



Diocese of Las Cruces XVI Synod of Bishops

Parish Consultive Process Facilitator Guide

Resources and Websites

Synod of Bishops website: <https://www.synod.va/en.html>
USCCB Synod website: <https://www.usccb.org/synod>
USCCB Social Media toolkit: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/synod-21-23-social-media-toolkit>

Preparatory Document: [XVI Synod of Bishops](#)
Handbook for the Synod: [Vademecum](#) for [XVI Synod of Bishops Official Handbook for Listening and Discerning in the Local Churches](#)

Before the Parish Consultive Session

1. Share the Synod information and the three questions of the Discernment Activity with your parish community
 - a. Post them on your website
 - b. Publish in the bulletin
2. Invite the public to participate in your parish session(s)
 - a. Bulletin, Website
 - b. Email to all in the parish database
 - c. Parish social media (ask parishioners to share on their own social media)
 - d. Flyers in community locations, notices in community newsletters
 - e. Next-door Neighbors and friends – all are welcome
 - f. Phone calls
3. Make efforts to ensure maximum inclusion and participation, especially from those on the periphery who are often excluded and forgotten
While the primary intended subjects of the synod are the baptized, people of other faith traditions and people of no religious belief are to be welcomed as well.



4. You may also have groups within the parish hold their own sessions. These sessions should not replace holding open parish sessions, as it would limit participation to only those individuals who are active in a ministry.
 - a. Parish Council
 - b. Finance Council
 - c. Youth Group
 - d. Small faith communities
 - e. Prayer groups or other parish ministries
 - f. School or religious education parents
5. Make the Individual Response Form available for those who will not be attending a session
 - a. Website, Parish office
 - b. Church
6. Ask people to serve as note-takers (optional)
 - a. If you choose note-takers ahead of the session, provide note-takers' guide
 - b. Another option for handling the note-taking process is to ask individuals to serve as note-takers that are not also participating in that session—they will attend another session as a participant and not as a note-taker.

On the Day of the Parish Consultive Session

1. Prepare the space for the group to meet.
2. Be prepared to show the Bishop's video (about 3 minutes)
3. Print out the hand-outs that you will need for each session, including an ample number of photocopies of each of the following.
 - a. Participant Hand-out (Synod prayer + Scriptural Reflection)
 - b. Discernment Activity (the questions)
 - c. Small Group Notes Page (one copy per small group)
4. You will also need one Parish Consultive Session Synthesis Form (one copy for each session)
5. Spend some time in prayer before each session.
6. Be ready to offer a warm welcome to every participant.
7. As an option you may wish to have name tags and markers for the participants.



After Each Parish Consultive Session

1. Compile a Parish Consultive Session Synthesis Form
2. Thank participants for attending
 - a. Via email, if people registered ahead of time
 - b. In the bulletin and website

Completing the Parish Consultive Process Synthesis

1. The Parish Synod members should both meet with the Pastor together once all the parish sessions are complete and the Parish Consultive Session Synthesis Forms are completed after each session. Please retain the Small Group Notes from each group that participated in each session.
2. With the pastor, decide how you will go about completing the Parish Synthesis Report, consolidating the information in the Parish Consultive Session Synthesis Forms.
3. You may prefer for one member to write a first draft and then circulate to the other member and the Pastor; alternatively, you may wish to write the draft together.
4. Complete one Parish Consultive Process Synthesis and have the Pastor sign; send via email to synod@rcdlc.org
5. Send no later than Wednesday, January 12, 2022.

Suggested Agenda for Parish Consultive Session

For a two-hour session:

Welcome and Opening Prayer	4 minutes
Scripture reflection activity	30 minutes
Break	10 minutes
Discernment activity	70 minutes
Instructions	10 minutes
Question 1	20 minutes
Question 2	20 minutes
Question 3	20 minutes
Closing Prayer and session close	3 minutes



General Session Instructions

Ask the group to assemble into groups for 4 or 5 persons (if that has not already occurred)

Scriptural Reflection: Use the video of Bishop Baldacchino proclaiming the Scripture; test the technology ahead of time.

Instructions for the Discernment Activity *(Please read the instructions to the participants)*

We are now going to begin the Discernment portion of this session. The path of synodality seems to make pastoral decisions that reflect the will of God as closely as possible, grounding them in the living voice of the People of God. That is why we are gathered here tonight. Bishop Baldacchino has discerned three questions for us to prayerfully reflect upon and share in small groups. Each group will ask one member to volunteer as note-taker. A form for note-taking will be provided.

At this time we ask that one person from each small group volunteer to serve as the note-taker. Note-takers, please read the note-taker instructions that will be handed to your group momentarily.

(Hand out to the note-takers the Note Taking instructions)

Here are some very important guidelines for your conversations:

1. Synodal listening is oriented towards discernment: we listen to each other, to our faith tradition, and to the signs of the times in order to discern what God is saying to all of us.
2. Listening only to those who have the same views as we do bears little fruit; dialogue involves coming together across diverse opinions. God often speaks through the voices of those that we might easily exclude, cast aside, or discount. We must make a special effort to listen to those we may be tempted to see as unimportant and those who force us to consider new points of view that may change our way of thinking.
3. This is a time for listening without judgment. Do not engage in debate to convince others or engage in criticism or correction of another's statements. Just listen.
4. Ensure that everyone in the group has the opportunity to speak in response to each question. If it appears that one person is taking an abundance of the time allotted for a particular question, gently ask them to conclude their comments, so that the others may also share.
5. If at any time there is a dynamic within the group that cannot be handled by the members of the group, please raise a hand to ask one of the session facilitators to come over to assist.
6. You will have 20 minutes per each of the three question areas.