



Synod  
2021  
2023

For a synodal Church  
communion | participation | mission

*For the Listeners*



# A Toolkit for Parish Consultations

ARCHDIOCESE OF CALCUTTA



# A Toolkit for Parish Consultations

*This booklet is for listeners:*

- Parish Moderators/ Facilitators, The Parish Priest

*Can also be of use to:*

- Diocesan Coordinators

The opening line “Listen, O Israel” of the Shema does not simply mean to let the sound waves enter your ears. Instead, the word “listen” here means to allow the words to sink in, provide understanding, and generate a response. In other words, in Hebrew, “hearing” and “doing” are basically the same thing. Thus, Synod Facilitators and Coordinators do more than merely “listen.”

## **A Toolkit for Parish Consultations**

*Published by*

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for and on behalf of

Diocesan Synodal Team (DST)

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+Thomas D'Souza

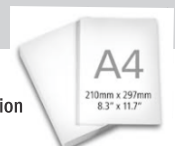
Archbishop of Calcutta

# Contents

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1. **Introduction**
2. **What is this toolkit designed for?**
3. **The Facilitator: A special role**
4. **Role of the Parish Priest**
5. **How Parish Consultations work**
  - a) Preparation/Groundwork
  - b) Listening Meetings
  - c) Collecting the interventions of Parish consultations
  - d) Going Forward – Parish PreSynodal Celebration
6. **Resources**
  - a) *Adsumus Sancte Spiritus* (See *Participant's Handbook*)
  - b) The Fundamental and Thematic Questions  
(See *Participant's Handbook*)
  - c) Ideas for Creatively Reflecting, Sharing and Involving
  - d) Sample Listening Meeting: Form and Conduct
  - e) Sample social post for inclusivity at the margins
  - f) *Vademecum* and Preparatory Document  
(Downloadable via QR Code)
7. **Addendum**
  - a) Parish PreSynodal Process Timeline:  
Checklist for Parish Priests
  - b) Template for Parish Synthesis (PreSynodal Document for submission to Diocese)
8. **Attachments** (to be photocopied for distribution)
  - a) Sharing cover page and record of participation
  - b) Participant's Handbook
    - Introduction
    - Synodality
    - Timeline: Universal Synod
    - Timeline: Diocesan Synod Process
    - Listening Meeting Timetable
    - Listening Meeting Ground Rules
    - *Adsumus Sancte Spiritus*
    - The Synodal Questions
    - Contact Information

Attachments section is printed in A4 Size  
to ensure easy photocopying for distribution  
for each Listening Group.



Through Synod 2021 2023 our Holy Father, Pope Francis, is inviting us to embark on a journey together to renew the Church. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, through listening and discernment, we are invited to enter into this synodal process. It allows us to open ourselves to the prompting of the Holy Spirit to lead our parish community towards the mission of Christ. Indeed, Pope Francis' vision is that the Church must become a missionary, which we see in his programmatic encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium*. This toolkit is prepared to assist you to organise effective consultations with diverse groups in the parish. The General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, rightly calls the diocesan phase as the listening phase, which will integrate the synodal process into the life of the local parish in creative ways that would promote communion, participation and orient us to the mission. This toolkit is designed to help foster authentic moments of encounter so that through open sharing of experiences, the local community can discover the synodal pathways best suited for the parish.

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Diocesan PreSynod 2021 2023, Archdiocese of Calcutta



## What is this toolkit designed for?

- Provides information on initiating and planning the Parish Consultative Process
- Provides resources to conduct effective listening sessions
- Provides templates to be used during listening sessions for **Parish Moderators/ Facilitators/ Parish Priests**

## The Facilitator: a Special Role

### Conducting the Listening Sessions

While each diocese is required to submit a report to the episcopal conference based on listening sessions held in the diocese, this report is secondary to the listening sessions where members of the local Church community can gather in order to pray, listen and dialogue together – and with others. If the exercise is to be successful in capturing the heart and soul of synodality, these parish level listening meetings – indeed the whole parish consultative process - has to be not just an exercise of collecting feedback, but a celebration of walking along; led by the Holy Spirit and never losing sight of our faith within the universal church. Facilitators/Moderators (and also the Parish Coordinators) are pivotal to the initiation of the Parish Consultations and indispensable at the listening sessions, where your orientation in all aspects of the Synod and engaging skills brings about meaningful involvement, and makes your role especially significant.

