



Terms of Reference for Parish Synod Team Members

“The purpose of the first phase of the synodal journey is to foster a broad consultation process in order to gather the wealth of the experiences of lived synodality, in its different articulations and facets, involving the Pastors and the Faithful of the particular Churches at all the different levels, through the most appropriate means according to the specific local realities” Preparatory Document #31

Pope Francis is asking all the faithful to share what they hear, see, and live in their local Churches. To help make this huge task happen, each diocese must develop local means for listening and gathering feedback. The Parish Synod Team gathers feedback that contributes to the diocesan submission for the next phase of the synod process.

Our 2021 Assembly of the People of God, October 15-16, 2021, begins our local synod experience. At the Assembly these delegates experience the synodal listening process first-hand and help to refine and adapt it for use with their own communities of faith.

Potential Parish Synod Team members should be available to attend the Saturday training session being held at the 2021 Assembly. Given our current public health and government protocols, this training does not qualify as a “faith gathering”; thus, delegates coming to the Saturday training session at the Assembly will be asked for proof of double vaccination.

Parish delegates should be...

- Prayerful
 - Open to the movements and guidance of the Spirit and comfortable praying publicly.
- Good communicators
 - Participants must be open to conversation and listening.
- Ready to commit
 - Participants are committing to spearheading a parish process, not just attending an event.
- Innovative
 - The Holy Father is calling us to find new methods to hear from those on our margins.
- Co-responsible
 - Participants do not need to currently be central parish leaders, but they must have some understanding of the need to support and build up the Church.

The Parish Synod Team is responsible for:

- Conducting three to four Synod Parish Sessions, modeled on what they experienced at the 2021 Assembly, at the parish between **October 17, 2021 and January 31, 2022**.
- Keeping the synod process clear, simple, and based in prayer.

- Capturing input from a variety of parish groups. We encourage parish-based synod sessions to target specific groups, such as youth, young families, elders, active parishioners, new parishioners, long standing parishioners, outreach ministries, etc.
- Recruiting more Parish Synod Team members as required.

The Diocesan Synod Team will provide support to the Parish Synod Teams by:

- Providing a synod website on the diocesan website that provides relevant information and resources: www.halifaxarmouth.org/synod.
- Maintaining regular communications via PL&NE Office contacts. These contacts are the key resource person for Parish Synod Teams and they are available to provide aid, answer questions, and pray with and for the teams and our diocesan synod process.
- Developing the necessary tools to facilitate synod sessions in parishes, such as sample agendas, feedback tools, training, and best practices.

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