

**Pope Francis invites us to embrace listening and dialogue
through the Synod:
“To involve everyone, without excluding anyone”**

- [The Pope Video](#) for the month of September is a call to pray for the Synod as the **Ordinary General Assembly** takes place this month, in conjunction with **World Mission Day**.
- The synodal journey, **Pope Francis** remarks, is based on prayer and discernment. This synodal dimension is closely linked to the missionary vocation of the Church, for “mission is at the heart of the Church.”
- The **Pope** prays that the Church might allow herself “to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the world’s peripheries,” reaching out to everyone, “without excluding anyone.”
- The video will be projected during the programme that will precede the **Ecumenical Prayer Vigil in Saint Peter’s Square** on Saturday, 30 September.

(Vatican City, 29 September 2023) - [The Pope Video](#) for October, an initiative of the [Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network](#) is about to be released. Its message is focused on the [Synod on Synodality](#), a process that began in 2021 and will continue through 2024. The First Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly will take place from the 4th to the 29th of October 2023. “This is a journey we are on, like the disciples of Emmaus,” the **Pope** explains, “listening to the Lord who always comes to meet us.” In addition, during this month, the Church celebrates the **97th World Mission Day**, a celebration that fits into the synodal dynamic: “Mission is at the heart of the Church. And even more when a Church is in Synod. This synodal dynamic alone carries its missionary vocation forward,” **Pope Francis** also says in the video.

Listening and discernment in an ongoing journey

The message for this month’s video – which received the support and collaboration of the [The Pontifical Mission Societies USA](#) and on the [Synod on Synodality](#) – is an invitation to place ourselves before the Lord in an attitude of **listening and dialogue**. The concept of the Church as “on the way,” and its missionary vocation is represented in the choice of images put together as a road movie: through an automobile window, we see places and people from different countries – from the Vatican to Cambodia, passing through Africa, the Middle East, North America – capturing scenes from daily



life. That car represents the Church; its gas, the “power of the Holy Spirit,” which, in the words of Pope Francis, must lead the Church “towards the world’s peripheries.”

Letting herself be guided by the **Holy Spirit** requires listening together. For this reason, the Pope also clarifies that in this Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod, “nothing ends here. Rather, we are continuing an **ecclesial journey** here,” so as to reap the fruits of mutual listening between brothers and sisters, everyone together at the service of **Christ’s mission**. **Pope Francis** uses the example of the disciples on the way to Emmaus and asks us to be like them, “listening to the Lord who always comes to meet us.”

What the Synod on Synodality is

On 10 October 2021, Pope Francis convoked the **Synod on Synodality** to treat the theme, “**For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission.**” The **Synod of Bishops** is a consultative body that asks bishops from all over the world to participate in the governance of the Church, advising the Pope on matters that concern the universal Church. The word “synod” comes from Greek and expresses the idea of “walking together.”

Expected to last three years (October 2021-October 2024), the **Synod on Synodality** has gone through different stages of listening and discernment. Pope Francis wants the entire Church to reflect on *synodality*: that the entire People of God – bishops, priests, men and women religious, lay men and women, adults and young people – participate in a conversation regarding whether and how we are walking together.

On 4 October, the First Session of the **XVI Ordinary General Assembly** will begin. In this meeting, bishops and other participants are gathering to reflect on the fruit of the previous listening process. In this Synod, there will be two such Assemblies held one year apart – from the 4th to the 29th of October 2023, and in October of 2024.

The First Session of the Ordinary General Assembly also coincides with the **97th World Mission Day**. In this regard, Monsignor Kieran Harrington, National Director of the [The Pontifical Mission Societies USA](#), comments: "Pope Francis, in echoing the spirit of St. Francis Xavier, emphasizes the Church's journey to the margins of society. As he reorganizes the Church's endeavors to prioritize the marginalized and impoverished, he reminds us of Christ's ministry centered around sharing the Good News with the overlooked and underserved. This is the primary task of The Pontifical Mission Societies at a universal level: 120 national offices work together in support of thousands of missionaries who bring the message of the Gospel to all. As we reflect on the Pope's



prayer intention this month, we are called to adopt a lifestyle of listening and dialogue, moving towards the peripheries, guided by the Holy Spirit.”

