

Dear Friends in Christ,

Pope Francis announced last spring that the topic of the October 2023 Synod of Bishops will be synodality in the Church. A synod is a meeting of bishop delegates from around the world invited to discuss a topic of theological or pastoral significance, in order to offer advice or counsel to the pope. Synodality is understood by Pope Francis to mean all members of the Church (clergy, laity, religious) participating in the evangelizing mission of the Church, journeying together as a community, prayerfully listening to one another in order to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit.

In preparation for the synod, the Holy Father has asked Catholics worldwide to share their experiences of participation in the life and mission of the Church. We have begun the diocesan phase of this consultation by holding listening sessions with some of our neighbors on the peripheries, including the incarcerated, homeless, migrants, refugees and the elderly. I now invite all of you to participate in the consultation with the wider Church that the pope desires.

Individuals thirteen and older are asked to respond to a series of questions online from February 5-28 at <https://archomaha.org/synod/>. You can also access the questions by using the QR code. A copy of this letter with the QR code is in today's bulletin. Those without internet access can ask for a printed copy of the questions from your parish. The questions should take you 5-10 minutes to complete. Feel free to share this link with family and friends living in the archdiocese, including those who may not be members of the Catholic Church.

In addition, pastors are encouraged to hold listening sessions with parish pastoral councils or other groups.

All that is received in our archdiocese, from the listening sessions and responses to the questions will be summarized later this spring, published on our synod website this summer, and forwarded to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. There it will become part of a national summary that will be forwarded to the Holy See. This worldwide consultation about the experience of the Church's life and mission is a daunting project. At the same time, Pope Francis is sincere in his hope that even this process of sharing will strengthen the bonds of our life in Christ. I encourage you to respond to the pope's invitation to participate.

With best wishes and prayers,



Most Reverend George J. Lucas  
Archbishop of Omaha



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QUESTIONNAIRE