

Clergy/Parish Synod Resource for Advent 2026

You are invited during Advent to begin and continue your Synodal journey, engaging with your parish, committees, and community.

Promotional Resources:

- Graphics for social media
- Reflection/Homily notes/Prayers of Intercession
- Bulletin notices for each week of Advent and Christmas

Weekly resources are inspired by the five parts of the **Final Document for a Synodal Church**

What is Synodality?
From the Final Document:

*And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." (*Mk *16:15)*

"Synodality is the walking together of Christians with Christ and towards God's Kingdom, in union with all humanity … Synodality is not an end in itself. Rather, it serves the mission that Christ entrusted to the Church in the Spirit … By appreciating all charisms and ministries, synodality enables the People of God to proclaim and witness to the Gospel to women and men of every place and time, making itself a "visible sacrament" of the fellowship and unity in Christ willed by God.*"*

Synod Reports and Resources are available online:
www.antigonishdiocese.com/listening-church
www.synod.va

First Sunday of Advent:
November 29



Part I - The Heart of Synodality

Called by the Holy Spirit to Conversion

Reflection/Homily Notes

On this First Sunday of Advent, the Scriptures invite us to wait with hope and to stay awake to God's presence. Isaiah cries out to God to come among the people and shape them anew: "We are the clay, and you are our potter." The psalm echoes that longing: "Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved." And Jesus tells his disciples to keep watch. This is not anxious waiting, but the attentive hope of people who trust that God is at work—even when the way forward is unclear.
That hope is also at the heart of synodality: walking together, listening deeply, and discerning the Holy Spirit's call as the whole People of God. In a world marked by division and uncertainty, the Church is called to be a community where people's hopes and wounds are heard, where every baptized person's gifts matter, and where our shared journey leads outward in service. As we light the first candle of the Advent wreath, may its light remind us that Christ calls us to conversion and gives us hope. May we keep watch not only for the Lord who is to come, but also for the Spirit moving among us now, inviting us to build communion, share responsibility, and carry God's light to the world.

Prayers of Intercession

For the Church throughout the world: that, attentive to the Holy Spirit, we may walk together in hope, listen to one another with humility, and serve the mission entrusted to us. We pray to the Lord.

For all who long for peace, justice, healing, or a place to belong: that our communities may hear their voices and respond with compassion, and that Christ's light may sustain them in hope. We pray to the Lord.

Bulletin Notice

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Second Sunday of Advent:
December 6

Part II - On the Boat, Together

The Conversion of Relationships

Reflection/Homily Notes:

The Second Sunday of Advent opens with a call to prepare the way of the Lord. Isaiah speaks words of comfort and hope, while John the Baptist calls people to conversion. The way we prepare is not only through personal prayer and renewal; it also involves making room for one another. A synodal Church is a people journeying together—meeting with openness, listening deeply, and discerning how the Holy Spirit is leading us. This relational conversion asks us to loosen what keeps us apart and to notice especially those who are most in need of welcome, care, and hope.
As we light the Advent candle of peace, we remember that peace is built through relationships shaped by patience, respect, and compassion. We do not have to agree on everything to listen sincerely or share responsibility for the Church's mission. Like John, we can help prepare the way for Christ by making our communities more welcoming and our bonds more loving. In the wilderness of division or loneliness, our listening and service can become a path on which others encounter the comfort and peace of God.

Prayers of Intercession

For the Church: that, guided by the Holy Spirit, we may journey together in communion, listen with humility, and welcome those who feel unheard or excluded. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all who long for peace, especially those experiencing conflict, loneliness, or hardship: that our communities may offer comfort, practical care, and a sign of God's steadfast love. Let us pray to the Lord.

Bulletin Notice

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Third Sunday of Lent: December 13



Part III – "Cast the Net"

The Conversion of Processes

Reflection/Homily Notes:

On this Third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday, the Scriptures invite us to rejoice because the Lord is near. Isaiah proclaims good news to the poor and freedom to the burdened; Mary rejoices in God, who lifts up the lowly; and Paul urges the community to rejoice, pray, and give thanks. In the Gospel, John the Baptist knows that he is not the light, but a witness to it. His humility and clear sense of mission make room for Christ. Like John, the Church is called to point beyond itself—to prepare the way of the Lord through lives of hope, justice, and loving service.

