

NOTE: The SCC Model is seen in many ways. This is the text that was read on a teleprompter for a video in English to introduce the “A Time to Talk and Listen: Lent 2022 Synod Listening Sessions” sponsored by the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers that were aired online on 15 March 2022 and 24 March 2022. There were “Small Breakout Rooms” during these Zoom gatherings.

Your Voice Counts in This Synod

By Joseph G. Healey, MM

Welcome from Maryknoll, New York, [USA]. You are welcome to join an event that is happening right now in the Catholic Church called a “Synod” or a listening session. And yes, your voice counts in this synod. Pope Francis himself personally invites you to actively participate.

“Synod” is a mysterious word to many people. Let’s break it down. “Synod” is from Greek word meaning “assembly.” In the Catholic Church today it refers to a series of meetings of bishops that have been extended to all the People of God (including laywomen and laymen). Pope Francis describes it a "walking together, a journeying together." Everyone participates – young and old, women and men, lay people, priests, Sisters, Brothers, Bishops. Everyone has a voice. The theme of these meetings is “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission.” The purpose is to listen to peoples’ concerns, questions and recommendations for changes and then to renew and reinvigorate the Catholic Church around the world.

How does it work? During this Lenten season in this month of March 2022 you are invited to participate in a one and a half hour online gathering on Zoom called a “A Time to Talk and Listen: Lent 2022 Synod Listening Session” [with “Small Breakout Rooms”]. You will have the opportunity to share your life experiences with others. The process is bottom up, not top down. Some questions may be: How is this "journeying together"/"walking together" happening in your Local Church (could pertain locally in your parish or diocese or community) or to your experience in Maryknoll-related events. What stories or experiences come to mind? What joys, difficulties, or obstacles have you encountered in journeying together/walking together? What wounds or insights did they reveal? How is authority exercised within our church: parish, Maryknoll, or otherwise? How do we listen to the social and cultural contexts in which we live? Where in these experiences does the voice of the Holy Spirit resound? What might the Spirit be asking of us?

We know many changes are occurring in the Catholic Church and in the world. For example, from the viewpoint of youth and young adults a shift is going on from a Parish-based Church to a Social Media-based Church and to a rich and highly developed Social Justice-oriented Church that is often called the Catholic Church’s best kept secret. Many social communities have problems with the Institutional Catholic Church and its rules. Yet many people are spiritual seekers. There's a hunger for genuine communion. Not just communication, but genuine communion. Many people who identify as not religious actually are not in churches because they find God elsewhere: in nature, in social activism, in joining people who are fighting

for justice, in what could be called less overtly religious spiritualities like mindfulness. No matter where you find yourself, we want to hear from you.

These listening sessions can be a opportunity to understand better how we are all missionary disciples following the vision of Pope Francis who says, “Dream big! And dream together.”

We will gather together a summary of these listening sessions (everything is anonymous by the way) and send the results directly to Rome as part of the Synodal Process. So yes, your voice counts.

Welcome.

For the 5:19 minute video go to: <https://mission.maryknoll.us/en/listeningsessions>

The link to the video on Google:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FnRkkR9_YAqOnvoc834_TyVGISSV7u7S/view?usp=sharing

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