

CANADIANS FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH

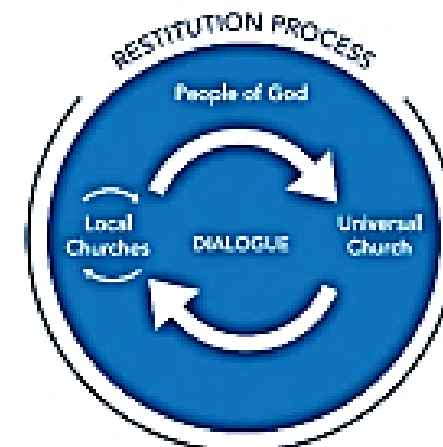
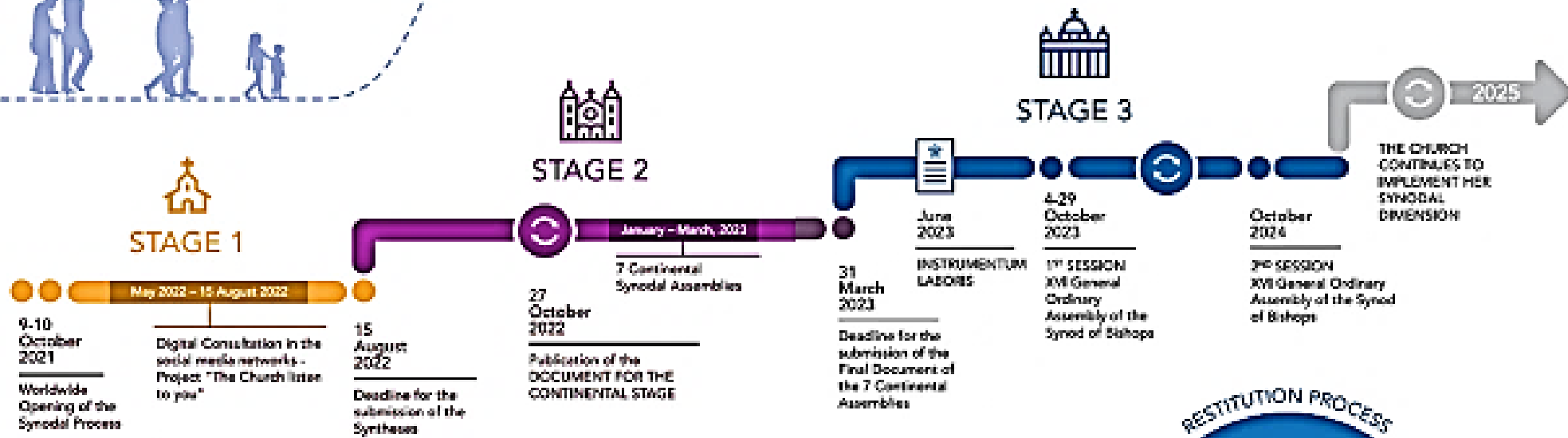
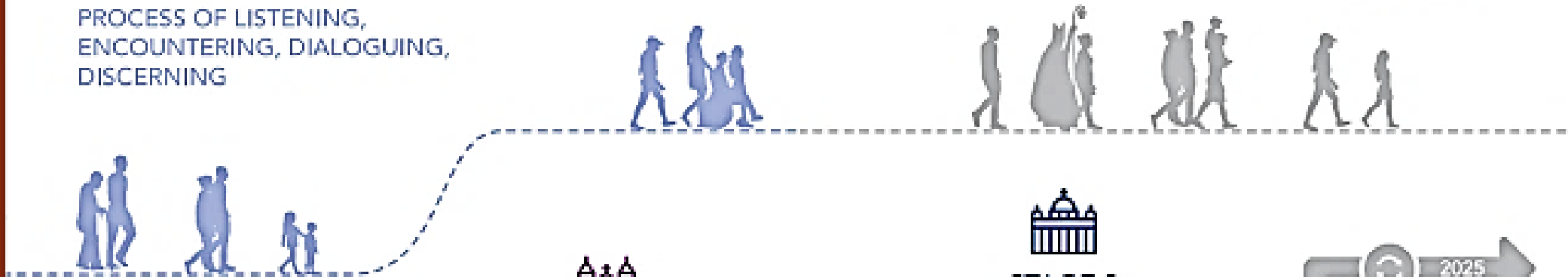


**Synod On Synodality ~
Implementation Phase
Elizabeth M. Davis, rsm
20 November 2024**

The Synodal Process 2021 - 2024



PROCESS OF LISTENING,
ENCOUNTERING, DIALOGUING,
DISCERNING



ICON INDEX



Conversation in the Spirit

A dynamic of discernment in the synodal Church



Synod 2021-2024



PERSONAL PREPARATION

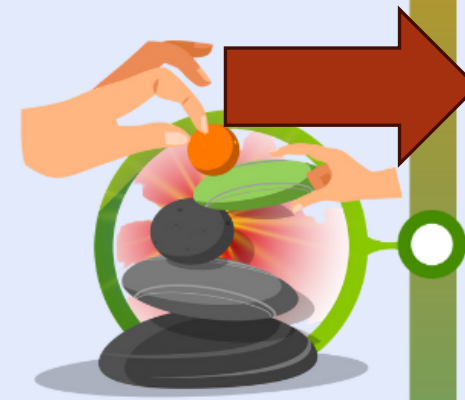
By entrusting oneself to the Father, conversing in prayer with the Lord Jesus and listening to the Holy Spirit, each one prepares his or her own contribution to the question about which he or she is called to discern.