#### What you need as a Facilitator

- A training/orientation session on the broad aspects of the synod, provided by the Diocesan Synodal Team (DST) Coordinators
- Good communication skills and friendly personality
- The time and energy to commit to (often) multiple sessions/venues.
- A Toolkit (like this one) and its Attachments
- Copies of the Synod preparatory documents

## Role of the Parish Priest

The Pastor is at the heart of the PreSynodal process of his parish. Without his direction and involvement, the process will have poor outcomes, or fail completely in its goals. As a Parish Priest you give direction, with the Parish Contact Person(s), in a four stage timeline:

**1 Beginning the Parish PreSynodal Process:** Structural and Informational tasks

**2 Parish Participation: Reflecting, Sharing and Involving** the parish in the synod in various ways

**3 Listening Phase:** Along with the Parish Synodal Team coordinate the most important part of the PreSynodal activity

**4 Celebration:** Parish PreSynodal Celebration AKA, Parish MiniSynod, as the President.

Please locate *Parish PreSynodal Process Timeline: Checklist for Parish Priests* under the **Addendum** section for point-by-point description of your prime synodal responsibilities, arranged in timeline form.

## How Parish Consultations work

### *Preparation/Groundwork before a Parish Consultation*

Preparing a Parish for a Consultation should be done through “Parish Synodal Team” coordinators.

At the direction of the Parish Priest, assisted by the assigned DST Coordinator, a “Parish Synodal Team” should be set up to assist with:

- Visible signage of Synodal Celebration – posters, logo, theme, etc. - are put up in and around the church.
- Information through the pulpit, notice board or WhatsApp group, etc. of the Parish informing of, and inviting persons to, the Listening sessions.
- Synod 2021 2023 Resource material made available as handouts to parishioners, or at least information on where to get them. These can be existing PowerPoint presentations, Vatican documents for participation, Vademecum, etc. Or just directions to [www.archdioceseofcalcutta.in/synod2123](http://www.archdioceseofcalcutta.in/synod2123), which contains all these.
- Activities for reflecting, sharing, and generating interest in Synod, such as sessions on synodality, Prayer Groups, Artistic expression (especially for children and younger people), Gospel Sharing by SCC and other creative means, prior to the Listening sessions {See Resources: Ideas for Creatively Reflecting, Sharing and Involving} conducted/encouraged.
- Discovering and then planning batches/groups according to age, language, orientation, etc. Besides selecting participants, give people an opportunity to apply, too.
- Reach out to those who cannot physically attend through digital means. {See Resources: Sample social post for inclusivity at the margins}
- Identify and appoint Facilitators for each batch planned.
- Identify an ideal location to hold sessions for each diverse group
- Planning the dates and times for the Listening session batches. These can be single sessions (about 3 hours) or a series of meetings (about 1.5 hours) with the same participants. Each must be divided into smaller groups and assigned a Notetaker (from among the participants – can be done on spot).

### *The Listening Meetings*

- Once the dates and times for the Listening session batches have been fixed, they are communicated to the proposed participants/open to anyone in the parish. Each diverse category of persons should have their own listening meeting or at least, session/group. For instance,



Teenagers/ young people should meet together, those who have stopped coming to church can be in another group, etc. – this helps in the participants being more open and less fearful of judgement, even if non-verbal. The participants ponder and respond to the questions in these smaller groups, to ensure the greatest level of participation. {For a sample meeting please see **Resources: Sample Listening Meeting: Form and Conduct**}

- The main reflection questions should be relevant and brief. It is often better to have fewer questions which can be explored deeply, rather than have many questions that would be covered superficially. This Synod poses a fundamental question on a synodal Church journeying together, and ten thematic ones, further exploring personal experiences of the participants in relation to Church. {All are included for discussion in the *Participant's Handbook*}

## Collecting the interventions of a Parish Consultation

At the end of each batch Listening Meeting, the Facilitator collects the group Notetakers reporting sheets and attaches them together with the Sharing cover page and record of participation, as the top sheet. This is handed over to the pastor and parish synodal team for creating the Synthesis document, to be used at the Parish MiniSynod, and a copy may also be taken by the DST Coordinator working in the Parish, for sharing with the Diocesan Synodal Team (DST).

