



SYNOD COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

Communicating about the Synod is a monumental task, involving each member of our family – that is, the Archdiocese of Winnipeg – including our 88 parishes and missions, the religious communities, the educational institutions, the many groups and organizations, our partners in mission, and the 155,000 Catholics of southwestern Manitoba.

We all have a role to play. All efforts are appreciated, no matter how small. There is a place for “official” communications, but our efforts cannot be limited to that. Each person comprising the People of God has a right to speak, and a right to be heard.

Pope Francis reminds us that communication calls us to closeness, and that it goes two ways. We share and we listen. Both parts are needed for effective communication. Communicating about the Synod is not just a matter of speaking “from a podium”. We should also work hard to cultivate spaces for authentic listening.

Ponder the image of “rowing a boat”. If we are uncoordinated, we get nowhere. If our energies are spent in working together, we become effective, and we get to our destination with joy. So it goes with our communications efforts about the Synod.

OUTLINE OF RESPONSIBILITIES – SYNOD COMMUNICATIONS

Archdiocese of Winnipeg Communication Services Office

Official communications regarding the Synod Implementation will be coordinated through the Archdiocesan Communication Services Office (CSO). The CSO is responsible for informing the People of God about the institutional aspects of the Synod implementation process. The CSO is also responsible for ensuring that feedback from the People of God reaches the appropriate Archdiocesan offices/personnel. The CSO will oversee and produce communications materials to assist parishes/organizations in their own communications efforts (e.g. key messages, posters, social media graphics, etc.).

The CSO will:

- Provide a “Talking Points” document for each phase of *Synod Implementation*.
- Provide an avenue on the Archdiocesan website where the People of God can share their thoughts, and/or questions, regarding the implementation of the Synod. They will have an option to leave their name and contact information, or offer their views anonymously.
- Organize and maintain all Synod-related resources on the Archdiocesan website.
- Create and distribute social media graphics that parishes and individuals can use to further their own communications efforts.

Archdiocese of Winnipeg Synod Implementation Coordinator

The Synod Implementation Coordinator (SIC) is the “point person” for all matters pertaining to Synod Implementation. The SIC develops and compiles resources that parishes can use to further their implementation efforts. In coordination with the Communication Services Office, these resources are made available to the parishes through the Archdiocesan website and other means.

The SIC will:

- Prepare a “Synod Update” to be sent out electronically and on a regular basis to all parishes and leaders. The Update will contain contributions from other Archdiocesan Pastoral Services offices.
- Directly communicate with members of the clergy and parish leaders to organize training sessions and assist with ongoing local implementation efforts.
- Assist parishes in their efforts to communicate about the Synod Implementation, by answering questions, providing workshops, and creating supplementary material for use in parishes. This is done collaboratively with the Communication Services Office.

Parishes in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg

Parishes, comprising the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, have an indispensable role in Synod communications efforts. Parishes will incorporate Synod Implementation messages in their regular communications workflows and platforms, e.g. parish websites, bulletins, brochures, posters, etc. Parishes are ultimately responsible for educating members of their community about the Synod Implementation process.

Parishes will:

- Incorporate communications materials provided by Archdiocesan offices in parish platforms: website, bulletin, posters, brochures, etc.
- Seek proactive ways of educating all members of the parish community – including, of course, members of parish groups.

Parish Pastoral Councils

Parish Pastoral Councils (PPC) take a leadership role in the Synod communications efforts in the parish. PPC members sometimes receive updates about the Synod directly from Archdiocesan offices, and thus have a responsibility to make sure the updates flow out to the rest of the parish community. Parish Offices have an administrative function, but communication is not “purely” administrative. As leaders of the parish community, PPC members connect with their fellow parishioners on a personal basis, and together explore ways to unfold the will of God in their local community.

The PPCs will:

- Recognize that they have a unique relationship with members of their parish community, and so take an active role in making sure everyone is “on the same page” when it comes to the Synod.