Silence and prayer
listening to the Word of God

"Taking the word and listening"

Each person takes turns speaking from his or her own experience and prayer, and listens carefully to the contribution of others.

Silence and prayer



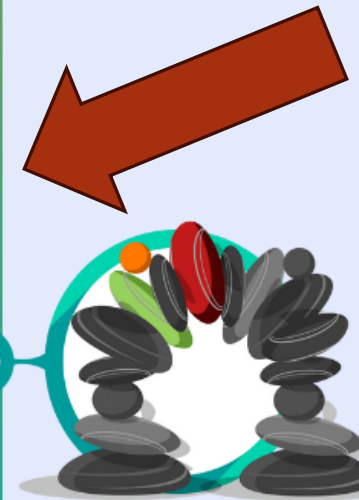
Silence and prayer

"Building together"


Together we dialogue on the basis of what emerged earlier in order to discern and gather the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit: to recognize intuitions and convergences; to identify discordances, obstacles and new questions; to allow prophetic voices to emerge. It is important that everyone can feel represented by the outcome of the work. "To what steps is the Holy Spirit calling us together?"

"Making space for others and the Other"

From what the others have said, each one shares what has resonated most with him or her or what has aroused the most resistance in him or her, allowing himself or herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit: **"When, listening, did my heart burn within me?"**




Final prayer of thanksgiving



THE IMPLEMENTATION STAGE BEGINS IN A SYNODAL WAY!

- **Pope Francis announced that he had chosen to not write the customary Apostolic Exhortation following the Synod, but that the Synod Document would be immediately available to all**
- **He expressed confidence that "There are already highly concrete indications in the Document that can be a guide for the mission of the Churches, in their specific continents and contexts"**



FINAL DOCUMENT

FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH:

COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION, MISSION

- **Recounting and relaunching of an experience of Church as communion, participation, and mission**
- **A concrete proposal of a new vision that overturns established practices**
- **Involvement of all in the daily journey with a synodal methodology of consultation and discernment, identifying concrete ways and formation pathways to bring about a tangible synodal conversion in the various ecclesial contexts**

OVERVIEW OF FINAL DOCUMENT

5 parts, rooted in two Gospel accounts of Risen Jesus appearing to the Disciples (John 20 & 21)

- Part One (#13-#48): “The Heart of Synodality”
- Part Two (#49-#78): “On the Boat, Together” = **conversion of relationships** that build the Christian community and shape mission in the intertwining of **vocations, charisms and ministries**
- Part Three (#79-#108): “Cast the Net” = **conversion of processes**; 3 practices intimately connected: ecclesial discernment, decision-making processes, and a culture of transparency, accountability and evaluation

OVERVIEW OF FINAL DOCUMENT

- **Part Four (#109-#139): “An Abundant Catch” = **conversion of bonds**; cultivation of new forms of the exchange of gifts and the intertwining of the bonds that unite us in the Church (when being rooted in a place is changing profoundly)**
- **Part Five (#140-#151): “So I Send You” = first step is caring for the formation of all, of the People of God, of all synodal missionaries**

SELECTED THEMES FROM FINAL DOCUMENT

- **Synodality is a path of spiritual renewal and structural reform that enables the Church to be more participatory and missionary, so that it can walk with every man and woman, radiating the light of Christ (28)**
- **Call for a Church with a greater capacity to nurture relationships: with the Lord, between men and women, in the family, in the local community, among social groups and religions, with the earth itself (50), recognizing that some continue to experience the pain of feeling excluded or judged because of their marital situation, identity, or sexuality**

SELECTED THEMES FROM FINAL DOCUMENT

- **Call to renewed relationships in the Lord Jesus flourishing in the **different contexts** in which His disciples live (53)**
- **By virtue of Baptism, **women and men have equal dignity as members of the People of God** – women continue to encounter obstacles in obtaining a **fuller recognition of their charisms, vocation and roles in all the various areas of the Church's life.** . . . This Assembly asks for full implementation of all the opportunities already provided for in Canon Law with regard to the role of women, particularly in those places where they remain under-explored – **what comes from the Holy Spirit cannot be stopped** – the question of women's access to diaconal ministry remains open (60)**

