

## **REPORT ON SYNOD ON SYNODALITY**

Based on the zoom meeting of the vicariate and some parish coordinators last Feb 22, here are some observations and recommendations:

### **A. Observations**

1. Synod is way of being together or journeying or accompanying one another as a church. Let us all remember that our many of our active parishioners are used to attend and participate in many parish meetings – ministries, faith communities, religious groups, pastoral teams, etc. The challenge is to make our meetings more synodal – imbued with listening and prayerful discernment. The greater challenge though is to reach out to the unchurched or the peripheries of the parish. As much as possible, a majority, if not all, of our parishioners, should undergo the synodal process.
2. The overwhelming support of the parish priests to the process is commendable – presence, facilitating gatherings, providing them snacks, expounding the themes or topics for sharing, and even suggesting or putting out guide questions for the participants to understand.
3. There are few parishes who have not started yet – no parish coordinator yet and no activity in line with the consultation process has been conducted. But vicariate coordinators have already been chosen and identified. The vicariate coordinator with the vicariate team is willing to help each parish. In most parishes, a team of facilitators have already been formed. The ongoing task is for the Spiritual Conversion to be done in all parishes and then to reach out to the barangays and the peripheries and to other sectors.
4. To reach out to the barangays, parishes should take advantage of the Lenten barrio recollections and confessions (to conduct the synod consultations in the barangays, while the priest is hearing confessions).
5. Formal spiritual conversations have been conducted especially among the different parish ministries and groups; but hybrid (using zoom or social media platforms), and informal consultations are also recommended and, in fact, have been done among some sectoral groups.
6. Important is the role of the facilitator or moderator and the recorder or secretary who will record the sharing. Does one have to share in each of the ten concerns? Not necessarily. It is from the data gathered in the sharings conducted in the parishes that the diocesan report will be based on.
7. All data will remain in the parish. The data gathered definitely give a profile of the parish which the parish can make use of in her pastoral programs. It is good to be reminded again that the parish synodal consultations should end by the month of April. The month of May will be

for consolidation of the data from the parishes. The diocese is expected to submit the diocesan report to the CBCP by June 3.

8. The diocesan report will be taken from the parish report. Will a copy of the parish report be submitted to the chancery? Maybe. But more importantly the drafting team will also come together in synodality to make the report. Those who will take part in this will come from the different vicariates. How will this be done and who will compose the drafting team? This is part of the process of discernment.

## **B. Recommendations**

1. Vicars Forane are encouraged to follow-up and know the status of the synodal process in each parish and mission station within the vicariate.

2. We may make use of the Lenten Message of the Holy Father. For the spiritual conversation, we can use the biblical texts found in Pope Francis' message for Lent 2022, specifically Gal 6:7-10 (or 1-10).

3. Let us encourage parishes to share their best practices. Please be open to the assistance of our lay vicariate and parish coordinators. They are inspired and spirited. In fact, many of them give their time and even make sacrifices just to conduct the orientation seminars.

3. For the priests, we suggest that the priests in the each vicariate should also have their own synodal process groupings; this is similar to the consultation which is being done in our seminaries and other houses of the religious. Our voices and concerns may be left out in the final report.