



Pope Francis has called the entire People of God to journey together!

...the purpose of the Synod is "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, and give strength to our hands"

-Pope Francis

- We gather to listen, dialogue, and pray so that we can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.
- The goal of our journeying together is to be present with one another, to listen and learn with each other, and to grow closer to the Lord and His Church.
- Our journey takes place in the midst of where the Church ordinarily lives and works in the day-to-day lives of the faithful.
- This process invites each of us - the People of God - to recall that we journey together.
- In this journey of faith, we are called to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

St. Pope Paul VI created the modern structure of the Synod of Bishops in 1965 after the Second Vatican Council. Pope Paul wanted to ensure that the collaboration and dialogue between bishops, theologians, religious and the lay faithful continued. Since 1967, the Church has held a Synod of Bishops roughly every 2-3 years to examine an issue affecting the Church. At each of these Synods, bishops have consulted with members of the clergy, religious, and the laity. The Synodal process of listening and consulting with the entire People of God is an ancient practice of the Church.

Synodality is the path and process of the Church.
It is the communion of all the baptized who are listening to each other, dialoguing with each other, and praying together to hear the voice of Holy Spirit as we all seek holiness and proclaim the Gospel.

How can I join a conversation?

Turn the page over or see the website for a list of guiding questions and Synod Listening Sessions here at St. Rita. Some of our ministry groups will also be talking about these themes over the next two months.

How can I start a conversation?

Bring these questions to a gathering of friends or family and start talking (and listening)!

Do you have a loved one who is no longer a practicing Catholic, especially within our Diocese?

We want to hear from them, too! Gently encourage them to take a few minutes to answer some of these questions with you, on our website, or to join one of our upcoming Synod Listening Sessions to dream with us about the Church we are called to be.

- The Synod of Bishops is a gathering of bishops that
1. Fosters closer unity between the bishops and Pope
 2. Provides counsel to the Pope on matters of faith, morals, and discipline of the Church
 3. Studies questions concerning the Church in the world
(c.f. Code of Canon Law c. 342.)

Synod is a Greek word (*synodos*) meaning a meeting or assembly. The two Greek words that make up Synod are *syn* meaning together and *hodos* meaning way or journey.

Everyone is encouraged to participate and/or submit ideas, thoughts, or answers to any of these questions on our website at www.saintritawebster.org/synod.html or in the donation slot at church or mail slot at the Parish Office by **March 20.**

WHAT IS A SYNOD?

Content adapted from *For a Synodal Church: Participant's Guide from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington*:
<https://www.usccb.org/resources/ADW%20Participant's%20Guide.pdf>

St. Rita Church
 Webster, NY

Fundamental Question:

Choose sessions to attend by theme or what works best for your schedule. Bring the answers to these two questions to any listening session.

What is the Holy Spirit saying in our church?

What are the joys of your parish life?

What obstacles to active parish life have you encountered?

Universal Themes and Guiding Questions

I. The Journeying Companions

Who is "our Church"?

II. Listening

Who does our Church need to listen to?

III. Speaking Out

Who speaks on behalf of the Christian community?

IV. Celebrating

How does the celebration of the liturgy direct our journey?

V. Co-responsible in the Mission

What are we doing well as a Church? What can we improve on as a Church?

VI. Dialogue in Church and Society

How do we promote collaboration?

VII. Dialogue with Other Christian Denominations

How is our mission enhanced by journeying with others?

VIII. Authority and Participation

How do we identify the goals of the Church?

IX. Discerning and Deciding

How do we promote participation in decision-making?

X. Forming Ourselves in Synodality

How do we form people who listen to one another and engage in dialogue?

Synod Listening Sessions at St. Rita

All are welcome to join us at as many of these sessions as you would like. Bring a friend!

These three sessions will focus primarily on Themes I and V.

Table with 3 columns: Date, Time, Location. Rows include sessions on Friday, February 11; Sunday, February 13; and Wednesday, February 16.

These three sessions will focus primarily on Themes II and III.

Table with 3 columns: Date, Time, Location. Rows include sessions on Monday, February 21; Wednesday, February 23; and Friday, March 4.

Sessions between March 5-19 will focus primarily on themes VIII and IX. Check the bulletin or website for dates and locations, TBD