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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Pope Francis has invited the entire church to a process of consultation. This process will culminate in the Synod of Bishops in October 2023. This Roman Synodal process will take two years because it is the biggest ever ecclesial exercise undertaken by the entire Catholic Church. During the time leading up to 2023, the Bishops gather information from their diocese and compile a report.

This Synod is known as Synod on Synodality of the Church, that participatory style of the Church, which mean walking together. It is walking together without any discrimination based on anything. Our church should be all inclusive, considering ever one as children of God.

Archbishop Don has asked us to participate and I quote:

“Over the coming months, I am asking that every community, parish, school, ministry and lay association plan some time to reflect on the ways that we “walk together” as a local church. Specifically, we want you to reflect on these two questions:

How is the ‘walking together’ happening today in your local parish/community?

What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our ‘walking together’?

I have appointed a team to coordinate our diocesan consultation. You will hear directly from the team frequently over the next months. This consultation is very important for the life of our church in the Archdiocese, in Canada, and throughout the world. Your participation is deeply desired.”

Although Archbishop Don has asked us to focus on the two questions, it is important we understand the theme of the Synod. I am referring to information from the Archdiocese that will assist us in developing our answers/thoughts regarding the questions.

Communion (Unity in Church), Participation (Including everyone), and Mission (Evangelization).

We are asked to reflect on these three themes and consider the two question brought forth to reflect on the ways that we “walk together” as Christ the Redeemer.

I. How is this walking together happening today in our parish and community?
(In the church and in society we are side by side on the road)



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- In our local church, who are the ones walking together?
- Who are our companions on the journey, including those outside the boundaries of the church?

II .What steps does the Holy Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our walking together?

(Walking together is only possible if it is based on communal listening to the WORD and the celebration of the EUCHARIST).

- How do prayer and liturgical celebration inspire and direct our walking together?
- How do we promote the active participation of all the faithful in the liturgy?

III. We are co-responsible in the Mission of the Church:

- Since we are all missionary disciples, how is every baptised person called to participate in the mission of the Church?
- What hinders the baptized from being active in mission?
- What particular issue in the Church and society do we need to pay more attention to?

IV. The dialogue between Christians of different confessions, united by one baptism, has a special place in the Synodal journey:

- What relationship does our church community have with the members of other Christian tradition and denomination?
- What do we share and how do we walk together?
- What are the difficulties?

The Synodal path leading to the General Synod in 2023 will be composed of three phases:

Phase One: This phase began with Opening Celebration in Rome on October 9 and 10, 2021. This first phase is to be marked by a broad consultation among the people of God throughout the world beginning at the diocesan level. It will be based on the Preparatory Document, accompanied by a Questionnaire and a more detailed document called Vademecum. During phase one, each bishop is asked to undertake a consultation process within his diocese. This phase will last until August 2022.

Phase Two: This phase is termed the Continental phase. It will commence in September 2022, with the purpose of engaging the Instrumentum Laboris (working document) at the continental level. At the conclusion of their deliberations each continental grouping (e.g. Canada and U.S.A.) will draft a final document to be sent to the General Secretariat of the Synod in Rome by March 2023.

The Secretariat will then draft a second Instrumentum Laboris based on the responses received and, in turn, this will be used for the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in the fall of 2023.

Phase Three: This final phase of the Synodal journey will take place in October 2023, with the celebration of the Assembly of Bishops in Rome. The Synod sessions in Rome will last for one month followed by the publication of the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father on Synodality, which will include world-wide plans for implementation.

We are launching Phase One in our parish. This is an exciting time. Let's pray about our responses and when an opportunity is presented for us to participate let us gather eagerly to share our comments.

More information will be presented as time unfolds.

God Bless

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