



DIOCESE *of* GAYLORD

Diocese of Gaylord publishes Synod 2021-2023 Synthesis Report

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GAYLORD, MICHIGAN — Prior to the 2023 meeting of the Synod of Bishops in Rome, Pope Francis asked the People of God to contribute their prayerful reflection on the life of the Church in order to discern together how to be a more communal and evangelizing Body of Christ. This invitation for the Universal Church was to be exercised in three stages: First, the bishops consult the People of God about a particular question, carried out in local parishes. Second, the bishops hear the response of the faithful and discern how the Holy Spirit is speaking in it. Finally, Pope Francis considers the bishops' discernment and implements directives in response.

The Diocese of Gaylord participated in this process by conducting synodal consultations in parishes and parish clusters over the past several months. In these synodal consultations, the faithful were asked to reflect upon the following questions: (1) *“What is the Holy Spirit saying to our Church today?”* (2) *“What should we do to improve our parish?”* (3) *“A synodal Church, in announcing the Gospel, ‘journeys together.’ How is this ‘journeying together’ happening today in your local Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our ‘journeying together?’”*

The Most Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh, bishop of Gaylord, shares the following in response to the completion of the diocesan synodal consultations:

“After several months of outreach at the parish and diocesan levels, the diocesan phase of the Synod on Synodality has concluded, and I am pleased to present the final report on this Feast of St. James. May the intercession of Saint James bolster our One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic faith!

“This Synthesis Report summarizes volumes of input from those who participated in small group discussions, completed online forms, or submitted comments via letter, email and/or social media. I want to thank everyone who took the time to express their views and listen with respect to what others had to say, whether they agreed or disagreed. The Synodal process is much like life itself. Being a Synodal Church requires openness, flexibility, patience, collaboration, orthodoxy, courage, and ultimate trust in God’s Providence. In a particular way, I would like to thank Mr. Andy Moe and Fr. Matthew Furguele for their work in compiling and synthesizing the material for this final report. It was no easy task. May God bless all our efforts as the Synodal process continues to unfold at the regional and national levels until it reaches Rome for our Holy Father’s discernment.”

This Diocese of Gaylord's Synod Report has been published at www.dioceseofgaylord.org/synod-2021-2023-diocesan-synthesis-report and submitted to regional bishops' conference. Next steps in the synodal process include each regional bishops' conferences synthesizing diocesan reports and submitting their findings to continental bishops' conferences. These continental gatherings will then submit reports to the General Synod of Bishops in Rome, where the final discernment process will take place and recommendations will be made to Pope Francis.

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The Diocese of Gaylord was established by His Holiness Pope St. Paul VI on July 20, 1971. The territory encompasses 11,171 square miles and includes the 21 most northern counties of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. The region is home to nearly 50,000 Catholics, served by 75 parishes, 16 Catholic schools and many closely-related institutions. For more information, visit www.dioceseofgaylord.org.

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