“Synod” is not a familiar word for most Catholics. It's a Greek word, basically meaning to “walk with,” or “journey together.” Throughout our history, it’s been used to refer to gatherings of the Church to “walk with” one another and with the Holy Spirit, to read “the signs of the times” and discern in a spirit of prayer how the Church is being called to respond.

The Church is gathering around this question: **A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, “journeys together.” How is this “journeying together” happening today in your local Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our “journeying together?”** (This intro and the timeline below are from the [Catholic Diocese of Davenport](https://www.davenportdiocese.org).)

If you would like to learn more:

- [The official website for the Synod](https://www.davenportdiocese.org/synod)
- [The USCCB resources](https://www.usccb.org/resources)
FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH: COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION AND MISSION

XVI ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS

**General Secretariat**

- Preparatory Document
- Local churches and other ecclesial bodies *
- Synthesis on the part of the Synods of Oriental Churches and Episcopal Conferences
- General Secretariat Instrumentum Laboris 1
- Pre-synodal "Meetings of the International Meetings of Episcopal Conferences and similar bodies" *
- Seven Final Documents from the Assemblies
- General Secretariat Instrumentum Laboris 2
- Synod of Bishops

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**Timeline:**

- **September 2021**
  - Preparatory Document + Vademecum

- **9/10 & 17 Oct 2021**
  - Celebration of the Opening (Rome + dioceses) Diocesan synodal phase

- **April 2022**
  - Synthesis

- **September 2022**
  - Instrumentum Laboris 1

- **Before March 2023**
  - Continental / Regional Ecclesial Assemblies

- **March 2023**
  - Final Documents

- **June 2023**
  - Instrumentum Laboris 2

- **October 2023**
  - Rome - Final Document

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*1. Diocesans: Consistent with the Synod of Bishops, the Synod of the General Conferences of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (CENAM), Asia (CONFACI), Australia (CEC), Latin America (CELAM), North America (USCCB-CCCB), Europe (CCEE), and Eastern Europe (CCEEA).

*2. Synod of Bishops: Consistent with the Synod of Bishops, the Synod of the International Conferences of Episcopal Conferences of Asia (ICCA), Africa (CENAM), Latin America (CELAM), and Oceania (FECIO/CECIA).