

# Prayers for the Synod on Synodality Online Seminar

## crafted by Michael R. Prendergast

### Week 1: What is the Synod on Synodality

Holy Spirit, may we listen to the Word of God and to one another. May our posture be one of participating together, walking together, and enlarging a space in the tent for all. Holy Spirit be our protagonist and advocate. May we go out to the peripheries to meet all, to dialogue with society, the poor and the disenfranchised as we care for our common home. May we be a church on the move, a church that upholds the human dignity of all. May we be a church with a robust hospitality embracing the baptismal dignity of the holy people of God. May we form ourselves into a synodal community. Amen

### Week 2: Synodality: Opportunity for Lay Leadership in the Parish

Holy Spirit, we are called to embrace our baptismal dignity and care for our common home. We are called to share and listen to others, as a mission driven church. May our hearts sing with the Spirit our protagonist. May we listen to our young people, may our shepherds meet our people in their everyday life. Make the tent of the church expand to include the voices of the next generation. May all be embraced and welcomed. May we be open to radical diversity and be a church of inclusion, a church that listens to one another. May we manage tension and not try to fix tensions with a band aid, but allow us to sit with discomfort. May we be movers and shakers that will break down structures and may those in leadership listen and respond with compassion. May our bishops take on a synodal posture and smell like the sheep. May the holy people of God enter conversation with the Holy Spirit, and with each other, that will lead us to embrace hope and joy. Amen

### Week 3: Synodality and Radical Belonging

Holy Spirit may we be a church with active participation in both liturgy and life. May we engage with cultural inclusion and embrace the traditions of various ethnic celebrations including *Simbang Gabi*, *Las Posadas* and *Día de Muertos*. May we be a church that creates a safe environment and carefully chooses language in addressing all topics. May our bishops use informed language that is both pastoral and sensitive especially when addressing victims of sexual abuse and gender identity. May we be a church that invites freedom of expression and listens especially to the many young voices that are a gift to the church. May we be a church of action as well as words. May young people shape the church into a new community where all belong. May we be a church that embraces cultural diversity. May we bring to the liturgy a plethora of multiple languages in our prayer. May we be a church that walks, talks, and listens. A church that says all are OK just as they are. Enable us to create a space where doubt, trauma and burdens can be voiced, where questions can be asked, and where pastoral ministers will listen and respond without judgment. May we be a Church of inclusion and not exclusion. Let us be a church that lifts up girls and women in church leadership. As we listen to others may we be patient as we participate in mission while walking the road to communion. May we allow a variety of voices to break open the word of God through homilies, preaching, witnessing, and reflecting. May no one be erased but all embraced and welcomed. As we journey with young people may we meet them and others where they are. May the church which proclaims that the human person is the clearest reflection of God's presence in the world embrace all those, on the margins and at the margins, especially our LGBTQ+ community members and those of various gender identities. Let us hope for a church that welcomes immigrants and refugees, a church concerned about care for our common home. Come Holy Spirit fill our hearts and in kindle in us the fire of your love. Amen

#### Week 4: Learning from Synodal Communities

May we listen with the ear of the heart as we put God's work into action. May we listen to one another and invite others into synodal action and shared collegiality of all the beloved baptized. May we continue to ask who we are walking with and who is not on the journey with us? May we listen and look and do this together: with mutual accompaniment, through sacred encounter, with agency and dignity, honoring unique voices, with integrity practicing and embracing ourselves, finding wisdom from the edge, seeing God present in all life with honesty and humility. As we meet those at the margin and bring hope to those who are not like us may we bring them to the welcome table. Let us enter into conversation and share with each other even when there is division. May we be rooted in an organic sound. Let us tap in as we listen to each other, like a choir in perfect harmony, when no voice overpowers another. May we have honest conversation as we practice consensus. Even in our division may we be people who pray for our enemies and those who listen to marginalized people. May we speak the truth in love and speak the truth through love. May justice and mercy meet in our synodal conversations along the path of interreligious dialogue. May our relationships with one another be rooted in nurturing humility, patience, and love. May we have ears like rabbits so we can hear in new ways. May we go to the edge and ask people what they need and then strive to implement all ideas that will lead us in justice and love. Amen.

#### Week 5: The Future of Synodality: A Renewal of Communion

May we be a church that models the chapter process as found in religious communities. May we learn from synodal communities like those embraced by our Lutheran and Episcopal sisters and brothers and communities of various Christian Churches. May we set a standard for listening and engaging in communion with all. May we create a model of discernment with all the holy people of God. May we continue to walk hand in hand through ecumenical and interfaith dialogue. May the model of the vineyard serve the synodal process as we prune, graft, and produce ripe fruit. May we model inclusion and discernment through diversity in unity. May we be a church where clergy and lay leadership embrace a period of renewal. Let us light a fire under those who are resisting the

synodal practice. May our parish pastoral councils have ears to the ground to advise those in leadership. May they listen with a deep love for the holy people of God. May we continue to walk the road to Emmaus where we, walk and listen for unity and diversity. May the church continue to listen to both the Gospel and the Holy Spirit as we move from maintenance to mission. May we all be one as children of God journeying on the road toward unity. May we embrace who we are as church: as exiled people, as sacramental people, as herald, as servant, as field hospital, as a church that meets people where they are, as a tent making room for all, as the communion of all the baptized. May we embrace both joys and sorrows as we strive to be more and more inclusive and welcoming church for all. May we be attentive to racial and ethnic diversity in our neighborhoods and cities. May we reject the notion of a rigid church, a lukewarm church, and a tired church. May we move forward with humility in unity through prayer and charity. Let us embrace a church that is more inclusive so that all may find a home. By embracing deep listening with a gaze toward the risen Christ may our identity be oriented toward a journey of playfulness and joy. May we uphold the role of women and listen to their wisdom. May we enter into deep, deep, listening as we break the bread of Christ and share the Good News of hope. Let us not be depressed but hold onto hope which allows us to embrace a tapestry of God's beauty. May we turn toward the Spirit as we look for ways of being a living tree in the world that produces abundant fruit for all. Let us look for ways of saying yes and embracing radical forgiveness as we look to a new horizon. May the praxis of mercy, through the lens of witness in our culture lead toward a church of mercy and forgiveness. May we continue to be a Pentecost church, a church of hope, a joy filled church, a grace filled church. May the calling down of the Spirit in liturgy over the bread and wine not only change the gifts but the church herself. May we be a church that is constantly reforming herself into a living church. Let us embrace a church of Pentecost! May we embracing courage that rejects war so as to root ourselves in peace. May we embrace an ecclesiology of *diakonia*, service to all the holy people of God. The Spirit is alive, we are a Pentecostal church. Amen