



Synod  
2021  
2023

For a synodal Church  
communion | participation | mission

## Synodal Process for Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel

### Background

The word “synod” means to journey together. In this synodal process, everyone around the world is invited to listen to God’s word, celebrate the Eucharist, and reflect upon our experience as Church. For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission is Pope Francis’ call for the largest consultation of the human family in history, and it included all of us in Western Washington! Local parishes, ministries and laypeople hosted listening sessions to prayerfully read the signs of the times together and discern how the Holy Spirit is calling all of us, as the Body of Christ, to accomplish our mission here and now. All parishioners and those known to us were invited to journey together. We wanted to hear from everyone — especially people who have been marginalized or are often unheard.

Father Matthew said, “Your insights are meant to be used by leadership at all levels of the Church to develop paths for revitalizing ourselves as church, and for more effectively taking the Gospel message of Jesus to the ends of the earth and bringing his grace to all people.”

### Announcements

Advertising for the Synod listening sessions for both Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel was from the pulpit, parish bulletin, parish websites, fliers, email, youth groups, and word of mouth. We provided online and tabletop signups for the scheduled listening sessions.

### Synod Listening Session Schedule

Holy Disciples held three in person Synod listening sessions for members of both Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel on March 14, 19 and 21, 2022.

Our Lady of Good Counsel held one in person Synod listening sessions for members of both Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel on March 21, 2022.

Virtual Zoom Synod listening sessions included a rosary group on March 17, a Lenten small group on March 30, and both parishes on April 5, 2022.

Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel held in person Synod listening sessions for High School Youth Group on April 3 and Junior High Youth Group April 6, 2022.

### **Methods**

Three Synod Coordinators (two from Holy Disciples, Geri Haworth and Sheri Hodson and one from Our Lady of Good Counsel, Roger Andrascik) selected by Father Matthew O’Leary. They were trained by the Archdiocese of Seattle on the Synodal process beginning in November 2021. Access to training materials were provided and mock listening sessions were conducted for all parish or ministry Synod Coordinators. Opportunities to attend other parishes and online listening sessions were made available. Father Matthew decided to begin the Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel listening sessions in March 2022 and conclude by beginning of April 2022.

The Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel listening session format whether in person or virtually by Zoom involved participants gathering, and with the help a trained facilitator, sharing our lived experiences in the Church. A sample copy of a listening session agenda and prayed offered are attached. Father Matthew provided the following written statement:

Dear friends in Christ Jesus,

Thank you for accepting Pope Francis’ invitation to be part of the universal synod. This is a consultation of the entire Body of Christ—the Church throughout the world. Pope Francis is asking us to gather under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to answer the broad questions: what is God asking the Church to be and what is God asking the Church to do in our time?

The meeting format here involves participants gathering, and with the help a trained facilitator, sharing our lived experiences in the Church. Individual sharing will be recorded by a note taker and no names will be recorded. We are here to mostly listen to each other, and at this time, not to challenge or discuss what is shared by each participant.

Insights gathered from every synod group meeting will be submitted to our Archbishop, Paul Etienne, carefully reviewed, and then sent on to Pope Francis. Your insights are meant to be used by leadership at all levels of the Church to develop paths for revitalizing ourselves as church, and for more effectively taking the Gospel message of Jesus to the ends of the earth and bringing his grace to all people.

This is why it is essential for you to be heard—and why I am not attending these parish gatherings, so as not to distract, by my presence, from the task of your sharing and listening to each other as members of the Body of Christ. This is a unique opportunity to be heard. Thank you for making time to be part of this vital consultation.

Let us pray that Holy Spirit guides us to realize great things for the Kingdom of God.

Blessings of God's peace,

Rev. Matthew L. O'Leary  
Holy Disciples Catholic Church  
Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church

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Ground rules included:

- Be present
- Stick to the agenda
- Keep answers succinct
- No personal attacks
- Let everyone speak. All voices to be heard
- Always assume positive intent
- Above all – welcome the Holy Spirit to our discussion

The following questions asked were provided by the Archdiocese of Seattle:

**Our basic question is: What is the Holy Spirit saying to our Church today?**

How is this “journeying together” happening today in your local Church?

