

## Five Synodal Themes for Discussion

### I THE JOURNEYING COMPANIONS:

In the Church and in society, we are side by side on the same road. The Preparatory Document offers the reflection that Jesus is the protagonist of the Church and its people, who proclaims to the crowd; with those called to be apostles and their successors serving in unity and fidelity. The Synodal process ultimately should reveal more fully who Christ is and how he informs the Church (PD, 18-19)\*.

- In your local Church, who are the ones “journeying together”?
- When we say: “our Church,” who is part of it?
- Who is asking us to journey together?
- Who are the road companions, including those “outside” the Church?
- What persons or groups are left on the margins, expressly or in fact?

### V CO-RESPONSIBLE (Sharing) IN THE MISSION:

Synodality is at the service of the Church’s mission, in which all her members are called to participate.

- Since we are all missionary disciples, how is each Baptized person called to be a leader in the mission?
- How does the community support its members committed to service in society (social and political commitment, in scientific research and teaching, in the promotion of social justice, in the protection of human rights, especially the right to life from the moment of conception until natural death, and in caring for the common home, etc.)?
- How do you help them to live out these commitments in a logic of mission?
- How is discernment about mission-related choices made, and who participates in it?

\*PD = Preparation Document, See Website [www.dor.org/synod/](http://www.dor.org/synod/).

## **II LISTENING:**

Listening, the first step, requires having an open mind and heart, without prejudices.

- To whom does our particular Church “need to listen to”?
- How are the Laity, especially young people and women, listened to?
- How do we integrate the contribution of Consecrated Men and Women?
- What space is there for the voice of minorities, the discarded, and the excluded?
- Do we identify prejudices and stereotypes that hinder our listening?
- How do we listen to the social and cultural context in which we live?

## **VI DIALOGUE IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY:**

Dialogue is a path of perseverance that also includes silences and sufferings, but which is capable of gathering the experience of persons and peoples.

- What are the places and modes of dialogue within our particular Church?
- How are divergences of vision, the conflicts, the difficulties addressed?
- How do we promote collaboration with neighboring Dioceses, with and among religious communities in the area, with and among lay associations and movements, etc.?
- What experiences of dialogue and shared commitment do we have with believers of other religions and with non-believers?
- How does the Church dialogue with and learn from other sectors of society: the world of politics, economics, culture, civil society, the poor...?
- How does the Church respond to social and political trends that are challenging and are in conflict with the faith of Jesus Christ?

## **IV CELEBRATING:**

“Journeying together” is only possible if it is based in prayer, and on a communal listening to the Word of God and the celebration of the Eucharist.

- How do prayer and liturgical celebration inspire and direct our “journeying together”?
- How do they inspire the most important decisions?
- How do we promote the active participation of all the Faithful in the liturgy and the exercise of the sanctifying function?
- What space is given to the exercise of the ministries of the reader and acolyte?
- Are celebrations of Mass reverent, uplifting, sacred moments?