



## ***Everything You Need to Know About The October 4 Synod***

### **Part Three: What does a “Synodal Church” Look Like?**

**What’s unique about being a Church  
that works synodally?**

The IL (*Instrumentum Laboris*) document, which guides the process of the October Synod, says that the **“synodal process offers an opportunity for an encounter in faith that makes the bond with the Lord, fraternity between people, and love for the Church.”** What does that look like in the everyday life of the Church and my parish, weekend after weekend, year after year?

To begin with, **“the protagonist of the Synod is the Holy Spirit.”** The synodal process trusts that the **Holy Spirit will guide the participants to address the “problems, resistances, difficulties and tensions” that the Church experiences today.** These will be “identified and named in a context of authentic dialogue that makes it possible for all participants to speak and listen with freedom and sincerity.” (IL # 17) The Holy Spirit will move us toward becoming a Synodal Church.

***When persons listen to the Spirit and to each other, an “awareness emerges of certain characteristics or distinctive signs of a synodal Church.”***

These signs are described on pages 10-13 of the IL.

***Some of those signs are . . .***

- The **common dignity derived from Baptism**, making us sons and daughters of God.
- A belief that the Church is meant to **become increasingly synodal in its institutions, structures, and procedures.**
- Awareness that **to be a synodal Church is to be a listening Church.** (In the early listening stages of the Synod process, some participants said “the great surprise was the experience of being listened to by the community, in some cases for the first time!”)





# Litterae Communio

## #ChurchOnTheWay

- A commitment to be **humble**. A synodal Church knows that it **must ask forgiveness and has much to learn from its members**.
- The need for **encounter and dialogue with other Churches**. A profound desire to **deepen the ecumenical journey** emerges: an authentically synodal Church cannot but involve all those who share the one Baptism.
- A practice of **openness, encounter and dialogue** which is not afraid of the variety it bears, but values it without forcing it into uniformity.
- An ability to **manage tensions without being crushed by them**. Authentic listening and the ability to find ways to continue walking together beyond fragmentation and polarization are indispensable for the Church to remain alive and vital.
- **Listening attentively to each other's lived experiences**, growing in mutual respect and discerning God's Spirit in the lives of others and in our own.

XVI ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS

### INSTRUMENTUM LABORIS

For the First Session  
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