- What have been our past and present experiences of the local churches we have attended?
  - What joys were experienced?
  - What difficulties or obstacles were encountered?
- What is most meaningful about belonging to a faith community?
- What paths are opening up for Holy Disciples/OLGC? (i.e. new ideas for expanding our faith communities)

What steps does the Holy Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our “journeying together”?

- What frustrates me about the church (local and/or universal)?
- Who else do we need to reach out to, listen to, and learn from? Whose voices are not currently heard?
- If I could change one thing at HD/OLGC that I think would help us all better follow Christ, what would it be?
- If I could change one thing in the universal church that I think would help us all better follow Christ, what would it be?

Notetakers recorded individual sharing and no names were recorded. We attempted to mostly listen to each other and not to challenge or discuss what was shared by each participant.

**Follow-up Comments**

Participants could also drop off, mail, or email their Synod follow up comments if they could not attend to the parish office until April 10, 2022. See below handout.



### **Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel – Call for all Catholics to discuss the needs and the future of the Church**

Pope Francis wants to hear from the whole Church about what is happening in local parishes and Catholic communities. Along with the bishops, he would like to know what individuals think we should be doing to help make our parishes better. The way he has proposed doing this is a synodal process. Synod means “journeying together” and it involves listening to the Holy Spirit and to each other in order to discern the path we are called to walk together. The ability to imagine a different future for the Church depends largely on the decision to initiate processes of listening, dialogue, and community discernment, in which each and every person can participate and contribute. We know that many former Catholics and our own adult children may not be able to attend Synod sessions. They may feel they are on the margins of the Church or may no longer practice the faith. Everyone is invited to contribute to this process.

#### **Our basic question is: What is the Holy Spirit saying to our Church today?**

To answer this question, we would ask those who cannot attend our sessions to reflect on the following and provide us your thoughts in writing.

1. What gives meaning to your life?
2. What effect has the church had on your life? Good, bad, a little bit of both?
3. Do you see the Church being part of your life? What will it look like if you are part of it and what challenges will it face in the future?

You can drop off your response at either parish, mail them to Holy Disciples Catholic Church, 10425 187th St E, Puyallup, WA 98374, or email to [synod2022replies@gmail.com](mailto:synod2022replies@gmail.com). Your comments will remain anonymous as they are shared with those of our parishes and forwarded on to the Archdiocese. Please respond by April 10, 2022.

\*For additional information visit: <https://archseattle.org/about-the-archdiocese-of-seattle/archbishop-etienne/pastoralplanning/pastoral-plan/synod/>

The parish Synod Coordinators consulted with Tim Hunt, Executive Director, Planning & Mission Effectiveness, Archdiocese of Seattle, and Father Matthew regarding the final report. We decided that a single combined report for both Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel parishes would be submitted.

All Synod listening session responses were consolidated by question by the parish's Synod Coordinators. We reviewed comments and grouped them by frequency of responses. We were selective as to choosing participants comments due to space limitations by the Archdiocese of Seattle reporting form. The responses to five observation questions were entered into an on-line synthesis tool *Local Synod Consultation - Parish or Ministry Summary Observations* provided by the Archdiocese of Seattle. Refer to <https://archseattle.org/about-the-archdiocese-of-seattle/archbishop-etienne/pastoralplanning/pastoral-plan/synod/synod-listening-resources/> Contact information, description of our process, participants demographics (if provided), and methods were also submitted. The final report was due and submitted to Archbishop, Paul Etienne at the Chancery on May 6, 2022.

The Chancery will then compile, synthesize, and submit a report to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) by June 30, 2022. In accordance with synod guidelines, the final report will not exceed ten pages and will be publicly available.

Bishops from each diocese will share their learnings and develop regional reports for the Vatican from September 2022 to March 2023. In October 2023, the Vatican's General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops will focus on discussing the input and ideas from the people.

**Synod Participation for combined Holy Disciples and Our Lady of Good Counsel parishes.**

**Total people 143**

**Age Groups**

0-13	18
14-17	39
18-23	8
24-30s	4
40s-60s	30
65 and up	44

**Ethnic, Race, Cultural Groups**

African American/ Black	3
Caucasian/White	77
Chinese	0
Filipino	10
Hispanic/Latino	25
Japanese	0
Korean	0
Native American/American Indian/First Nation/ Alaskan Native	1
Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian	9
Vietnamese	1
Multi-Racial	6
Other/Unknown	10

**Gender**

Female	81
Male	62