This Sunday's joy also speaks to our synodal journey. The Church grows in its mission when we listen to one another, share our gifts, and discern together what the Holy Spirit is asking of us. Such listening is not simply a process for reaching agreement; it is a spiritual practice rooted in prayer, humility, and trust. When every voice is welcomed—especially the voices of those who are poor, overlooked, or burdened—our shared discernment becomes richer, and our witness to Christ's light becomes clearer. May our joyful listening help prepare the way of the Lord.

Prayers of Intercession

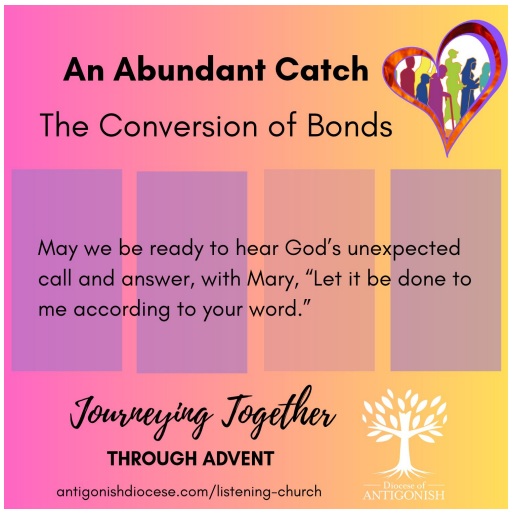
For the Church: that, like John the Baptist, we may humbly bear witness to Christ, and that through prayerful listening and shared discernment we may faithfully serve the mission entrusted to all the baptized. We pray to the Lord.

For those who are poor, burdened, or unheard: that they may encounter the good news of God's love through communities that listen with compassion, work for justice, and share the joy of hope. We pray to the Lord.

Bulletin Notice

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Fourth Sunday of Advent: December 20



Part IV - An Abundant Catch

The Conversion of Bonds

Reflection/Homily Notes

On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, our readings are filled with unexpected announcements. David learns that God will establish his house—not through a temple David builds, but through a promise that reaches far beyond his lifetime. Paul proclaims the surprising news that God's saving love is offered to all peoples. And Mary, listening with courage and trust, receives Gabriel's announcement that she will bear Jesus, the Son of God. David, Paul, and Mary show us that God's purposes often unfold through people and possibilities we might not expect.
As we light the Fourth Candle of Advent, the candle of Love, Mary's response invites us to become a listening Church. Synodality asks us to make room for one another: to listen deeply, pray and discern together, and welcome the gifts the Spirit gives to every person. Like Mary, we may not know exactly where God's invitation will lead. But when we walk together in communion, participation, and mission, our shared gifts can carry God's love into the world. May we be ready to hear God's unexpected call and answer, with Mary, "Let it be done to me according to your word."

Prayers of Intercession

For the Church: that, like Mary, we may listen attentively to God and to one another, and welcome the gifts of all the baptized in service of the Gospel. Let us pray to the Lord.

For all who feel overlooked, excluded, or uncertain about their place in the world: that they may encounter the love of God through communities that listen, include, and walk beside them. Let us pray to the Lord.

Bulletin Notice

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Christmas

Part V - "So I Send You"
Forming a People for Missionary Discipleship

Reflection/Homily Notes

In the light of Christmas, we see that God draws near not in power or privilege, but in the vulnerability of a child. The shepherds hear the good news, go together to Bethlehem, and share what they have witnessed. Their journey offers a beautiful image of synodality: people setting out together, listening to God's invitation, and carrying the joy of Christ to others. The light born in Bethlehem welcomes every person and calls the whole Church—each with gifts received in Baptism—to walk in communion, take part in the Church's life, and serve its mission.
As we celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace, we remember all who suffer through war, hunger, displacement, poverty, and persecution. Christmas invites us to listen attentively to their stories and to become signs of Christ's mercy through our prayer, service, and work for justice and reconciliation. May the Holy Spirit help us walk together with humility and hope, bringing the light of the newborn Saviour to a divided and wounded world.

Prayers of Intercession

For the Church throughout the world: that, like the shepherds at Bethlehem, we may journey together, listen to one another, and share the good news of Christ through our words and actions. We pray to the Lord.

For all who suffer because of war, hunger, displacement, poverty, or persecution: that they may receive comfort, protection, and practical support, and that those with power may work courageously for peace, justice, and reconciliation. We pray to the Lord.

Bulletin Notice

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