

Prayer

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:1-2

The listening phase of the Synodal Path is a privileged time for the whole Church, the diocese, and for each local parish, to listen carefully and attentively to what 'the Spirit says to the churches' (Revelation 3:22). We are called to listen to the voice of the Lord, so that walking together in his way, we might call others to follow him in the way that leads to life and freedom. In order to deepen our walk with the Lord Jesus, united with Our Lady who always walks beside us, we need to listen with the ear of our hearts. This process begins with silence before the Lord, and continues with our own attentive listening as we talk together. There is a constant movement from silence to dialogue and back to silence so as to enable the truth of what the Lord is saying to us to emerge and become concrete. The Holy Father gives us a beautiful insight into what this listening phase means for the whole Church.

A dynamism of mutual listening, I want to underline this: a dynamism of mutual listening, conducted at all levels of the Church, involving all the people of God. The... Bishops must listen to each other, the priests must listen to each other, the religious must listen to each other, the laity must listen to each other. And then, everyone 'inter-listens'. Listen to yourself; talk and listen to each other. It's not about gathering opinions, no. This is not an investigation; but it is a question of listening to the Holy Spirit, as we find in the book of Revelation: 'Whoever has ears, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches' (2:7). Having ears, listening is the first commitment. It is about hearing the voice of God, grasping his presence, intercepting his passage and breath of life. It happened to the prophet Elijah to discover that God is always a God of surprises, even in the way he passes by and makes himself felt.

(Pope Francis message to the Diocese of Rome)

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At the heart of our prayer is the discernment of how best to announce the Gospel to the people we encounter. This discernment can be guided by the fundamental question given to us in the preparatory documents.

A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, ‘journeys together.’ How is this ‘journeying together’ happening today in your local Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our ‘journeying together’? (PD, 26)

The resources provided here are offered as a guide to the time of prayer you have together as you discern what the Lord is asking of your parish. The basic structure is the same for each option, but increases in length depending on the option you think best for your community. The resources provided here can be used both in person and online, depending on your needs.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

1-hour meeting

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, **Amen.**

Reading from Sacred Scripture

John 16:12-15

Jesus said 'I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.'

Silence

5-10 minutes

Prayer for the Upcoming Universal Synod (Adsumus, Sancte Spiritus)

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name. With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts; Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it. We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right. All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.

Hail, Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

Our Lady, Immaculate, Mother of the Church. **Pray for us.**
St Gregory the Great and St Augustine of Canterbury. **Pray for us.**
St Thomas of Canterbury. **Pray for us.**

2-hour meeting

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, **Amen.**

Reading from Sacred Scripture

John 7:37-44

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

On hearing his words, some of the people said, 'Surely this man is the Prophet.' Others said, 'He is the Messiah.' Still others asked, 'How can the Messiah come from Galilee? Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David's descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?' Thus the people were divided because of Jesus. Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.

Silence

10 -15 minutes

Prayer for the Upcoming Universal Synod (Adsumus, Sancte Spiritus)

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name. With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts; Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it. We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.

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Amen.**

Our Lady, Immaculate, Mother of the Church. Pray for us.

St Gregory the Great and St Augustine of Canterbury. Pray for us.

St Thomas of Canterbury. Pray for us.

Half day meeting

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, **Amen.**

Reading from Sacred Scripture

John 3:1-21

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.'

Jesus replied, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again'

'How can someone be born when they are old?' Nicodemus asked. 'Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!'

Jesus answered, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, "You must be born again." The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.'

'How can this be?' Nicodemus asked.

'You are Israel's teacher,' said Jesus, 'and do you not understand these things? Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have

seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.'

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

Silence

15 -20 minutes

Questions for use during the silent period / sharing in the group

- Jesus invites Nicodemus to see that he must be born again in baptism. As I think of my own baptism and my vocation as a baptised person, how do I understand my part, my definite service, in my parish? What do I understand our mission as a whole parish and diocese to be?
- Jesus is to be lifted up on the Cross, the source of life and salvation for all. Where are the places in our parish where the Cross of Christ needs to be raised? Is there an area where the Holy Spirit is inviting a new missionary effort? What would that effort look like?
- The Son of God came not to condemn but to give life. Are there people on the margins in our parish who are looking for a place of welcome in which to meet the

Lord Jesus. How do we respond to those who come seeking to enter on this new way of life? What have our experiences been of welcoming new people?

- Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light. Where does the Lord wish to bring his light into my own life, in our parish, in the diocese, in the Church?

Prayer for the Upcoming Universal Synod (Adsumus, Sancte Spiritus)

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Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right. All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.

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the Lord is with thee.

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and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
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Amen.

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The end of the day

The end of the day is an excellent opportunity to spend some time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, committing to the Lord all that he has revealed in the course of our day together.

Whole day meeting

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, **Amen.**

Start of the day

Lectio Divina

John 4:1-28

Jesus came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Will you give me a drink?' (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, 'You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?' (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.'

'Sir,' the woman said, 'you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?' Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.'

The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.' He told her, 'Go, call your husband and come back.' 'I have no husband,' she replied. Jesus said to her, 'You are right when

you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.'
'Sir,' the woman said, 'I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.'

'Woman,' Jesus replied, 'believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.'

The woman said, 'I know that Messiah' (called Christ) 'is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.' Then Jesus declared, *'I, the one speaking to you—I am he.'* Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, *'What do you want?'* or *'Why are you talking with her?'* Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, *'Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?'* They came out of the town and made their way toward him. Meanwhile his disciples urged him, *'Rabbi, eat something.'* But he said to them, *'I have food to eat that you know nothing about.'* Then his disciples said to each other, *'Could someone have brought him food?'*

'My food,' said Jesus, 'is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don't you have a saying, "It's still four months until harvest"? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying "One sows and another reaps" is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour.' Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, *'He told me everything I ever did.'* So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, *'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.'*

Questions for Lectio Divina

- The woman comes to the well in the heat of the day. She is an outcast because of her lifestyle. What do you notice about how Jesus interacts with her? In our own parish how would you describe the interactions with one another and with those who come seeking to meet the Lord?
- What is Jesus reaction to this woman's sin? Did we notice how he gently guides away from sin and into a new life? Notice how her lifestyle has made her unhappy. How does she change when Jesus reveals himself to her?
- Jesus helps the woman to identify what she is really seeking - Jesus himself. How can we help people to see that they are seeking the Lord? What areas of need do we see around us? What new opportunities are being revealed by the Lord?
- The woman becomes a disciple and evangelist because of her personal encounter with the Lord Jesus. How is the Lord inviting us to tell others about our own encounter with him? Personally, in the parish, in the diocese?

Prayer at the midpoint of the day

Angelus

The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary: **And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. **Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

Behold the handmaid of the Lord: **Be it done unto me according to Thy word.**

Hail Mary...

And the Word was made Flesh: **And dwelt among us.**

Hail Mary...

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, **that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.**

Let us pray:

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.



Silence

10-15 Minutes

Questions for silent meditation

- What major themes are we discerning at this midpoint in our discussion?
- Which voices are being heard and what voices are we yet to hear?
- What might the Lord be pointing out to us that surprises us?

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