

**Diocese of Laval**  
**The Catholic Church in Mayenne**  
**Diocesan Synod 2018 - 2020**  
**First Synod Guide Book May 2018 – March 2019**

**‘You are precious in my eyes’** Isaiah 43, 4

**Let’s talk about it**

Preface

I have decided to hold a synod that will seek to guide the diocese into the future.

But for this I need everyone. I am giving you the floor. Take it; each person has something to say!

**‘I don’t have the time’** – It’s about finding only a few hours over 2 years

**‘I don’t know how to speak’** – You are not starting off alone: this synod guide book is for you; it will guide you step by step, as a team.

**‘It’s not for me’** – Remember you are all loved by God ... and that is the first good news of the synod!

**‘What’s going to change?’** – Together we are able to design the future ... and that is the second good news of the synod!

Join a synod team.

Let’s go this way together!

*Bonne route* to everyone!

Thierry Scherrer  
Bishop of Laval

Landmarks

**What is a synod team?**

It is a team of 4 – 7 volunteers who meet together several times.

1<sup>st</sup> Stage: How we live as human beings – in one or several meetings.

2<sup>nd</sup> Stage: How we live as Christians – in one or several meetings.

## **Who can take part in a synod team?**

Everyone who thinks: 'I'm interested in this, why not walk the path with others?'

It's about:

- Meeting up with others
- Sharing what we hold in our hearts and what has a hold on us in our lives
- Welcoming our humanity and stories
- Envisaging the life of the Church today and tomorrow
- Envisaging together as a diocese the path of evangelisation for the years to come

## **How is a synod team formed?**

1. One or two people who know each other (neighbours, through sport or other leisure activities or members of an association) take the initiative to invite others, practicing or not.
2. A parish pastoral team calls on and encourages people to recruit others to form teams.
3. People belonging to different groups within the church decide to come together to form a synod team. These groups may be: a movement team, a liturgical team, a sharing team, a chaplaincy team ... all teams which are already established.
4. An existing church group takes on the Guide Book and becomes a synod team.

It is possible to belong to two teams.

A team can bring together people from different generations, situations or convictions.

So that the meetings are convivial it is preferable that they be held in the home of a team member. Let's take the time to welcome each other over a cup of coffee or a slice of cake.

## **When the team has formed, what happens?**

The team chooses a representative who acts as a link with the secretariat of the synod. He/she will be able to receive information from the secretariat.

The representative registers the team either online or by completing the form at the back of this guide book.

At the end of the first stage, then at the end of the second stage the representative submits the content of the team's reflections. This is not a synthesis but the words of the participants. Everything must be sent in before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

## Advice for meetings

A member of the team will ensure that the following guidelines are followed:

- What I say is important and I listen to what others say in the exchange
- I strive to welcome with humility without imposing my convictions
- I risk speaking in confidence
- I listen to the end, even if I am surprised
- What is said is shared in confidence and remains confidential within the team

## The Route of the Synod

**In this world loved by God, let's open up the paths of joy**

Pentecost 2018	Opening of the Synod
May 2018 – March 2019	Path of the teams, 1 <sup>st</sup> Guide Book
September – October 2018	Constitution of the Synod Assembly
25 – 26 January 2019	1 <sup>st</sup> Synod assembly – Recollection and training (1 day)
31 March 2019	The Synod teams have sent their reflections to the secretariat
Spring 2019	Local assembly of teams (team leaders)
June 2019	1 <sup>st</sup> workbook for the members of the assembly
6 – 7 July 2019	2 <sup>nd</sup> Synod assembly – Deliberation and vote (2 days)
September – October 2019	Path of the teams, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Guide Book
31 October 2019	The Synod teams have sent their reflections to the secretariat
January 2020	2 <sup>nd</sup> workbook for the members of the assembly
March 2020	3 <sup>rd</sup> Synod assembly – Deliberation and vote (3 days)
Pentecost 2020	Closure of the Synod and promulgation of the decrees

Stage 1, in one or more meetings

**In this world loved by God, we reflect on how we live as human beings**

If needed, we can devote the first meeting to get know each other.

- 'You are precious in my eyes .....' you are important to me.  
I look at the cover of this guide. How does this statement resonate in me?  
In whose eyes am I precious?
- 'You are precious in my eyes .....' You matter a lot to me.  
How does this statement resonate in me? Who matters a lot to me?

- 'You are precious in my eyes .....' what you see touches me. I reflect on a situation that I can observe around me. I talk about it. What is it that touches me?

**This first stage will have more depth with the following biblical text.**

### **The Story of Zacchaeus (Luc 19, 1 – 10)**

He entered Jericho and was going through the town and suddenly a man whose name was Zacchaeus made his appearance; he was one of the senior tax collectors and a wealthy man. He kept trying to see who Jesus was, but he was too short and could not see him for the crowd; so he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus who was to pass that way. When Jesus reached the spot he looked up and spoke to him, 'Zacchaeus, come down. Hurry, because I am to stay at your house today.' And he hurried down and welcomed him joyfully. They all complained when they saw what was happening. 'He has gone to stay at a sinner's house,' they said. But Zacchaeus stood his ground and said to the Lord, 'Look, sir, I am going to give half my property to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody I will pay him back four times the amount.' And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man too is a son of Abraham; for the Son of man has come to seek out and save what was lost.'

