

THE SYNOD ON SYNODALITY

BY BISHOP STEPHEN BERG



As you may know, Pope Francis has called a Synod of Bishops in Rome for October 2023, designated as the *Synod on Synodality*. The purpose of the synod is to remind the entire Church to walk together on a synodal journey, which involves collaboration at each ecclesial level in seeking and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit in proclaiming the mission of Jesus.

The process will explore:

- 1.) The experience of listening.
- 2.) Our willingness to be converted through listening.
- 3.) The goal of communion through listening and conversion.
- 4.) The importance of prayer in all that we do.

In the first phase of the papal synodal process, which will take place from October 2021 to April 2022, each local church has been asked to provide a format for participation by the people of God. The results are to be compiled for final discussion by an assembly of bishops from around the world in 2023.

In the Diocese of Pueblo, we welcome this invitation to enhance our culture of collaboration around the four principles in service to our mission. The purpose of all we do is embodied in our strategic plan at all levels: to proclaim the Gospel as missionary disciples of Jesus Christ. We are grateful to all those who have already participated in local listening sessions, conciliar consultations and pastoral team tours. We have already accomplished much of the research needed for the papal synod. Our participation in the preparation, outlined below, will now allow us to sharpen our focus in developing our diocesan goals. It will also provide hopeful material for spiritual reflection as we prepare for the three-year *Eucharistic Revival* to begin in July 2022 across the United States, as will be officially promulgated in the upcoming November plenary assembly of the USCCB.

A survey of five simple questions will soon be distributed across the diocese to offer a wide participation in the synodal process. Each question, however simple, is designed to provoke a thoughtful response and provide insight for the synod authorities, as well as

assisting us in the growth of our diocesan mission. This questionnaire will be released the week of October 18th to run through March 2022, facilitated through a third-party survey instrument. It can be answered anonymously if so desired. As you have interest in the future direction of the church and particularly our diocese, I ask you to prayerfully anticipate your participation in the questionnaire around your experiences of listening, conversion, communion, prayer and our response to the call to discipleship. Your answers will be important for the future of our Church.

On October 9th and 10th, our Holy Father will officially inaugurate the *Synod on Synodality* in a celebration of Mass at the Vatican. The Bishops of the United States will celebrate Mass in their dioceses on October 17th. Further information is forthcoming. I ask for your prayers for our church. May we truly seek and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit in proclaiming the mission of Jesus. Thank you for your participation and the many ways in which Our Lord is blessing us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Most Reverend Stephen J. Berg

Bishop of Pueblo

