

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I learn more about the Synod?

The Synod on Synodality was called by Pope Francis and information from the Vatican is available at <https://www.synod.va/en.html>. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has additional information on the Synod at <https://www.usccb.org/synod>. The Diocese of Saginaw has local information on the Synod available at saginaw.org/synod2023.

When will I get to be involved in the Synod process?

The consultation sessions for the Synod will take place from mid-January through early May in most of our parishes. Watch for local announcement from your parish on dates and times for the consultation meetings.

Why do we have to wait so long to get started with the parish consultation sessions?

The Vatican outlined a ten-step roadmap to complete the Diocesan Phase of the Synod. A key part of the process is to take time for discernment of the path, followed by planning, preparing the leaders, and then providing orientation of local coordinators. We are on track and the parishes will have three-and-a-half months to complete the consultation process. A complete timeline for the Diocesan Phase for the Diocese of Saginaw is available at our website (saginaw.org/synod2023).

How is this effort different from the Discipleship Maker Index (DMI) survey we already completed?

The Synod and the DMI are two separate but complimentary activities. The DMI was an effort by the Diocese of Saginaw to gather quantitative data for our parishes and the diocese. The Synod is an effort coming from the Vatican to gather qualitative information for parishes, the diocese, and the universal church. Together they give us a powerful set of information to help guide future decisions for our parishes and the diocese.

Will materials be made available to aid parishes in performing the consultations?

Yes, the Diocesan Synodal Team is working on training and a toolkit to help parishes with the consultation process. Training for volunteers is set to take place starting in January 2022.

How do I volunteer to help with the Synod?

You are encouraged to voice your interest to your local parish contact on your willingness and availability to help with the consultations. Alternately, the diocesan website (saginaw.org/synod2023)

has a volunteer capture form where we will collect your information and funnel to the appropriate parish contact.

How can I participate if my local parish does not offer face-to-face consultations sessions?

As parishes schedule consultation meetings, the diocesan website (saginaw.org/synod2023) will be updated with dates and times of the events for people to attend.

How do we get people who don't come to church to participate in the Synod?

The ideal way to gather feedback on “journeying together” is to personally invite people to participate. Additionally, the Diocese of Saginaw and local parishes will encourage attendance through various channels including websites, Flocknotes, social media, and bulletin announcements. For those who wish to be heard but will not attend a face-to-face session, an on-line survey option will be available in the future at the diocesan website (saginaw.org/synod2023).

How will the information collected be used?

The information from the consultations will be consolidated at the parish level and the local staff is highly encouraged to share this with parishioners and develop action plans based on the feedback. All the information collected at the diocesan level will be consolidated and a ten-page summary will be presented to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in August 2022. The USCCB will again consolidate information to be part of a Synod of Bishops at the Vatican 2023.