



DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

2110 Broadway • Sacramento, California 95818 • 916/733-0200 • Fax 916/733-0215

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Memo

To: All Clergy and Parish Pastoral Council Chairs
From: Chantal LeFevre, Vice-Chancellor
Date: November 21, 2022
Re: Continental Stage for the Synod on Synodality

Earlier this year, parishes and organizations throughout the Diocese of Sacramento together hosted more than 250 listening sessions for the diocesan phase of the Synod on Synodality.

On October 16, Pope Francis extended the Synod of Bishops to 2024, allowing an additional year for discernment. On October 27, the Holy See then released the working Document for the Continental Stage (DCS) of the Synod, and is available in 5 languages: <https://www.synod.va/en/highlights/working-document-for-the-continental-stage.html>



As part of this Continental Stage, **we have identified 5 delegates** who will represent our diocese in virtual continental assemblies including people from the United States and Canada between December 2022 and January 2023. Our delegates will gather for their own reflection in mid-December.

Parishes that may be interested in providing **supplemental notes** for our delegates' reflection are invited to hold listening sessions on the DCS. Unlike the diocesan phase, these **optional listening sessions** will require participants to have read and prayed with the 55+ page DCS in advance. These discussions will reflect on the following 3 questions:

- After having read and prayed with the DCS, which intuitions resonate most strongly with the lived experiences and realities of the Church in your continent? Which experiences are new, or illuminating to you?
- After having read and prayed with the DCS, what substantial tensions or divergences emerge as particularly important in your continent's perspective? Consequently, what are the questions or issues that should be addressed and considered in the next steps of the process?
- Looking at what emerges from the previous two questions, what are the priorities, recurring themes and calls to action that can be shared with other local Churches around the world and discussed during the First Session of the Synodal Assembly in October 2023?



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Best practices for hosting a DCS listening session follow many of the same from the diocesan phase:

- **Participants:** Include a facilitator, note taker, and no more than 10 additional participants
- **Setting:** Chairs in a circle, prayer table in the center with a candle, bible, prayer cloth, etc.
- **Duration:** Overall two hours, spend 30 minutes on introductions and prayer, one hour on questions 1-2, after an extended pause move to question 3 for the last 30 minutes.

The note taker should enter the notes on the online form within 2 days of the session taking place, or by Friday, December 9 at the latest: https://scd.formstack.com/forms/synod_continental

For questions, please contact the Bishop's Office at 916-733-0200.