

Faith

October 25, 2023



Communiqué #04

Catholic and Living It!

FOR: Chairpersons of Faith at All Levels (new structure) and Chairpersons of Spiritual Development at All Levels (old structure)
THROUGH: Presidents and Secretaries at All Levels
CC: National Executive (for information)
National Life Member Liaison
FROM: Rolande Chernichan, National Chairperson of Faith

We live in historical times! Members accepted Pope Francis' 2021 invitation to participate in the synodal process, which he felt was necessary for the church. In an address marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Synod of Bishops, Pope Francis said, "the world in which we live, and which we are called to love and serve, even with its contradictions, demands that the Church strengthen cooperation in all areas of her mission. It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium." Pope Francis appointed more than 450 participants, including dozens of religious men and women and laypeople worldwide, to attend the first general assembly of the Synod on Synodality convened October 4-29, 2023. Noteworthy is that more than 50 women participated as voting members of the synod. Currently, delegates are in the final days of discussions and discernments, with a letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to the people of God expected to be released on October 28th. Pope Francis has extended the general assembly, with a second session to convene in October 2024. Chairpersons of faith are encouraged to consult the [Vatican News website](#) for future reports about the synod and to communicate information about it to members at general meetings or through the council newsletter.

The *Constitution & Bylaws* instructs that, "Under the guidance of the spiritual advisor, in cooperation with the chairperson of faith, the spiritual program shall express the religious renewal of the people of God as envisioned by documents of Vatican II." One of the responsibilities entrusted to chairpersons of faith is to encourage the study of Catholic teachings. Pope Francis has invited the faithful to begin to prepare for Jubilee 2025 by taking time to study and reflect on the four constitutions of Vatican II and the meaning of these documents for the life of the church today. Starting November 7th, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishop's Office for Evangelization and Catechesis provides an opportunity to participate in a series of webinars on the Four Constitutions of Vatican II noted on the reverse:

- *Sacrosanctum Concilium* with Msgr. Murray Kroetsch, PH, VG, Tuesday, November 7th from 12:00-1:30 p.m. CST.
- *Dei Verbum* with Most Rev. Yvan Mathieu, SM, Tuesday, November 14th from 12:00-1:30 p.m. CST.
- *Gaudium et Spes* with Sr. Donna Geernaert, SC, Tuesday, November 21st from 12:00-1:30 p.m. CST.
- *Lumen Gentium* with Dr. Catherine Clifford, Tuesday, November 28th from 12:00-1:30 p.m. CST.

Chairpersons of faith are urged to inform members about this opportunity for faith enrichment and to encourage members to [register](#) as soon as possible. All webinar sessions will be recorded and packaged with a reflection guide for later release. Registrants will also be notified when session recordings will be made available.

The final two months of the calendar year require parish councils to complete annual report surveys. For some, it is also a time for conducting nominations and elections for a new executive. A council's November meeting is an occasion to participate in one of the spiritual works of mercy by praying for the living and the dead. We remember not only deceased loved ones, members and spiritual advisors whose names are entered in the *Book of Life*, but also those who fought and died in wars. Does your council have the opportunity to partner and pray with a Military Ordinariate base council and acknowledge this special sisterhood of members?

A council's December meeting or Advent gathering is an occasion to honour Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, who appeared to a humble native peasant, Juan Diego, in Mexico in 1531 and whose feast is celebrated December 12th. Every year since 2002, the church in Canada marks the National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples on December 12th. This initiative has been coordinated, promoted and celebrated by the Canadian Catholic Indigenous Council and with the approval of Canadian bishops. In solidarity with Indigenous peoples, chairpersons of faith at all levels are encouraged to include in the spiritual program of their December general meeting or special Advent gathering, [A Prayer to St. Juan Diego](#).

Pope Francis' vision for a synodal church calls for communion, participation and mission. Members' faith journey continues, and though the national theme changes in 2024, may we always remember to be *Catholic and Living It!*



Rolande Chernichan
National Chairperson of Faith