SELECTED THEMES FROM FINAL DOCUMENT

- **Ecclesial discernment, care for decision-making processes, commitment to accountability and evaluation of our decisions are practices through which we respond to the Word that shows us the paths of mission (79)**
- **Decision-making processes need ecclesial discernment, which requires listening in a climate of trust that is supported by transparency and accountability**
- **Trust must be mutual: decision-makers need to be able to trust and listen to the People of God. The latter, in turn, needs to be able to trust those in authority (80)**

SELECTED THEMES FROM FINAL DOCUMENT

- **We know that the Spirit has placed the desire for authentic relationships and true bonds in the heart of every human being – creation itself speaks of unity and sharing, of diversity and of variously interconnected forms of life (154)**
- **The text concludes with a prayer entrusting the results of the Synod to Mary – “May she... teach us to be a people of disciples and missionaries together, to be a synodal Church” (155)**

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE ~ WHO

- 1. Members of the Assembly – synodal missionaries in our respective communities**
- 2. Local Churches (parishes, Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, movements of the faithful, dioceses, episcopal conferences, groupings of Churches) – daily journey in tangible synodal conversion**
- 3. Ongoing evaluation led by episcopal conferences and synods of churches (with dedicated personnel and resources)**
- 4. Synod Secretariat – oversight of synodal quality of Study Groups**

TEN STUDY GROUPS ~ JUNE 2025

- 1. Some aspects of the relationship between the Eastern Catholic Churches and the Latin Church.**
- 2. Listening to the cry of the poor and the earth.**
- 3. The mission in the digital environment.**
- 4. the revision of the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* in a missionary synodal perspective.**
- 5. Some theological and canonical matters regarding specific ministerial forms.**

TEN STUDY GROUPS ~ JUNE 2025

- 6. The revision, in a synodal missionary perspective, of the documents touching on the relationship between Bishops, consecrated life, and ecclesial associations.**
- 7. Some aspects of the person and ministry of the Bishop (in particular: criteria for selecting candidates to the episcopacy, the judicial function of the Bishops, the nature and structure of *ad limina Apostolorum* visits) from a missionary synodal perspective.**
- 8. The role of Pontifical Representatives in a missionary synodal perspective.**

STUDY GROUPS ~ JUNE 2025

- 9. Theological criteria and synodal methodologies for shared discernment of controversial doctrinal, pastoral, and ethical issues.**
- 10. The reception of the fruits of the ecumenical journey in the People of God.**

Plus: Canonical Commission and a group on the pastoral accompaniment of people in polygamous marriages entrusted to the Symposium of the Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar

FORMATION TO WITNESS JOY OF THE GOSPEL AND GROWTH IN SYNODALITY

- **Profound vocational and missionary awareness**
- **Renewed way of living ecclesial relations, new dynamics of participation**
- **Ecclesial discernment, culture of ongoing evaluation**
- **Continuous conversion and openness to the gifts of the Spirit**
- **Rediscovery of Sunday Eucharist decisive for synodality**

FORMATION TO WITNESS JOY OF THE GOSPEL AND GROWTH IN SYNODALITY

- **Formation – continuing and integral, common and shared, generative and transformative**
- **Intergenerational encounters**
- **Inclusion of popular piety**
- **Catechesis – in addition to being part of the journey of initiation, catechesis is continuously drawing people outwards in mission**
- **Impact of digital environment**
- **Culture of safeguarding**



PLACES OF FORMATION

- **Families, small communities, parishes, ecclesial associations, seminaries, religious communities, academic institutions (schools, vocational training colleges, universities)**
- **Places for serving and working with marginalized, missionary and volunteer initiatives**
- **Wherever people are formed for social and political commitment, in the worlds of sport, music and art**

FORMATION TO WITNESS JOY OF THE GOSPEL AND GROWTH IN SYNODALITY

Themes of the Church's social doctrine

- Commitment to peace and justice**
- Care for our common home**
- Intercultural and interreligious dialogue**
- Commitment to defending life and human rights**
- Proper ordering of society**
- The dignity of work**
- A fair and supportive economy**
- An integral ecology**

GREATEST CONCERNS

- **That the themes of the Final Document will not resonate with “ordinary, everyday” Catholics**
- **That we will not see ourselves in the synodal way outlined in that Document**
- **That we will see that Synod as a good and important event, now finished, and we move on**
- **That we will not give the time, intention and attention needed to ensure that every dimension of Church and Church life is permeated with ongoing synodal conversion**

GREATEST HOPES

- **That the CCCB and the individual Canadian Bishops will passionately pursue this missionary synodal pathway, giving it our own local touch**
- **That individual parishes, religious congregations, lay movements, ministry endeavours will see the synodal way in their lives and will partner with each other to make the Canadian Church a truly synodal Church**
- **That we will appreciate the many ways in which we are already on a synodal path and will find in this reality the strength and the courage to become a more listening, inclusive and welcoming Church**



Jesus said to her, 'Mary!' She turned and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' (which means Teacher). . . Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, 'I have seen the Lord.'

Jn 20:16, 18