### **Advice**

1. One person reads the text out loud. We spend some time in silence.
2. A different person reads the text out loud for a second time. We spend some time in silence.
3. Each person can repeat without additional commentary a word or short phrase which has touched them.

### **Time for Exchange**

4. - I consider Jesus' attitude  
 - I consider Zacchaeus' attitude  
 - What changes in the course of the text?
5. How does the meeting between Jesus and Zacchaeus clarify what we have already shared, since the beginning of our exchanges or in previous exchanges? And for me, what does it tell me about my meetings with Jesus and with others?

**At the end of this first stage please send the content of your team's reflections to the Synod secretariat by email or post.**

[synode@diocesedelaval.fr](mailto:synode@diocesedelaval.fr)

**The Synod Secretariat**  
([synode@diocesedelaval.fr](mailto:synode@diocesedelaval.fr))

- P. Luc MEYER, secretary
- Mme Florence BOULANGE
- P. Frederic FOUCHER
- Mme Françoise JOURNAULT
- Mme Isabelle LELIEVRE
- M. Bertrand de MOULINS-BEAUFORT

the Secretariat will liaise with the Synod teams; it is at your service. It does not disclose the composition of the teams.

It meets up very regularly, gathering your reflections and organises them into a Synod workbook. The quotes of the teams will be recorded anonymously.

This workbook is to be finalised in conjunction with the guidance council before being sent to all the members of the Synod assembly as constituted in Autumn 2018.

**The Guidance Council of the Synod**  
Presided over by Mgr Thierry SCHERRER

- Mme Jeannine BOURILLON
- P. Maurice CARRE
- Mme Elisabeth JACOB
- P. Raymond JULLIOT
- M. Dominique LELIEVRE
- Sr. Emmanuelle MAHE
- P. Pierre-Marie PERDRIX
- M. Christohe PICHON
- M. Xavier PUJOS
- M. & Mme Stephane & Melanie RAGOT
- P. Franck VIEL
- The secretariat of the Synod

The Guidance Council supports the secretariat in its work.

It allows it to guide, evaluate and amend things before they are presented to the Synod assembly.

## Stage 2, in one or more meetings

### **In this world loved by God, we reflect on how we live as Christians.**

- 'You are precious in my eyes .....
- 'You are precious in my eyes .....
- You are precious in my eyes .....

### **Do you love me? (John 21, 15 – 19)**

This happened just after the great fish catch. When they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these others do?' He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know I love you.'

Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He replied, 'Yes, Lord, you know I love you.'

Jesus said to him, 'Look after my sheep.' Then he said to him a third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was hurt that he asked him a third time, 'Do you love me?' and said, 'Lord, you know everything; you know I love you.'

Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. In all truth I tell you, when you were young you put on your own belt and walked where you liked; but when you grow old you will stretch out your hands, and somebody else will put a belt round you and take you where you would rather not go.'

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**At the end of this first stage please send the content of your team's reflections to the Synod secretariat by email or post before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019**

[\(synode@diocesedelaval.fr\)](mailto:synode@diocesedelaval.fr)

**You will be invited to meet again around a second Synod Guide Book in September/October 2019.**

## Hymns

### **Spirit of Light, Creator Spirit (IEV 21 – 04)**

Come living spirit of God, renew your children  
Come Holy Spirit; burn us with your fire!  
Spread your gifts in our hearts,  
Inspire a song on our lips  
Come Holy Spirit, come transform our lives!

**Spirit of light, Creator Spirit  
Restore in us the joy, the fire, the Hope.  
Strengthen our souls, rekindle our hearts,  
To bear witness to your immense love.**

Fortify our wounded bodies, wash away all our sins,  
Come Holy Spirit ; burn us with your fire!  
Make us search for peace, desire holiness,  
Come Holy Spirit, come transform our lives!

### **Unpredictable Breath (K28 – 44)**

Unpredictable breath, Spirit of God,  
Wind which revives, Spirit of God,  
Breath of tempest, Spirit of God,  
Open our windows, Spirit of God!

**Spirit of truth, breeze of the Lord,  
Spirit of freedom, enter our hearts! (repeat)**

Joy given to mankind, Spirit of God,  
Feast of the kingdom, Spirit of God,

Joy of the gospel, Spirit of God,  
Make us your signs, Spirit of God!

**Prayer to Our Lady**

For the jubilee of her apparition at Pontmain (1871 – 2021)  
and the Synod of the Diocese of Laval (2018 – 2020)

Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church,  
You walk along the road with us. Today we turn our eyes towards you in faith.

Educator of prayer,  
Teach us to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, which helps us to recognise  
the signs of the times and better perceive expectations hidden in our hearts.  
So that his ardour burns us and transforms us with the fervour of a new  
Pentecost.

Star of Evangelisation  
Obtain for us the audacity and the courage to witness to our faith. Convert our  
meetings into visitations of love. So that each person discovers the value he  
has in God's eyes and let them be touched by his mercy.

Mother of Hope and Queen of Peace  
You who revealed Jesus to us  
Strengthen our hearts and guide our steps.  
In this world loved by God make us pilgrims and apostles of joy. Amen

Thierry Scherrer  
Bishop of Laval