## Going Forward – Parish PreSynodal Celebration

Follow the *Parish PreSynodal Process Checklist for Parish Priests* (See **Addendum**) relating to Parish MiniSynod (Parish PreSynodal Celebration) or consult the DST Coordinator assigned to your parish for organisation recommendations. He/she may continue to assist the pastor and the local Parish Synodal Team in facilitating the Parish MiniSynod. There is also a detailed document available with minutiae of organising a MiniSynod, which can be requested from the Diocesan Contact Person I.



**1. *Adsumus Sancte Spiritus* (See Participant's Handbook)**

**2. The Fundamental and Thematic Questions (See Participant's Handbook)**

**3. Ideas for Creatively Reflecting, Sharing and Involving in the Synod Process**

Some of these tools are particularly suitable for children, youth, and people who prefer approaches that are simple and easy to relate to, and can be used to get feedback from these groups, without use of the Questions.

***Narrative approach:***

*Telling or writing one's own faith story and journey with the Church*  
One's life story. People can be invited to tell their story, their view of faith, the way they have sought to take their place in the Church. During the diocesan or national synthesis, care should be taken not to read these stories as simple testimonies, but to hear what paths they open up for the local churches.

*A text that drives exchanges.* We can invite a small group of people to write a joint text; then other groups of people react to this text and comment on it from their own daily lives. This way of doing things can be applied to hearing one another's life stories, which can be shared with groups of other people. All these words can also open the eyes of other Christians on the mission of the Church and its capacity to "reach everyone."

*Finding the right words.* Participants can be invited to say what the Church evokes in them, or to name the words that designate what it takes to "walk together with Jesus" (a possible translation of synodality), and then which words are opposed to "walking together"; they can then be invited to explain why they evoked this or that word. The participants can then choose which words are the most significant and the most apt to convey the group's message.

***Using images and artistic creation:***

*Communicating through images.* Presented with various images, people are invited to find those that best capture what walking together in the Church means to them. Participants can then share why they chose that particular image. On the basis of these exchanges, a joint text can be written.

*An individual or shared artistic creation.* People are invited to draw an image of the Church in which they walk together, and they are asked to comment on their drawing. People can also make an artistic creation together, as a way of visually representing the Church or their place in it. In any case, once the work has been created, participants are invited to share about what they have created; their comments can then be transmitted as well as their creative works.

*Writing together.* Participants are invited to write a story, a poem, a prayer, a psalm, or a song on the theme of “walking together with Jesus” or “walking together in the Church.” This piece of writing may be intended to update selected passages from the Gospels or the Acts of the Apostles. What they write can be passed on as it is. It can also be proclaimed during PreSynodal celebrations/Parish Mini-Synod (for example, if it is a song, it can become a dance for the pre-synodal celebration).

*Acting it out.* A group of participants can write a short play that expresses what it means to “walk together” in the Church, why it is important, why it is difficult, etc. This story can then be acted out and performed at a PreSynodal assembly.

### **Social approach:**

*Coffee Meet-ups.* Invite 3 or more persons who are a) *active in church*, b) *were active before the pandemic*, etc. or c) *Never been a community member* to grab a coffee, breakfast or whatever in a social setting. Preparation: Spend some time in prayer in the days leading up to the conversation reflecting on how you feel about it. Are you nervous or anxious about something? Why is that the case? It is important that we set aside ulterior motives (like, I’ll finally convince him that he’s wrong or she’ll see how genuinely invested I am in my faith because I’m doing this!). People can sense ulterior motives. We all experience them from time to time. The most important thing to do is to name them in prayer and set them aside. The simple goal of the conversation is to listen with genuine curiosity in order to understand their experience of the Church. Discussion: The key question to ask, as with the Synod in general, is: *As you think about your experience of the Catholic Church, what fills your heart and what breaks your heart?* You could begin by telling them a little about the Synod - the largest process of listening sessions in human history. Pope Francis wants no one to be left out. Finally, thank them for sharing their experience, and coffee, with you.

### **Scriptural approach:**

*Gospel sharing.* The Word of God inspires and enlightens our journey together, giving us food to share with one another on the way.



