



For the Synod

OCTOBER

“Let us pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a style of life at every level, allowing herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the world’s peripheries”



PRAYER INTENTION REFLECTION

MESSAGE FOR THE 56th WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS¹²

Francis

24 January 2022

Listening to one another in the Church

In the Church, too, there is a great need to listen to and to hear one another. It is the most precious and life-giving gift we can offer each other. “Christians have forgotten that the ministry of listening has been committed to them by him who is himself the great listener and whose work they should share. We should listen with the ears of God that we may speak the word of God” [4]. Thus, the Protestant theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer reminds us that the first service we owe to others in communion consists in listening to them. Whoever does not know how to listen to his brother or sister will soon no longer be able to listen to God either.[5]

The most important task in pastoral activity is the “apostolate of the ear” – to listen before speaking, as the Apostle James exhorts: “Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak” (1:19). Freely giving some of our own time to listen to people is the first act of charity.

A synodal process has just been launched. Let us pray that it will be a great opportunity to listen to one another. Communion, in fact, is not the result of strategies and programmes, but is built in mutual listening between brothers and sisters. As in a choir, unity does not require uniformity, monotony, but the plurality and variety of voices, polyphony. At the same time, each voice in the choir sings while listening to the other voices and in

¹² See full message:

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/communications/documents/20220124-messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html>

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relation to the harmony of the whole. This harmony is conceived by the composer, but its realization depends on the symphony of each and every voice.

With the awareness that we participate in a communion that precedes and includes us, we can rediscover a symphonic Church, in which each person is able to sing with his or her own voice, welcoming the voices of others as a gift to manifest the harmony of the whole that the Holy Spirit composes.

➤ **October 2022 - Synod of Bishops**

August 2021

<https://thepopevideo.org/august-church-on-the-way/>

October 2019

<https://thepopevideo.org/missionary-spring-in-the-church/>