

## Responding to DCS 106

# For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission



# Question #1

“After having read and prayed with the DCS, which **intuitions** resonate most strongly with the **lived experiences and realities** of the Church in your continent? Which experiences are **new, or illuminating** to you?”



## Question #2

“After having read and prayed with the DCS, what substantial **tensions or divergences** emerge as particularly important in your continent’s perspective? Consequently, what are the **questions or issues** that should be addressed and considered in the next steps of the process?”



## Question #3

“Looking at what emerges from the previous two questions, what are the **priorities, recurring themes** and **calls to action** that can be shared with other local Churches around the world and discussed during the First Session of the Synodal Assembly in October 2023?”





# Discernment Process

Each local Church will thus have the opportunity to **listen to the voice of the other Churches**, gathered in the DCS, and to **respond to it** from its own experience.



# Discernment Process

With the involvement of its synodal team, each Episcopal Conference has the task of **collecting and synthesizing** in the form most appropriate to its own context the reflections around the three questions coming from the individual Dioceses.



# Discernment Process

The reflection and discernment of each Episcopal Conference will then be **shared** within the Continental Assembly, according to the modalities identified by the Continental Task Force.



# Spiritual Conversation

In particular, its three phases should be emphasized: the taking of the floor by each participant, the resonance of **listening to others**, and the **discernment of the fruits** by the group.





# Spiritual Conversation

Participants form **small groups** of about 6-7 persons from diverse backgrounds. This method takes about at least an hour and comprises **three rounds**.



# Spiritual Conversation

In the **first round**, everyone takes equal turns to **share** the fruit of his or her prayer, in relation to the reflection questions circulated beforehand. There is **no discussion** 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. This is followed by a **time of silence** to note one's interior movements



# Spiritual Conversation

In the **second round**, participants **share what struck them most** in the first round and what moved them during the time of silence. **Some dialogue** can also occur, and the same spiritual attentiveness is maintained. Once again this is followed by a **time of silence**.



# Spiritual Conversation

Finally in the **third round** 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. Spontaneous **prayers of gratitude** can conclude the conversation. Usually each small group will have a facilitator and note-taker.





# Methodological Guidelines

It will be important to ensure the participation in the Continental Assemblies of **bishops, priests, deacons, lay men and women, consecrated men and women**, as well as **people capable of expressing** the views of those on the margins.



# Deadline

Kindly request your diocese synod contact person to send in the reflections by **15 December 2022** to me, not more than 10 pages maximum. It can be 3 or 4 or 5 pages too.



# QUOTE FOR TODAY

“Enlarge the space of your tent, spread out your tent cloths unsparingly, lengthen your ropes and make firm your pegs” (Is 54:2).

This tent is a space of communion, a place of participation, and a foundation for mission.



# QUOTE FOR TODAY

“The Church-home does not have doors that close, but a perimeter that continually widens” (EC Italy).

“Those who feel at home in the Church feel the absence of those who don’t” (EC Ireland).





# Question #1

## Lived Experiences:

- Great desires / enthusiasm to get involved
- Great love for the church
- Joy of belonging and walking together
- Fear of expressing themselves freely
- Lack or weak involvement of priest in some area
- Fewer men/women feel a vocation; shortage of priests and volunteers
- Greater transparency

- Fractured into self-identities
- Members do not feel listened to, supported and appreciated
- Most excluded group are the lonely elderly, drug addicts, people with disabilities
- Growing secularization, individualism and indifference to the religion
- The rich and the educated are listened to more than others





# Question #1

## New/illuminating Experiences:

- Strong urgency to acknowledge the horror and damage done
- Enlarge the space of your tent (clothes, ropes, pegs)
- The Church-home does not have doors that close, but a perimeter that continually widens
- Church moving and stretching out to include all but still need to be based on unchanging teaching

- Radical inclusion, shared belonging, and deep hospitality
- Recognize others as subjects
- Integration of local culture into the liturgy
- Need to involve people with adequate professional competence
- A spirituality of “we”
- Prayer and silence cannot remain extraneous – prayer foster joy of life and a purpose of community
- Make the liturgical celebration more alive and participatory



## Question #2

### Important tensions or divergences:

- Democracy
- Modernization
- Lose our sense of the whole
- Concern for environmental justice
- Closer communion between churches of different rites, sharing of eucharist, common actions

- Real dialogues with other faith communities
- Pluralism of positions
- Decentralization of local cultural practices
- Ridding the church of clericalism
- Female diaconate, priestly ordination of women
- Celebration of Pre-conciliar Mass



## Question #2

### Questions/issues to be addressed:

- Access to sacraments for those who remarry but are daily Mass goers
- How to get leaders and parishioners interested to learn more about their faith and to take up responsibilities and leadership roles, especially the younger members of the Church?
- How to get everyone to think widely, to be creative in finding solutions?

- How to get the young ones to consider missionary work?





## Question #3

### **The priorities, recurring themes and calls to action:**

- Responsibility of all to listen to each other, include everyone, participate and walk together
- Cooperation should become one of the “unwritten laws” of the Church culture
- Need to build real/authentic relationships, make Christ present through our actions, peace building
- Seek and promote more inter-cultural approach to problems for the common good