## 4. A sample Listening Meeting: Form and Conduct

### *Notes:*

- a) *This session is 3 hours long. However, it can be adapted into two or three sessions, when time is an issue. Conducted by a Facilitator.*
- b) *Provided there are enough rooms/spaces, multiple listening sessions can be held for different categories of individuals. For example, Youth, the Aged and the Unchurched could all meet simultaneously, each with their own Facilitator.*
- c) *Avoid mixing categories as much as possible. This usually leads to less than optimal sharing.*
- d) *Carefully select the meeting place. For example, those who left the church, may be uncomfortable coming in to church for a Session. If a neutral/more practical venue is possible, hold the session there.*

### ***Equipment and Materials for Half-Day Listening Session***

- A room with enough chairs for all participants expected
- Desk and Chair for Facilitator and any Parish officials
- Participant's Guide for the number of participants
- Pens and/or pencils
- Bible open to Acts 2:14-21
- Water and refreshments, as required
- Notetaker's Cover Page and writing sheets
- This Tool Kit (for various resources)

### ***Proposed Time table***

10:00	Welcome and Introduction
10:05	Opening Prayer for Parish Listening Session
10:08	Participant Ground Rules
10:12	Overview of Synod Process - Reading
10:25	Small Groups: The Fundamental Question
11:00	Break
11:20	Small Groups: The Ten Thematic Questions
13:00	Closing

### ***Process:***

#### *Welcome and Introduction*

Send the **Record of Participation** sheet/s around, making sure that all have filled in their basic information. This sheet/sheets will function as the **Sharing Cover Page**, as well – the top cover of the sheaf of noted interventions. (*Before meeting begins – keep SCP sheet available for latecomers*)

# Sample Meeting

# 09

At the appointed start time, Facilitator introduces the session, welcoming participants; introduces her/his self to the participants. Be sure to have the pastor and any other parish clergy, religious or parish staff introduce themselves, too. (5 minutes)

*Opening Prayer:* Have the pastor or facilitator lead the opening prayer. {see *Adsumus Sancte Spiritus* in Participant's Handbook} (3 minutes)

*Participant Ground Rules:* Following the opening prayer, say - (3 minutes)

The Synod process involves active listening. Listening is at the heart of our conversation today. In your Participant's Guide you will find the Listening Session Participant Ground Rules. Remember to give your full attention to each other and listening to the voice of God in your hearts. Listen for understanding by taking to heart what other people share. As we share, in smaller groups, individuals will speak, one at a time, without interruption, while others listen. Everyone will have a chance to speak and if you like, you may choose to pass.

*Overview of Synod Process* (15 minutes) Say-

As you arrived today each person received a Participant's Handbook, open this participant guide to the outline for today's gathering. Throughout this process, the guide, which includes an Introduction and an explanation of What is Synodality, serves as an aid in facilitating our small group discussion.

Give participants a few minutes to read silently, then say -

Pope Francis has called the entire People of God to journey together! We gather to listen, dialogue, and pray so that we can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. The "goal" of this journeying together is not to create a new vision or pastoral plan with objectives. Rather, the goal of our journeying together is to be present with one another, to listen and learn with each other, and to grow closer to the Lord and His Church.

In this gathering, as we listen, dialogue, and pray, we take part in a practice that dates back to the earliest Church. Throughout the history of the Church, the Church has gathered in Synod to open our hearts to the voice of the Holy Spirit. Foundational to religious life is the gathering of the brothers and sisters in prayer, listening to the voices of members, and discernment.

Announce the breaking into Small Groups, each group should be no larger than 6 - 8 participants.

Every small group will have a note taker; take a moment to select a member of the group to serve as "note taker" for your group discussion, and make

# Sample Meeting

# 10

sure she/he has adequate sheets of plain A4 paper, and a good writing instrument.

*Small Groups:* The Fundamental Question (60 minutes)

Say:

As we begin our listening session, let's remember: Our Synod journey takes place in the midst of where the Church ordinarily lives and works in the day to day lives of the faithful. The Synodal process invites each one of us - the People of God to recall that we journey together. Moreover, in that journey of faith, we are called to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Invite a parishioner to volunteer to read Acts 2:14–21 then say:

As we listen to the Word of God, let us reflect on how the Scripture calls all to share and to proclaim the Good News, to open our hearts to listen to the faith journey of our brothers and sisters, to pray as a community and open our hearts to hear voice of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture is read.

*A reading from Acts 2: 14-21*

Then Peter stood up with the eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them ... "These people are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 'It will come to pass in the last days,' God says 'that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams' Indeed, upon my servants and my handmaids I will pour out a portion of my spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy. And, I will work wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below: blood, fire, and a cloud of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the coming of the great and splendid day of the Lord, and it shall be that everyone shall be saved who calls on the name of the Lord.'

