



Simla Chandigarh Diocese

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"For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission" – 2

[That they may all be one.....(John 17,21)]

Dear Brothers and sisters,

We have been through rough times and very recently a turbulent 18 months from December 2019. I am reminded of a line I read somewhere: the pandemic didn't change the world, it only revealed who is really in charge. After a harrowing time 'Thanks be to God', yes we are now seeing our interactions and activities increasing in schools, workplaces,; our streets are again busier and our churches are becoming fuller. I say again, how grateful I am to all of you, who have helped to keep our churches open and our parish communities functioning over these past months: you have reached out with food, rations, medicines and finance to many and have kept in contact with the elderly and vulnerable, and so many others. I thank each and every one of you, most sincerely. Now that there is greater normality in daily life, we have a unique opportunity to refresh and maybe reshape these patterns of life in the Church, families, neighbourhoods, workplaces...

Indeed, Pope Francis is asking us to do so. In starting what can be described as a 'Church-wide listening process', he is inviting us to listen again to each other, hearing experiences of faith with all its joys and disappointments, and to find new ways of strengthening each other. In this Synodal process, 'Listening' is the key relevant disposition of this synod and thus, we are listening to the Holy Spirit. We also listen to the voice of the Holy Father Pope Francis who is exhorting all people of God of the Diocese to walk and journey together towards the common Mission of the Synod/Church. Hence, the following groups will help in this synodal process in the Diocese:

1. I have appointed Frs. Manoj Prabu (Director, Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 9384274711) & Wilfred Masih (Director, Small Christian Communities, 8699975509) as Coordinators and contact persons to be in touch with Fr. Francis Gonsalves S.J., the Executive Director for the Synodal Process in India, appointed by the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI) .

2. Diocesan Core Team- The core team in the Diocese, who will plan, administer and facilitate the Synodal process in the Diocese are Mr. Dominic Joseph, Mr. Sameer Lakra, Mrs. Liz Philip, Mrs. Rosy Massy, Srs. Arti CFMSS, Archana CMC, Mary DHM, Frs. Manoj, Wilfred, Dominic, Ambrose, Angelus, Kejus, Robert, Anil, Sahayaraj, Powlish, Roque SFX, Pankaj IMS, Rajesh IMS and Fr. Regi SDB.

3. Deanery Core Team is the Resource Team for the Deanery and the Dean will form this team comprising Laity, Priests and Religious to help in the parishes.

4. Parish Priests will form a Parish Resource Team who will directly work in the parishes having interaction with different pious associations, groups and the parishioners.

5. The Synod has three phases and they are: Diocesan, Continental and Universal in which the Consultation and discernment play a vital role.



6. All the meetings have to be recorded with the particulars of the persons present along with their phone numbers, emails, address etc. The responses of the findings and proposals from the Parishes should reach Fr. Manoj by the second week of Lent 2022.

7. Questions will be sent to the Deans and it will be discussed and the responses of the finding and proposals need to be recorded and sent to Frs. Manoj Prabu, the Coordinator of the Synodal Process.

8. This Synodal journey is an important pilgrimage with the universal church and hence, I request everyone to actively participate in this venture.

This Synod is an invitation and an exhortation to all the Laity, Priests and Religious to walk with the universal church in listening, communion with each other and participating in the Mission of the Church.

Thanking you and with God's blessings.

Yours sincerely in Christ

+Ignatius Mascarenhas
Bishop of Simla Chandigarh



PS: A gentle reminder of the forthcoming meeting for the Priests, Religious and few laity will be on 20.10.2021 at 10.00 am at St. Anne's Convent School, Sector 32, Chandigarh followed by lunch.