

Synod of Bishops 2021

**“The Synod calls us to become experts
in the art of encounter.” – Pope Francis**

Pope Francis launched the process of the Synod of Bishops with a Mass on October 10, 2021 in St. Peter’s Basilica. The process of the synod continues until the event in October 2023.

The theme chosen by Pope Francis for the 2023 Synod of Bishops is:
Communion, Participation and Mission.

In his homily during the Mass, Pope Francis said that “celebrating a Synod means walking on the same road, walking together, looking at Jesus.”

With the initiation of the process for the Synod, Pope Francis names three verbs which are to characterize the Synod: ***encounter, listen and discern.***

In every ***encounter***, we are called to openness, courage and willingness to be challenged by the presence and the stories of others.

When we ***listen*** with our heart, people feel that they are being heard and not judged; they feel free to recount their own experiences and their spiritual journey.

As we encounter and listen, in dialogue with each other, we ***discern*** what God wants to say to us in this time and in the direction which he wants to lead us.

At this time, as followers of St. Francis, Pope Francis calls us to journey together as pilgrims in love with the Gospel and are open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.