



Episcopal Letter on Synodality

A further step on the path to Synodality

When the Holy Spirit speaks

Dear brothers and sisters,

The Synod on Synodality has not only paved the way for a new understanding of the Church in its processes, but it has also introduced a method of listening, consultation, and discernment that we wish to share in our diocese as we move forward on the path toward a missionary Church.

To start a spiritual process that I very much wish to experience with you, I invite you during this Marian Octave of 2026, to entrust the work of our Diocesan Church to the Virgin Mary. In the coming weeks, I invite you to revisit the Final Document (FD)¹ of the Synod, to read or reread it individually, or even in groups, to discover the challenges of synodality for the Church of Christ here in Luxembourg.

I would also like to remind you that this phase of implementing synodality should not be seen as an additional task, but as a process that allows us to reexamine both our “being” and our “doing” as a Church, so that we may move forward in a new way. To this end, I invite you to discover *Conversation in the Spirit* to listen to the Word of God and to one another in an atmosphere of trust where “*No one is called to command; all are called to serve; no one should impose their ideas; we must all listen to one another; no one is excluded; we are all called to participate; no one holds the absolute truth; we must all seek it together in humility.*”²

Toward dynamic communities where the Holy Spirit is at work

To support this third phase of the Synod, I have established a diocesan synodal team which, in collaboration with other consultative groups such as the Diocesan Pastoral Council, is responsible for supporting the implementation of synodality.

¹ FINAL SYNOD DOCUMENT (FD), *Toward a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission*, July 2025

² POPE LEON XIV, *HOMILY* at the Jubilee of Synodal Teams and Participatory Bodies, October 2025

From the start of the 2025/2026 pastoral year, I have desired that members of the diocesan consultative groups, such as the Diocesan Councils (Episcopal Council, Presbyteral Council, Diocesan Pastoral Council, Council of Deans, Seminary Council, Youth Council) participate in a specific introduction to *Conversation in the Spirit*, which allows them to experience it in a group in order to integrate it into their pastoral work.

Aware that *Conversation in the Spirit* is not a panacea or a miracle solution, it is an aid to help us listen to the Holy Spirit and live a discernment that considers the realities of our own lives.

Conversation in the Spirit: A key element of Synodality

To engage in this diocesan spiritual process, it is important that all the baptized realize that they are involved and seize the opportunity to participate. To encourage movement and communication between all, the *Conversation in the Spirit* proposed by the Universal Church can be a major help. So, as a first step, do not hesitate to try it out for yourself or to ask for help or even assistance from the diocesan synodal team. Contact: synode-esprit@cathol.lu

How to practice *Conversation in the Spirit*?

- This process usually begins with a prayer to the Holy Spirit, which may be a song. Participants gather around the Word of God. A facilitator or moderator oversees the process. At the beginning, the Word of God is proclaimed aloud to the group.
- Next, participants take time for personal prayer to meditate in silence on a question prepared and shared in advance, related to the biblical text. At the end of this time of personal prayer, each person discerns what would be good to share with the others.
- After this time of personal prayer, participants gather in small groups for sharing. The locations for sharing are arranged in advance, as is the grouping of participants. The facilitator/moderator keeps track of the allocated time and reminds every one of the principles of active listening.
- During the first round, each person shares a gift from their prayer. The speaker uses “I” statements and speaks only once. The others listen. The facilitator ensures that no discussion begins and keeps an eye on the clock. After the first round, the participants observe a moment of silence before beginning the second round.
- The second round then begins, during which everyone tries to resonate with what has just been said, perhaps highlighting an aspect, sharing a new insight, or asking a question, but always remaining in a listening mode, without directly commenting on what the other person has just said. This stage concludes with a spontaneous prayer.
- Then everyone meets again in the plenary session, where participants continue to listen to one another to reach a consensus through discernment. At the end, the plenary moderator invites the participants to write down the main points of the sharing, and the *Conversation in the Spirit* may conclude with a moment of celebration.

Based on experiences elsewhere, this methodology is particularly well-suited for addressing major issues as a group, engaging in discernment, or resolving tensions within a team or council (e.g., launching a project, implementing significant changes to the parish structure, launching a catechetical program, or deconsecrating a chapel or church).

Other Challenges in the Final Document

- Encourage the spirituality of synodality (FD nos. 43–46).
- Strengthen decision-making processes (FD nos. 81–86).
- Promote greater synodality at the decision-making level (FD nos. 93–94).
- Promote a culture of dialogue in transparency (FD nos. 95–102).
- Encourage participatory processes (FD nos. 103–106).
- Prepare an ecclesial assembly (FD no. 108).
- Promote and institutionalize new ministries and charisms according to pastoral needs (FD No. 60).
- Develop Christian initiation in a synodal spirit and make proposals for formation in a synodal spirit (FD No. 117).

A process of conversion³

It is important to me to encourage you as we begin this third stage of synodality, especially in the days following the pastoral visits we have recently undertaken in the various deaneries. And I want to emphasize that it is only through trust that we can move toward a living Church, a Church under construction where everyone commits themselves in accordance with their baptism.

When it comes to the future of the Church, no one has all the answers, but we can all seek and move forward together. I also wish to recall that the process we have begun is one of conversion (conversion of relationships, processes, and bonds), in which we seek to integrate the cultural and linguistic differences that make up our Church, so that we may become a more synodal Church that builds bridges and encourages dialogue among all its co-responsible members⁴.

Let us entrust the journey of synodality to Mary, the Consoler of the Afflicted, so that she may accompany us on the paths of the Gospel, all of us as missionary disciples.

With my gratitude for your involvement and my episcopal blessing



+ Jean-Claude Cardinal Hollerich
Archbishop of Luxembourg

Luxembourg, 2 May 2026, Solemnity of the Consoler of the Afflicted

³ FD n°140-151

⁴ FD n° 36