



For more information, visit → <http://www.aod.org/synod16/>

### **What is a Synod?**

A Synod is both an event and a process that sees people – clergy, religious, and laity – gather to discuss important matters of the faith. Synods are transformative events that lead to renewal in the Church's life. After a Synod takes place, the church emerges different, changed.

### **What is the purpose of Synod16?**

In expressing his confidence that, "in response to our prayers through the synod in 2016, God will make being missionaries part of the DNA of our archdiocese." Archbishop Vigneron summarized the two-fold purpose of Synod 16.

The first is "missionaries." The focus of this Synod is **evangelization**. The second is, "DNA." The Archbishop hopes to transform the very culture of our Archdiocese—how we work, how we pray, how we minister, everything—so that in everything we do, we are more effective witnesses

### **What is Evangelization, anyway?**

Evangelization is bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to those around us.

### **Why is Evangelization so important?**

Jesus himself commanded us to evangelize. The church exists to give witness to the Gospel. All around us are people who have never heard that God loves them and desires abundant life for them. They need to hear this good news. There are also people who received sacraments or grew up in faithful homes who have now stopped coming to church or stopped participating in their faith. Evangelization is for them, too.

### **Have there been other Synods in the Archdiocese of Detroit?**

There have been ten synods since the Archdiocese of Detroit was established in 1833.

### **How did previous Synods held in the Archdiocese of Detroit pan out?**

The last synod in 1969, spurred much change in the Archdiocese. One of the most-familiar results of this synod was the bolstering of lay participation in the life of the Church through parish councils, parish finance councils, and vicariate councils.

It's hard to imagine parish life without those elements of lay involvement. We pray that Synod 16 will, in a similar way, influence how we live the faith in the Archdiocese of Detroit (more on that later).

### **When will this Synod take place, and where?**

Synod 16 will take place November 18-20, 2016 at the Westin Book Cadillac Hotel in Detroit.

### **Who participates in Synod 16?**

Hundreds of clergy and laity will be participating in Synod 16. All of the faithful—whether they are participating directly in Synod 16 or not—are encouraged to pray for Synod 16.

### **How were the lay members of Synod 16 chosen?**

Each pastor was asked to prayerfully nominate three people from his parish who he thought could be flexible, creative, and discerning to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. The Archdiocesan Pastoral Council prayerfully considered the nominations and elected the members.

Clergy and religious have been elected by their peers and invited by the Archbishop.

### **Tell me more about Synod 16**

What we are attempting is nothing less than a radical overhaul of the Church in Detroit, a complete reversal of our focus from an inward, or maintenance-focused church, to outward, or mission-focused church.

### **What changes do you anticipate as a result of Synod16?**

It is difficult to say because we do not know where the Holy Spirit will lead us. But, much of the conversation is expected to center around how we can make our parishes, schools, hospitals, charitable organizations, families, etc. more joyfully missionary-based.

### **What will happen at Synod 16?**

In November 2016, clergy, religious, and laity will gather to pray and discuss how we can help everyone in our Archdiocese encounter Jesus, grow as disciples, and witness to the glory of a life lived in God's love.

### **Is there a way for me to play a role in the process?**

Yes! Most of our parishes will be hosting **Parish Dialogue Sessions**. At these sessions, the faithful will have facilitator-led conversations. A scribe will capture the content of the discussion, which will be brought to the synod for further discussion. The dialogue sessions will be taking place between March and June. The faithful may attend a session at their parish or at another parish.

### **What happens after Synod 16 is over?**

The Synod is an important step which will allow the faithful to consider questions and make recommendations to Archbishop Vigneron about transforming our regional church into an evangelizing diocese of joyful, missionary disciples. After the conclusion of the Synod, Archbishop Vigneron will prayerfully consider the recommendations and promulgate those which he feels will most help us become joyful, missionary disciples of Christ.

### **Why is Synod 16 so important?**

There is a need to elevate the presence and importance of Christ in individuals, families, parishes, schools, and Catholic institutions to receive the good news, to live it, and to share it with our friends, our families, in our workplaces and beyond.

The natural state of the Church is one of growth. We are living in a time of unnatural deterioration of the Church. The decline in sacramental participation and vocations as well as the closing of parishes are unnatural aberrations rooted in an erosion of evangelization. We need to undo some of what we've become as a people of Christ—passive in prioritizing and living our faith, sad about the perceived decline of the importance of Jesus and Church institutions, and accustomed to a malaise rooted in believing there is little that can be done.

Just as we are seeing revitalization in our city, we seek to bring about rebirth of the Church in Detroit.

### **Are there ways for me to become involved?**

There are many ways for you to become involved. There are many events taking place across the Archdiocese of Detroit over the next year to help you understand God's love in a more profound way. A few of them are:

- Attend a **Parish Dialogue Gathering**.
- Attend a **Come, Encounter Christ!** evening with excellent speakers, music, and adoration.
- Walk through the **Holy Door of Mercy** at the **Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament**. Better yet—take some friends.
- Pray for the Synod and our Archdiocese. Pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.