

## PART II: SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

In this part, participants are asked to keep in mind **THIS WEEK'S THEMES:**  
**'DISCERNING & DECIDING' and 'FORMING OURSELVES IN SYNODALITY'**

**DISCERNING AND DECIDING** In a synodal style we make decisions through discernment of what the Holy Spirit is saying through our whole community. What methods and processes do we use in decision-making? How can they be improved? How do we promote participation in decision-making within hierarchical structures? Do our decision-making methods help us to listen to the whole people of God? What is the relationship between consultation and decision-making, and how do we put these into practice? What tools and procedures do we use to promote transparency and accountability? How can we grow in communal spiritual discernment?

**FORMING OURSELVES IN SYNODALITY** Synodality entails receptivity to change, formation and on-going learning. How does our church community form people to be more capable of 'walking together', listening to one another, participating in mission, and engaging in dialogue? What formation is offered to foster discernment and the exercise of authority in a synodal way?

**STEP 1:** Everyone takes equal turns to share the fruit of his or her prayer, in relation to the reflection questions circulated beforehand. **There is no dialogue** in this round and all **participants simply listen deeply** to each person and attend to how the Holy Spirit is moving:

within oneself,  
within the person speaking,  
and in the group as a whole.

*In this step, please look at the two themes in turn, one at a time.*



**STEP 2:** A time of silence to note one's interior movements.

**STEP 3:** Some dialogue may now occur within the group with care taken that spiritual attentiveness be maintained. Here, each individual is asked to respond to what someone else has said in step 1, for instance by seeking further clarification, expressing agreement or expanding what the other person said.

**STEP 4:** A time of silence to assimilate what has been said.

**STEP 5:** Participants reflect on what seems to be resonating in the conversation and what moved them most deeply. New insights and even unresolved questions are also noted.

**STEP 6:** Spontaneous prayers of gratitude can conclude the conversation.

**END WITH THE OFFICIAL SYNOD PRAYER**

COMMUNION

PARTICIPATION

MISSION

## THE SYNOD 2021-2023

DIOCESE OF MOTHERWELL



### FOURTH MEETING

**'DISCERNING & DECIDING' and  
'FORMING OURSELVES IN SYNODALITY'**



## INTRODUCTION

The Synod poses the following fundamental question:

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)

*In responding to this question, we are invited to:*

**Recall our experiences:** What experiences of our local Church does this question call to mind?

**Re-read these experiences in greater depth:** What joys did they bring? What difficulties and obstacles have they encountered? What wounds did they reveal? What insights have they elicited?

**Gather the fruits to share:** Where in these experiences does the voice of the Holy Spirit resound? What is the Spirit asking of us? What are the points to be confirmed, the prospects for change, the steps to be taken? Where do we register a consensus? What paths are opening up for our local Church?

In order to respond to these questions, we shall have **FOUR MEETINGS**, each divided into **TWO PARTS**.



The **First Part** will be a **Lectio Divina**, a Sacred Reading of a Scripture text. The text chosen is the story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24.13-35. Sections of the text will be reflected upon over the four meetings. The purpose of the Lectio Divina is to create the sacred space and time of prayer and listening to what the Holy Spirit is saying. The Spirit will create the necessary environment for what follows.

The **Second Part** will be a **Spiritual Conversation**. This is the time when each participant is given the time to share the fruit of their prayer. It is also a time of silence when all participants listen deeply to the interior movement of the Holy Spirit within them. Dialogue and conversation also take place during which everyone is encouraged to share what moved them most deeply. The purpose of this part is to identify what resonated within the conversation and the recurring themes within the group.

### THIS WEEK'S THEMES:

**‘DISCERNING & DECIDING’ and ‘FORMING OURSELVES IN SYNODALITY’**

## PART I: LECTIO DIVINA

### Step 1: LECTIO

**Read the passage** - The passage is read twice by different people. The first time, just get a feel for the passage. When you read the passage a second time, note the word or phrase to which your attention is being drawn. It is God drawing your attention to this word or phrase. The Holy Spirit has a special message just for you in this moment.

### LUKE 24.34-48

*They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions,*

<sup>34</sup> *who said to them, 'The Lord has indeed risen and has appeared to Simon.'*

<sup>35</sup> *Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.*

<sup>36</sup> *They were still talking about all this when he himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!'*

<sup>37</sup> *In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost.*

<sup>38</sup> *But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts stirring in your hearts?'*

<sup>39</sup> *See by my hands and my feet that it is I myself. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.'*

<sup>40</sup> *And as he said this he showed them his hands and his feet.*

<sup>41</sup> *Their joy was so great that they still could not believe it, as they were dumbfounded; so he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?'*

<sup>42</sup> *And they offered him a piece of grilled fish,*

<sup>43</sup> *which he took and ate before their eyes.*

<sup>44</sup> *Then he told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, was destined to be fulfilled.'*

<sup>45</sup> *He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures,*

<sup>46</sup> *and he said to them, 'So it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,*

<sup>47</sup> *and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.*

<sup>48</sup> *You are witnesses to this.*

### Step 2: MEDITATIO

**Meditate on the word** or phrase that stood out to you. How is God speaking to you through this word or phrase? Is there an invitation? Is there a call? Does a memory surface? What image comes to mind? What feelings are evoked? Take your time and allow God to speak to you in the depths of your soul. Notice that God is speaking to you personally about your life right now.

### Step 3: ORATIO

**Respond to God** who has been speaking to you. What is your response? What is your prayer? Allow your own words to come from a place deep within where the Spirit dwells. (*Please indicate when you are ready to speak your prayer aloud to the other members of the table group*).

### Step 4: CONTEMPLATIO

**Still yourself** and rest in the loving embrace of your Maker. Words are never sufficient to express all that stirs within. Simply be present to the Sacred One. Savour the silence. Connect with the Presence deep in your soul. When distractions occur, return to your chosen word or phrase and repeat it to re-centre.

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**PAUSE FOR A BREAK**  
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