**The Word of the Lord**

R: *Thanks be to God.*

Now, instruct the small groups to:

Find the Fundamental Question in your Participant's Handbook. Before we begin sharing with one another, I want to remind everyone that group members will take turns sharing their reflections, one at a time, without interruption, while other group members listen. The note taker will record reflections. Please keep your answers to 1-2 minutes per person.

During this time of sharing, people may tend to express strongly what they think and how they feel about the Questions. Remember, Christian kindness and gentleness should be extended to everyone who speaks, no matter what they say. Interventions reflect personal perspectives and convictions about stewardship - not another's. No two people are alike.

# Other Resources

# 11

There will usually be some differences of opinion about a question. Please decline debate - we are here to listen... not judge.

After the Fundamental Question is discussed, there is a break.

*Small Group:* The Thematic Questions (100 minutes)

Then the Thematic questions are taken up, and feedback noted in a similar manner as the Fundamental Questions. Say –

You may now take up the Questions on the 10 themes...giving approximately 10 minutes per theme. Please do not feel you need to complete every theme or question... If there is rich sharing on a particular question, please be free to give the time needed to it.

*Closing:*

I would like to thank parishioners for sharing and listening. Let us pray together The Lord's prayer.

(You may substitute a suitable prayer)

At the conclusion of prayer, say:

Note takers should bring their documentation to deposit here, in the front of the room and thank you all who participated in the parish listening session. The recorded comments from the groups will be compiled into a parish report, a document to be presented at our upcoming Parish MiniSynod celebration, from where pastoral priorities for the parish will be considered. Finally, the local reports will contribute to the creation of our diocesan synthesis report, sent to the DST. Parish delegates will later be appointed to attend an archdiocesan PreSynod also along with clergy and religious representatives. Thank you and God Bless.

## ***5. Sample social post for inclusivity at the margins***

*You are called to participate in the upcoming Synod of Bishops! In preparation for the international Synod of Bishops in 2023, Pope Francis wants your input on the topic of "For a Synodal Church, Communion, Participation, and Mission." People of all ages, Catholics and non-Catholics, are invited to give their feedback on the Church's mission. Register on (Phone no. xxxxx) for participating in the parish listening sessions, but if you can't make it, share your opinion online at [www.archdioceseofcalcutta.in/Synod2123](http://www.archdioceseofcalcutta.in/Synod2123)*

## **6. Vademecum & Preparatory Document(QR Code)**



Use your mobile device or QR Code app to scan the codes.

◀ Download Vademecum  
Download Preparatory Document ▶





## a) Parish PreSynodal Process Timeline: Checklist for Parish Priests

*Each of these requirements should be ideally fulfilled, in order. Check the **Resources** section of this booklet for creative ideas. If assistance on any point is required, please reach out to the Diocesan Synodal Contact Persons or the DST Coordinator assigned to your parish.*

*Tick all that apply.*

### 1. Beginning the Parish PreSynodal Process

#### • Structural:

- Has the DST provided a Diocesan Coordinator to liaison with your parish, and assist you in the process?
- Have you appointed Parish Contact Person(s) and a Parish Synodal Team to organise the 1. Structural/Information needs 2. Parish Participation 3. Listening 4. Celebration (MiniSynod) phases?
- Have you and your team got a copy of "A Toolkit for Parish Consultations"?

#### • Informational:

- Are you publicising the process on the Notice Board?
- Is the Synod logo available prominently in your parish?
- Is Synod being discussed in parish social media/pulpit?
- Are there banners and posters?

### 2. Parish Participation: Reflecting, Sharing and Involving in the Synod Process:

- Activities have been organised to enthuse parishioners and involve them in the process?
- Have involved at least 50% of registered parishioners?
- The core stakeholders (Eg. Women, Youth, Elderly) have been involved?

### 3. Listening Phase. Along with the Parish Synodal Team, have you:

- Identified groups and categories?
- Planned dates, times, numbers and venues?
- Included at least one peripheral group (Divorcees, Left church)?
- Included another denomination/religion group?
- Made photocopies of the all the **Attachments (Participants Handbook and Cover Sheets)** in sufficient numbers (per listening group/ participant)?
- Appointed facilitators for each Listening Session?

