



EPARCHY  
OF ST. MARON  
CANADA

Bishop's Office

**Orientation Homily Text**  
**His Excellency Paul-Marwan Tabet**  
**Ordinary of the Eparchy of Saint Maron - Canada**  
**To the Clergy and Laity**  
**At the opening of the Synod procession 2023**

**Sunday, October 17, 2021**

***“For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission”***

**Reverend Monsignors and Fathers,  
Dear Faithful of the Eparchy,**

May the peace of our Lord be with you.

His Holiness Pope Francis has called for a general assembly of the Synod of Bishops entitled: **“For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission”**, to be held in Rome in October 2023. Through this synodal path, His Holiness wants a broader participation of the People of God in the decision-making process that concerns the whole Church and everyone in the Church, with a dynamism of mutual listening, which takes place at all levels of the Church and includes the entire People of God. It is not just about gathering opinions, but about listening to the Holy Spirit, hearing the voice of God, and understanding His presence and its effectiveness in our lives.

Practically speaking, Pope Francis invites the entire Church to question a crucial topic of her life and mission: by walking and meditating together on the path that has been accomplished, the Church will be able to learn from what will be tested and what paths can help her to live in communion, to achieve participation and openness to mission. In fact, “walking together” (which is the original meaning of the word “synod”) is what most fulfills and reveals the nature of the Church as a pilgrim and missionary people of God.

**What steps does the Holy Spirit invite us to take in order to grow as a synodal Church?**

- **Recalling** how the Spirit has guided the Church's journey through history. Today, He calls us to be, **together**, witnesses of God's love;
- **Living** a **participative** and inclusive ecclesial process that offers everyone - especially those who for various reasons find themselves on the margins - the opportunity to express themselves and to be heard in order to contribute to the edification of the People of God;
- **Recognizing and appreciating** the wealth and the various gifts and charisms that the Spirit liberally bestows for the good of the community and the benefit of the entire human family;


- **Exploring** participatory ways of exercising responsibility in the proclamation of the Gospel and in the effort to build a more beautiful and habitable world;
- **Examining** how responsibility and power are lived in the Church as well as the structures by which they are managed, bringing to light and trying to convert prejudices and distorted practices that are not rooted in the Gospel;
- **Accrediting** the Christian community as a credible subject and reliable partner in paths of social dialogue, healing, reconciliation, inclusion and participation, reconstruction of democracy, promotion of fraternity and social friendship;
- **Regenerating** relationships among members of Christian communities as well as between communities and other social groups, e.g., communities of believers of other denominations and religions, civil society organizations, popular movements, etc.;
- **Fostering** the **appreciation** and **appropriation** of the fruits of recent synodal experiences on the universal, regional, national, and local levels.

Beloved,

With the whole Church, our Eparchy is committed with all its components to participating in the procession of the Synod. Therefore, I encourage you to take this synodal process seriously. Listen to the Holy Spirit by listening to each other. I invite you all to accompany this synodal journey with individual and collective prayer, and to participate effectively in this procession by following the recommendations and directives of your parishioners, and by providing the appointed pastoral coordinator with your experiences and opinions by answering the questions asked in the preparatory document that you will receive successively.

Thanking you for your willingness to activate this synodal procession, I wish you continued health and activity.

With my blessings and prayers,

  
+ Paul-Marwan TABET  
Bishop