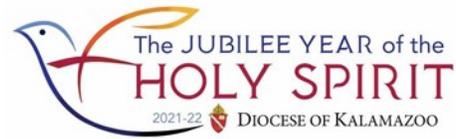




Synod Coordinating Team
Diocese of Kalamazoo
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An Invitation to Volunteers for the Synodal Process

A major part of the synodal process that will take place in our Diocese are public listening sessions. Gatherings for Spanish speakers and English speakers will take place throughout the diocese in the months of January and February. A schedule of those sessions has been published on the diocesan website.

Each listening session will include an introduction to the process and guidelines for sharing at the tables. There will be a significant amount of prayer time because the process is first of all about listening to the Holy Spirit, and secondly, listening and learning from one another. Small groups seated at tables will be invited to reflect on pertinent questions prepared for the synod following quiet times for prayerful reflection. [There may also be simultaneous streaming of the listening sessions and small groups online.] At the end, each table will prepare a summary of what was shared to give to the Synod Coordinating Team, who will later summarize them for its report to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. There are no propositions, debates, or votes, but always a focus on listening carefully to one another. Each session is scheduled to last for about 1 3/4 hours.

Volunteers are needed (a) to lead each session, to introduce synodality to the participants, explain the guidelines, and keep the program "on schedule;" and (b) to lead each table and take notes. A table summary should include both the content of the sharing as well as the "emotional" response of the participants, e.g. what excited people or made them sad. Those volunteers may also be asked to read a Scripture passage as part of the prayer time.

Later, there will be additional opportunities for groups to gather for their own listening sessions following the same format and guidelines. Those groups will also need session leaders, and perhaps table leaders depending on the size of the group.

So you can see that with 17 scheduled public listening sessions (and 16 snow dates), plus other groups meeting independently, there is a large need for session leaders, and for many many table leaders. It is our hope that table leaders will be willing to help more than once, but that is not required.

We will offer a training session for these volunteers at several different sites during the month of December. The volunteers will then participate in their own listening sessions, because as session leaders and table leaders they cannot participate in the sharing. Then they will be asked to sign up to assist at the various listening sessions

The training sessions will take place as follows, and we'll ask volunteers to register so we can make adequate preparations:

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>SITE</u>
Saturday	Dec 11	9-Noon	?
Thursday	Dec 16	6-9 pm	?
Friday	Dec 17	6-9 pm	?

SYNOD COORDINATING TEAM