

# PARTICIPANTS GUIDE

## for Non-Parish Sessions

**Synod 2021-2023 in the Diocese of London**

*Together on the Road*  
*Conversations for a Listening Church*  
*in the Diocese of London*



DIOCESE OF  
LONDON

**Thank you** for agreeing to participate in our Synod Listening Sessions. In this intentional process of mutual listening for the Catholic Church, Pope Francis wants it to rediscover the joy of being the People of God who journey together.

## **We are all called to Listen, to be Open, to Share with one another**

We are all called to listen humbly and to speak courageously; to listen in a manner that invites others also to share authentically with us. This is an opportunity to hear things from other points of view; a different perspective. It will provide a framework to refine the vision of the Catholic Church and its mission in the world.

After the session, if you have additional thoughts to add, a link to a web page will be provided where you will be able to submit additional thoughts, ideas and reflections.

**During the listening session you will be given the opportunity to:**

- Share your experiences and hopes for the Church
- Listen to the answers of other participants
- Respond to what you hear

We invite you to prepare some thoughts on the below reflection questions ahead of the listening session.

## **Session Overview**

**The session will follow the below format or similar**

- Welcome and Introductions
- Reflection
- Personal Reflection and Sharing
- **First Round of Reflection Questions** and Sharing
  1. “What have been your experiences with the Catholic Church?
    - a. What joy did these experiences bring?
    - b. What difficulties and obstacles have you encountered?”
- **Second Round of Reflection Questions** and Sharing
  2. What are your hopes and dreams with for the Catholic Church?
- Summary of Main Themes from each Table
- Closing Comments, Thanks, and Next Steps

After the session, we will be sharing the main themes as they emerged from the listening session with the Diocese of London without identifying any particular individual. Your reflections are important and will be part of our discernment of the future of the Church in the Diocese of London and beyond.

Following the listening session an email will be sent to participants containing a link to an “Exit Card”, which will provide an opportunity for further reflection and sharing. Paper copies will also be available after the listening session.

## Guiding Questions for our Listening Sessions

“The mission of the Church requires the entire People of God to be on a journey together, with each member playing his or her crucial role, united with each other.” (Vademecum 1.2)

**With this in mind, we will consider these questions:**

1. What have been your experiences with the Catholic Church in your community?
  - a. What joys did these experiences bring?
  - b. What difficulties and obstacles have you encountered?
2. What are your hopes and dreams with for the Catholic Church?

**The following can be prayerfully used as a starting point or guide.**

There is so much that we can receive from one another and offer to others TOGETHER as people of faith to build bridges of fraternity, compassion, and solidarity. Three pathways are open before us:

**ENCOUNTER ONE ANOTHER:** Walking together starts with getting to know each other. Finding those ways in which we can encounter one another and open ourselves to one another.

**LISTEN TO EACH OTHER:** Taking the time to listen to one another to receive something good, beautiful and true from one another. Listening to each other shows that we care and are willing to welcome the other as a gift from God.

**SERVE TOGETHER:** Joint initiatives that care for those in need that puts what we believe into practice in a way that speaks to everyone and puts us all on common ground. Responding to the needs of our fellow human beings with concrete acts of service is a powerful magnet that draws us together.

- Is there something good, true, and/or beautiful that you have learned or experienced in any dealings you have had with the Catholic Church
- Is there somethings you would like to see changed or practiced by the Church?
- How do we develop an atmosphere in which we meet as companions on the same journey?
- How can we take the next steps together, working with each other, walking with other?