## 4. Celebration: Parish PreSynodal Celebration AKA, Parish MiniSynod

- Established a Team to produce a sectionised working document (synthesis) from the inputs of the Listening phase?
- Formed a secretariat to transcribe (digital) inputs for synthesising the Working Document, during the Synthesis process, and, later the synod record (General body meeting and discussion groups) and final Parish PreSynodal Document?
- Announced a venue, date and time for holding the MiniSynod?
- Appointed a team for the i) Liturgical and ii) hospitality requirements of the day?
- Appointed joint reporting secretaries to record the interventions at the General Body meetings?
- Prepared a Directory of Parish PreSynod members from your parishioners after consultation and discernment, and informed such members of their obligations?
- Established the methodology of discussion at the MiniSynod, and outcomes for the parish? (*Suggested guidelines available with DST*)
- As President of the Parish MiniSynod (PMS) ready to convene and host the same?
- Plan to sending final Synthesis to the Diocese Synodal Team ratified at the Parish MiniSynod, for creating diocesan synthesis, in the format of TEMPLATE FOR PARISH SYNTHESIS (Pre-Synodal Document) provided in this Addendum.
- Sharing the Final Parish Synthesis with all Parishioners and also highlighting the recommended pastoral priorities for the parish discovered through the MiniSynod, in a letter or announcement, post conclusion of the same.

*(The announcement can be done once the Parish Priest has considered the recommended pastoral priorities thoroughly.)*

### Contacts

Local Contact person(s) Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Diocesan Contact person, Call or WhatsApp +91 90380 94004

For errors or clarifications regarding this booklet,  
email [publish@archdioceseofcalcutta.in](mailto:publish@archdioceseofcalcutta.in)

## **b) Template for Parish Synthesis (*PreSynodal Document format for submission to Diocese*)**

*The Parish Final Synthesis should be a written document of up to 10 pages, which conveys the main fruits of the discernment of the whole parish, summarising the reports of the parish consultations. It contains the responses to the Preparatory Document (Lineamenta) at the Listening Groups. Other materials such as images, videos, stories, artistic expressions, and personal testimonies can be submitted as attachments (appendices), insofar as they help to bring out the experience and input of participants.*

### **GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING PARISH SYNTHESIS**

1. The parish synthesis should reflect the diversity of views and opinions expressed by the parishioners.
2. While preparing your synthesis pay particular attention to the lived experiences of participants, both positive and negative.
3. The synthesis should be faithful to the people's voices and to whatever emerged from their discernment and dialogue, rather than a series of generalised or doctrinally correct statements.
4. Points of view that are contrary to one another need not be omitted but can be acknowledged and stated as such. Views should not be excluded simply because they were expressed by a small minority of participants. Indeed, sometimes the perspective of what we could call the “minority report” can be a prophetic witness to what God wants to say to the Church.

### **MAJOR CONTENTS OF THE SYNTHESIS**

#### *Part I – Process of Consultation*

- a. What were the main steps taken in the parish?
- b. What were the main questions posed?
- c. What was done to engage as many participants as possible and to reach out to the peripheries?
- d. Approximately what proportion of people in the diocese participated in one way or other?
- e. Were there any groups of people whose participation was especially noteworthy?
- f. Were there specific groups of people who did not participate for any reason?

## *Part II – Experience from Consultation*

- a. What was most significant about the whole experience of the consultation?
- b. What were the high points and low points, or the consolations and desolations?
- c. What dispositions, attitudes, or feelings were notable?
- d. What tensions or disagreements emerged from the listening process?
- e. What topics or issues gave rise to diverse points of view?
- f. Overall, what were the fruits that the Holy Spirit has brought about through this experience?

## *Part III – Significant and Resonating Insights and New Perspectives Learned*

- a. Among the feedback from the local meetings, what was particularly significant, surprising or unexpected?
- b. What new perspectives or new horizons opened up?
- c. Which particular stories or real-life experiences were especially moving and why?
- d. Which points of view seem to have strong resonance?
- e. Which points of view were mentioned less but are interesting and noteworthy?

## *Part IV – Current Experience of Synodality in the Parish*

- a. Overall, what has the Holy Spirit inspired the community to see regarding the current reality of synodality in the parish, including the present lights and shadows?
- b. What did participants have to say about areas where the Church is in need of healing and conversion, in its spiritual life, culture, attitudes, structures, pastoral practices, relationships, and missionary outreach?

