

Conversation in the Spirit

A dynamic of discernment in the synodal Church



Synod 2021-2024



Silence and prayer
listening to the Word of God

"Taking the word and listening"

Each person takes turns speaking from his or her own experience and prayer, and listens carefully to the contribution of others.

Silence and prayer



Silence and prayer

"Building together"

Together we dialogue on the basis of what emerged earlier in order to discern and gather the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit: to recognize intuitions and convergences; to identify discordances, obstacles and new questions; to allow prophetic voices to emerge. It is important that everyone can feel represented by the outcome of the work. "To what steps is the Holy Spirit calling us together?"

PERSONAL PREPARATION

By entrusting oneself to the Father, conversing in prayer with the Lord Jesus and listening to the Holy Spirit, each one prepares his or her own contribution to the question about which he or she is called to discern.



"Making space for others and the Other"

From what the others have said, each one shares what has resonated most with him or her or what has aroused the most resistance in him or her, allowing himself or herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit: *"When, listening, did my heart burn within me?"*



Final prayer of
thanksgiving

Conversation in the Spirit as used in the Synod on Synodality

First, prepare with prayer asking the Spirit to guide you and others to follow the Spirit's lead.

Second, listen to the Word of God together as a group.

Third, in a circle, each person then has the opportunity to share what God has been saying to them. Each person has his or her own turn to speak without being interrupted by any other member. Then there is a moment of silence so that what others have said can resonate with us.

Fourth, go around the circle again, and each person has the opportunity to briefly respond to what struck him or her about what others shared in the first round. Then there is a time of silence again, to listen in our hearts to what has been shared in this second round.

Fifth, there is a free exchange among participants, dialoging with one another based on what has emerged in order to discern and gather together the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit that has just taken place. Recognize points of commonality, as well as differences. Ask: "What steps is the Holy Spirit calling us to take together?"

Finally, conclude with a prayer or song of thanksgiving to God.

A couple of suggestions:

It is wise to have a designated "facilitator", as they did at the Synod, to hold participants to the process, especially ensure that people may speak without interruptions and there is real use of silence.

Perhaps to ensure that everyone who wants to share has the opportunity to speak, proceed in the following way:

- A designated person will share first.
- After sharing, that person will invite another person to share.
- Each person who is invited has three options:
 - Share and invite.
 - Pass for now and invite. The group will return to this person later.
 - Pass and invite. When a person chooses to 'pass,' the group will not return to this person in this round.
- Do this until everyone is invited, remembering to return to those who 'passed for now.'



for further information
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