INTRODUCTION & SECTION I — WHERE WE HAVE BEEN IN THE SYNOD PROCESS

Read:

1. Gratitude for the blessings of our Archdiocese
2. Gratitude for the Synod
3. An experience of unprecedented difficulty meriting an apology
4. Why I called a Synod
5. Principles that shaped the Synod process
6. Consultation grounded in prayer and listening
7. The June 2022 Archdiocesan Synod Assembly exceeded my expectations

Reflect:

- Archbishop begins by listing his reasons for gratitude. In which of these do you most see the Holy Spirit at work? What would you add to his list? (1)
- Have you experienced healing in our Archdiocese in the years following the sexual abuse crisis, and if so, how? In what ways is healing still needed? (3)
- Do you see your parish as your “primary encounter with the Church”? In what way? (5)
- Have you turned to prayer prior to making a big decision? Reflect upon the experience. (6)
- Which one of the three focus areas speaks to you most and why? (6)

SECTION II – WALKING TOGETHER (SYNODOS)

Read:

8. What then should we do? (Lk 3:10)
9. The harvest is abundant
10. The laborers are few
11. Ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest
12. Calling of the twelve to form a parish Synod Evangelization Team
13. From Synod to synodality
14. Office of Synod Evangelization
15. Vicars of Evangelization
16. From the how to the what of Synod implementation
17. Finding clarity in the Upper Room

Reflect:

- What gives you hope that indeed the “harvest is abundant” in this Archdiocese? (9)
- Do you see yourself as a “laborer” with Jesus – one of his “co-workers… in the work of salvation?” If so, describe your role. If not, explain how you may be able to grow into such a role. (11)
- Each parish Synod Evangelization Team is intended to “help pastors keep evangelization in the forefront of parish life.” In what ways could such a Team help your pastor in proclaiming the Gospel at your parish (and beyond)? (12)
- Do you see synodality (“walking together”) at work in your parish? How might synodality foster “a way of missionary life and activity” in your parish? (13)
- How alive in your parish, and in your personal life, are each of the three mysteries of the Upper Room: Foot-washing, Eucharist, and Pentecost? (17)
- Monsignor Vaghi says the three mysteries of the Upper Room give us today an “icon of a fruitful Church.” In what ways do you see your parish as fruitful? In what ways does it need to grow? (17)

SECTION III – THE UPPER ROOM

A. THE MYSTERY OF THE WASHING OF THE FEET

Read:

18. Jesus humbled himself through service and self-gift
19. Jesus heals us and purifies us
20. The washing of the feet reveals that love must be expressed concretely
21. The washing of the feet is hospitality that unites us with the other
22. The washing of the feet affirms the other
23. As we give ourselves to others, we discover ourselves
24. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do
25. Small Groups as an opportunity for the washing of feet
26. The primary small group: The family
27. Support for the family: Office of Youth and Young Adults

Reflect:

- In the Incarnation, Jesus descended to serve us – he “humbled himself.” What does Jesus’s humility teach us about the value he sees in each of us? How can we recognize that value in others? (18)
- What “garment” might you need to shed in order to humbly serve others? (21)
- Archbishop offers examples of “foot-washing” he sees in our Archdiocese. What would you add to that list – or, which example of those listed has impacted you most? (24)
- What does St. Teresa of Calcutta say is the greatest hunger of the human person? How might parish life help those who are experiencing this hunger? How might you help those experiencing this hunger? (25)
- What is one way you may participate in the service of “foot-washing” in your household or in your parish? (26)

B. THE MYSTERY OF THE EUCHARIST

Read:
28. This is my body given for you
29. The love is in the food
30. From foot-washing to the breaking of the bread: From Incarnation to Paschal Mystery
31. Do this in memory of me: The institution of the Holy Eucharist
32. The Sunday Eucharist in our parishes
33. Do this in memory of me: the institution of Holy Orders
34. The beauty of the Mass
35. The form of the Mass
36. The meaning of the Mass

Reflect:

- Why does Archbishop say that the phrase “the love is in the food” could be said about the Eucharist? (29)
- How is Christ’s gift of himself in the Eucharist connected not just with the cross, but also his Resurrection? (31)
- Have you sought to deepen your devotion to our Lord in the Eucharist? What is one step you may take during the National Eucharistic Revival? See ideas at archspm.org/eucharisticrevival. (32)
- How have you experienced beauty in the Mass? Or, what can parishes do to make liturgies “dignified and beautiful”? (34)
- What struck you about the story of the woman who called the Eucharist her “most precious daily endeavor”? (36)

C. THE MYSTERY OF PENTECOST

Read:

37. Waiting for the promise
38. The Synod and the mystery of Pentecost
39. The Upper Room: What God has joined, we have divided
40. The Acts of the Apostles: A Church on fire
41. The Acts of the Apostles: A growing Church
42. St. John XXIII and the new Pentecost
43. The Second Vatican Council: A Council to proclaim the Good News in the modern world
44. St. John Paul II: “Be not afraid!”
45. The New Evangelization is for all Christians
46. Pope Francis and the “all” of missionary discipleship
47. Going beyond fear and misconceptions
48. Recognizing our gifts: Vicar for Charisms
49. The Renewal in the Spirit and the Catholic parish
50. Holy Spirit you are welcome here

Reflect:

- To what is Archbishop referring when he writes, “What God has joined, we have divided”? (39)
- Archbishop writes, “Only a culture of witness can turn the tide of decline that we are seeing in many areas of the Church today.” What might “a culture of witness” look like in today’s world – at your parish, in your family, in your community, or in your own life? (41)
- How do the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to you at Confirmation operate in your life? (42)
- How can you renew your passion for the Second Vatican Council? (43)
- Archbishop writes, “There would never have been a first evangelization without a first Pentecost; neither can there be a new evangelization without a new Pentecost.” Have you seen Pentecost, or do you desire to see Pentecost like the person who attended the Duquesne weekend? (43)
- Who is responsible for evangelization in the Church? (45)
- What is one God-given gift that you may use in service of the Lord, your fellow parishioners, and your family? (47)
Have you sought to discern your charisms? If so, what are they? How do they operate in your life? (48)

Is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit an ordinary part of your parish’s life? Your life? If yes, how is it manifested? If no, how might it be brought to flame? (49)

How can you help your parish be “a center of constant missionary outreach”? (50)

SECTION IV – GOING FORTH

Read:

51. Synod Priorities for the next three years
   A. Year 1: Small Groups (July 2023-June 2024)
   B. Year 2: The Mass (July 2024-June 2025)
   C. Year 3: Parents as primary educators (July 2025-June 2026)

52. Archdiocesan actions to support Synod implementation
53. Annual Synod implementation plans
54. Synod Priorities beyond the first three years
55. Other ongoing Archdiocesan priorities
56. Plans for a future of hope

Reflect:

- Which small group goal in Year 1 (e.g., serving the marginalized and the poor, teaching about the Mass, etc.) speaks to you most and why? (51)
- Related to the Synod Priority for Year 2, how do you envision “radical hospitality” at your parish? (51)
- As stated in one goal for Year 3, how might you (as an individual or with your family) “reclaim Sunday”? (51)
- Imagine your parish embracing the three mysteries of the Upper Room. What effect might this have on you personally, on other parishioners, or on those in your community? (56)
- Pray the “Archdiocesan Evangelization Prayer” and reflect upon how you, your family, or your parish may experience “a new Pentecost.” (56)