Openness to mission

Father Frédéric Fornos S.J., International Director of the **Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network**, comments regarding this important moment the Church is living: “In this third phase of the Synod, Pope Francis is inviting us to pray that ‘listening and dialogue’ be the ‘style of life at every level’ of the Church, for this is a grace. Only in this way can we listen to the Holy Spirit and allow ourselves to be guided by him, which requires prayer and discernment. ‘Allowing herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit,’ he says later, presupposes listening to one another. ‘It is not the result of strategies and programming, but of mutual listening between brothers and sisters.’ It is the Spirit of the Lord who opens new paths to us. It is he who helps to recognize Christ’s mission today and leads us toward the world’s peripheries: ‘to reach out to everyone, to seek everyone, to welcome everyone, to involve everyone, without excluding anyone.’”

The Pope Video is possible thanks to the generous contributions of many people. You can donate by following [this link](#).

Where can you watch the video?

- [Official website of The Pope Video](#)
- [YouTube channel of The Pope Video](#)
- [Facebook page of The Pope Video](#)
- [The Pope Video on Twitter](#)
- [The Pope Video on Instagram](#)
- [The Pope on Twitter @Pontifex](#)
- [The Pope on Instagram @Franciscus](#)

About The Pope Video

The Pope Video is an official global initiative with the purpose of disseminating the Holy Father’s monthly prayer intentions. It is carried out by the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer). **Since 2016, The Pope Video has had more than 210 million views across all the Vatican’s social networks, and is translated into more than 23 languages, receiving press coverage in 114 countries.** The videos are produced and created by The Pope Video Prayer Network team, coordinated by Andrea Sarubbi, and distributed by La Machi Communication for Good Causes. The project is sponsored by [Vatican Media](#). More information: [The Pope Video](#).

About the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network

The Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network is a Vatican foundation, with the mission of mobilizing Catholics through prayer and action in response to the challenges facing humanity and the mission of the Church. These challenges are presented in the form of prayer intentions entrusted by the Pope to the entire Church. The foundation’s mission is inscribed in the dynamic of the Heart of Jesus, a mission of compassion for the world. Founded in 1844 as the Apostleship of Prayer, it is present in 89 countries, and is made up of more than 22 million Catholics. It includes a youth branch, the Eucharistic Youth Movement (EYM). In December 2020, the Pope



THE POPE VIDEO
Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network



constituted this pontifical work as a Vatican Foundation and approved its new statutes. Its international director is Fr. Frédéric Fornos, SJ. For more information, visit: <https://www.popesprayer.va>.

About the Synod on Synodality

The Synod on Synodality (2021-2024), whose theme is “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission,” The aim of this synodal process is to provide an opportunity for the entire People of God to discern together how to move forward on the path towards being a more synodal Church in the long-term. Synodality denotes the particular style that qualifies the life and mission of the Church, expressing her nature as the People of God journeying together and gathering in assembly, summoned by the Lord Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel. Synodality ought to be expressed in the Church’s ordinary way of living and working.

About The Pontifical Mission Societies USA

The Pontifical Mission Societies USA are part of a worldwide network at the service of the Pope that supports the proclamation of the Gospel, the building of the Church, and the work and witness of mission priests, religious Sisters and Brothers, and lay pastoral leaders. These missionaries provide food, education, and medical care to the most vulnerable communities in 1,150 mission territories. The Pontifical Mission Societies USA are at the service of the Church and offer every baptized person the opportunity to live their faith by sharing it with others and experiencing its universal dimension. Prayer, sacrifice, and charity are concrete modalities offered by The Pontifical Mission Societies USA, under the guidance of the Dicastery for Evangelization, to live a missionary and universal faith. For more information, please go to: www.onefamilyinmission.org.

PRESS CONTACT

press@thepopevideo.org

+34 633 32 33 29

+39 06 69 868 383

The Pontifical Mission Societies USA

Ines San Martin

isanmartin@missio.org

+1 212-563-8706