation and leadership among Catholics?

The Process

Begin by using the Main Questions on Page 4.

Then you can choose one of the five themes on Page 5 to help focus the reflection on the Main Questions.

SILENT REFLECTION

Take time for prayerful reflection.

01

FIRST ROUND

Give time for everyone to share the fruit of their reflection.
All take a turn to speak while the rest of the group listens.
Do not rush the process.

SILENT REFLECTION

Allow another time of silence for people to reflect on what they have just heard.

02

SECOND ROUND

Everyone is invited to share a word or a thought that
SOMEONE ELSE HAS SHARED that has touched them.

03

THIRD ROUND

Together, the members of the group look at what has stood out.
What is the essence of the sharing that has taken place?

PRAYER

We come before You, Holy Spirit
e te Wairua Tapu
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts
o mātou ngākau;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.

Let us find in You our unity *kōtahitanga*
so that we may journey together to eternal life
te oranga tonutanga
and not stray from the way of truth *te ara o te*
pono 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 *te Matua* and
the Son *te Tamaiti*,
forever and ever.

Amene.

**Adapted from the
Adsumus Sante Spiritus Prayer.
Te Reo by the Auckland Diocesan Vicar for Māori**

Please remember that you **do not** have to answer every question. The themes and questions are provided primarily as a starting point or helpful guideline.

You may like to record your group/individual submission on Page 9. This can then be used to form an online submission, or take a photo and email in, or cut it out and pop it in the post. You will find more details for how to make a submission on the back page.

If you are looking for more resources, visit pndiocese.org.nz/synod

To access the full **Participation Booklet** you can scan the QR code here or visit the above link.





Reflection

A series of horizontal lines for writing, starting below the title and extending to the bottom of the page. The lines are evenly spaced and cover most of the page's width.

HOW CAN YOU RESPOND?

Both individuals and groups of all ages are welcome to respond to the participation process. You can choose to cover all, one or a selection of themes included in this booklet, using the questions to guide your discussion or prompt discernment. We wish to hear your heartfelt, inspired responses so please do not be limited by the questions.

Submissions are now open until 31 March 2022.

You can submit your response in the following ways:

ONLINE SURVEY

Visit pndiocese.org.nz/synod and follow the link to the online response tool.

E-MAIL

Download the Word document 'Synod Participation Response' from our Diocesan website. To do this go to pndiocese.org.nz/synod

Email your response in Word format to synod@pndiocese.org.nz

POSTAL RESPONSE

Handwrite or type your response to the questions and post it to:

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Diocese of Palmerston North

PO Box 5279

Terrace End

Palmerston North 4441