

An Introduction to the Synod on Synodality: The Engagement of Baptized Catholics

Pope Francis has called for the entire Church to consider how the Church should carry out the mission of the Church in today's world. This call is the **Synod on Synodality**. With this new Synod process, Pope Francis continues the work to ensure that baptized Catholics become more engaged in praying, sharing their faith, and collectively setting the course of the Church and their faith in the future. As opposed to previous synods, this new approach invites all to contribute, and the events in Rome include laypeople... both men AND women as voting members.

The Synod is a process of prayer and discernment and a way to explore how we are being asked to live our Catholic faith and how we relate to and listen to each other. The Synod process started long before the meeting in Rome last October, and it will not conclude when the members of the Synod reconvene this coming October. The Synod process is an ongoing process for the future development of the Catholic Church. The Synod is a “bottom-up” process that allows every Catholic to participate. It’s a whole different way of living the Catholic faith.

The St. Bernard Parish Council has agreed to follow Pope Francis’s call to become a Synodal Parish. A committee has been formed to launch this effort. Plans are underway to conduct a first parish event in May. We are also inviting members of Mother of Christ to join us. We want to invite EVERYONE to join us. The two available dates are May 19 following mass at St. Bernard and May 20 at 7:00 pm

How will this work?

- We will sit in small groups, and a facilitator, a timekeeper, and a note-taker will be chosen within each group.
- We might have starting questions (for example, *what are your thoughts on growing our church community?*) to get us going.
- We will pray for guidance, then each person in the group has two minutes to express their thoughts. We will pray and ask ourselves, what did I hear others say?
- Then, we will take two minutes each to talk about what we heard others say.
- Each group will then come up with the key ideas that came up from group sharing.

What will be the result? First, we will send a summary of our comments to Rome to be included in the global conversation in October. Second, we will identify issues that we can work on to start implementing and improving things at St. Bernard and Mother of Christ. Lastly, we will continue to occasionally hold these synod conversations and join Pope Francis’s call to become synodal parishes.

More information will be provided leading up to this event. If you are interested to learn more about the synod process, consider watching a video of a conversation hosted by Georgetown University... https://youtu.be/m7B2mhyGb4U?si=4SpKke8Z_iYMfaBl