



## **Synod on Synodality Listening Session Participant Overview**

The term “Synod,” in the Tradition of the Church, is understood to mean the path along which the People of God walk together. “Synodality” describes the walking together of all the baptized as we listen to one another and to the Holy Spirit in discerning the will of God for how to accomplish the mission of the Church.

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, invites every Catholic to participate in the worldwide Synod on Synodality by sharing our experiences, hopes, and concerns for the Church and to listen carefully as others offer the same. All who are baptized in Christ are invited and welcomed to participate in a Synod listening session at the local level. Whether highly engaged in the faith, disengaged, or somewhere in between, the People of God have personal stories and testimonies to share.

In preparing to participate in a listening session, it is important that we understand the Synod’s objective for the consultation. Participants are invited to offer their experiences, wisdom, hopes, and concerns around specific themes; to dream about the Church we are called to be; and to listen as others similarly share their experiences. This is an opportunity for us to hear and learn from diverse voices and backgrounds, and to discern how God calls us to journey forward together to fulfill our Catholic mission in the world.

Perhaps equally important is that we understand what the Synod listening session is not. It is not about planning, solving, persuading, or debating. It is not about particular voices having greater or lesser influence than others. And, it is not about compiling statistics, data, survey results or producing volumes of documents.

This local consultation is one of three phases in the Synod’s two-year worldwide process and is designed to gather the wisdom and insights of our clergy, religious, and lay faithful in the Archdiocese of Louisville. Listening sessions will typically be hosted at local parishes or venues, will involve small-group dialogue around certain reflection questions, and will last no more than two hours.

When opening the Synod on Synodality in late 2021, Pope Francis offered us both a gift and a task. The gift is an unprecedented communal sharing of prayer, dialogue, listening, and walking together by millions of faithful around the world. Our task is to participate in diverse, prayerful, and reflective dialogue at the local level so that all voices may be represented in the dreams and visions of our future Church.

For more information on the Synod for Synodality in the Archdiocese of Louisville, visit [www.archlou.org/synod-2022](http://www.archlou.org/synod-2022).