## *Part V – Pastoral Suggestions for a Synodal Church*

- a. In what ways is the Holy Spirit inviting the parish to grow in synodality?
- b. What dreams, desires, and aspirations for the church were expressed by participants?
- c. Based on their feedback, what steps does the parish feel called to take in becoming more synodal?
- d. What are the next steps forward for our parish on the path of synodality, in communion with the whole Church?

## *Part VI–Inculturation (Cultural Learning)*

a. What cultural image(s) articulate(s) our experience of synodality?

### **GUIDELINES FOR THE DRAFTING TEAM**

1. It is recommended that the synthesis be prepared by a small team of persons led by a Relator rather than a large assembly.

2. This drafting team will carry out its task in collaboration with the Parish Priest and the Parish Contact Person(s)/Team.

3. They should read all the submissions in a spirit of prayer. The team meetings themselves should be synodal and spiritually discerning, listening to the living voice of the People of God across the diocese under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

4. As much as possible, everyone should feel that his or her voice has been represented in the synthesis. As a model of transparency, the members of the drafting team as well as the process of synthesizing the feedback can be made known to all. It is strongly recommended that the synthesis be made public once it has been drafted, as a touchstone for the journey of the parish along the path of synodality.

5. Opportunities can be given to the parishioners to review and respond to the content of the Parish Synthesis before it is officially sent to the Diocesan Contact Persons.

The parish synthesis will be used as a working document (*instrumentum laboris*) for the Parish PreSynod/MiniSynod. The Parish MiniSynod is the culmination of the parish consultations. This gathering will provide the opportunity for diverse members of the parish to come together to pray, to reflect on their experience of the synodal process, to listen to the feedback presented in the synthesis and to discern the parish's path of synodality. The outcome of the parish MiniSynod should be included as part of the parish synthesis.

### **Attachments that could accompany the Final Parish Synthesis Document (PSD)**

*When officially sending to the Diocesan Contact Persons, the following, from activity during the PreSynodal Process can accompany the PSD:*

1. Stories of Faith shared
2. Expressions in Art Forms
3. Images and Videos





**THE PAGES DESCRIBED BELOW ARE ATTACHED SEPARATELY IN A4 SIZE; AND ARE NOT BOUND WITH THIS BOOKLET. You will need to photocopy them in the quantity required by your groups.**

## 1. Sharing Cover Page and Record of Participation

Every Listening batch meeting should have a copy of this sheet so that everyone attending can be properly registered. No contact information is recorded. This is intentional.

**Make one copy for every meeting** and keep this sheet(s) attached on top of the sheaf of reporting sheets recording the interventions of the meeting, to give it provenance.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CALCUTTA  
SYNOD 2021 2023 | PARISH SHARING COVER PAGE AND RECORD OF PARTICIPATION

PARISH \_\_\_\_\_ BATCH \_\_\_\_\_

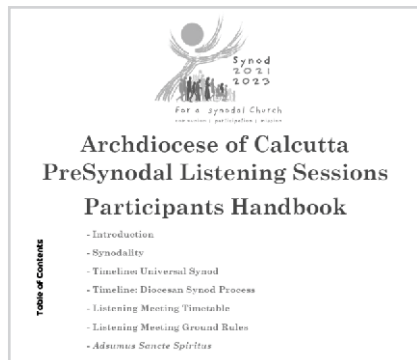
Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / 2021

S. No.	Name of Member	Signature
1.	<b>FACILITATOR:</b>	
2.	<b>REPORTER:</b>	
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Sample image of SCP/RP Sheet ▶

## 2. Participants Handbook

To be photocopied and provided to every participant to enable them to quickly and easily understand the purpose of the Listening Groups, and have the necessary resources at hand to participate effectively.



Sample image of Participants Handbook ▶





Perhaps the most important, and for some also the most daunting, aspect of Synod 2021 2023 are the Parish Consultations in the form of Listening Groups.

Convening and organising the process can be challenging and the amount of varied approaches makes it all the more confusing - and even seemingly complicated.

This Toolkit by the Archdiocese of Calcutta compiles the best resources and practical, simple methodology that renders the process as it was intended by Pope Francis - to be a simple and honest sharing among equals.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CALCUTTA

## A Toolkit for Parish Consultations

# For the Listeners



Scan code for a digital version of this book