

What is Synodality?

- Synodality is the path or journey the entire People of God take together. The path is characterized by active listening to the Holy Spirit and all the People of God as well as dialogue between the sense of the faithful and the teaching authority of the bishops and the Supreme Pontiff.

For more resources on Synodality, visit:

- [CMSM Synodality Primer](#)
- [2015 Address by Pope Francis commemorating the institution of the Synod of Bishops](#)
- [“Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church” by the International Theological Commission](#)

What is the Synod of Bishops?

- The Synod of Bishops is a group of bishops from around the world who meet together to offer the Pope “their counsel in the preservation and growth of faith and morals and in the observance and strengthening of ecclesiastical discipline, and to consider questions pertaining to the activity of the Church in the world,” according to their [FAQ](#). Officially established in 1965, the Synod has met in 15 ordinary general assemblies since the close of the Second Vatican Council.
- The theme of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops is “For a synodal Church: communion, participation, and mission.”

How can men religious participate?

- You are invited to take up the conversation with your councils, communities, appropriate groups of leaders, or lay people. These could involve those who are colleagues in mission, those you serve in mission, and any others who may be able to share their thoughts, concerns, or needs.
- The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life has invited members of religious institutes and societies to participate through two ways. First, they are encouraged to participate in their local synodal processes. Second, they may undertake consultations in their communities, and submit their results to the Congregation through their general government. These must be submitted by June 30, 2022. The resources included herein may be helpful in guiding those conversations.
- In September 2022, the first instrumentum laboris will be published for discussion. We will share that with our members and post it at www.cmsm.org/synod. The final instrumentum laboris will be published in June 2023.

Communal Discussions

CMSM members are encouraged to gather to discuss synodality in their own communities. Please feel free to define community as you see fit; this could be as institute, society, province, or monastery-wide; leadership council; or sponsored ministry.

Conversation Guidelines

(1) Those who attend should be adequately prepared for the conversation. This might include providing them with the “[Preparatory Document](#)” and “[Vademecum](#),” questions posed, CMSM’s [synodality primer](#), or other relevant documents for their review.

(2) Consider inviting an outside facilitator. This might be a trusted member of the community who is not the superior, who can elicit a broad range of responses and ensure everyone is heard.

(3) Designate one person to act as recorder. This person should take appropriate notes, summarize the discussion.

(4) Begin your session in prayer, possibly starting with the *Adsumus, Sancte Spiritus* (page 4).

Synodality Questions

The Fundamental Question of the Synod of Bishops

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’? -From the Preparatory Document

Questions for Discussion

CMSM members are encouraged to gather with other members of their communities, with leaders, with lay staff or volunteers, or with anyone who might be interested in discussing synodality.

How does your community live out synodality?
In what ways can it improve its commitment to synodality?

Think to the times leaders have changed.
What are the challenges in those time periods? What are the joys?

How can we ensure our entire community is truly
“listening together to the voice of the Holy Spirit”?

What would you like your community to learn
from this Synod of Bishops?

What should the Synod understand about religious communities
and synodality?

What can the Church learn from how
your community lives out synodality?

Adsumus, Sancte Spiritus

Prayer of invocation to the Holy Spirit for an ecclesial assembly of governance or discernment

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.