

Session 5:

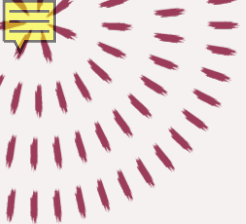
Adaptive Leadership



Walking the Path of
Synodality
in the Footsteps of
Pope Francis



A Six-Session Synodal Leadership Formation Course





Overview of Session

- Welcome & Overview
- Opening Prayer
- Revisit Previous Session
- Presentation: Leadership Challenges
- Reflection & Breakout Group Exercise
- Presentation: Adaptive Leadership
- Reflection & Breakout Group Exercise
- Conclusion and Closing Prayer
- Looking to the Next Session





Learning Objectives



Invite the Holy Spirit to guide our conversations



Become aware of new ways of identifying and handling challenges



Reflect on how complex problems require deeper diagnosis and new approaches



Draw from their leadership and resources and learn from one another's lived experience



Consider new attitudes and mindsets essential to a new way of leading



Learn specific practices that enhance their adaptive capacity



Commit to practicing synodality in daily life.



Prayer for a Synodal Church



Here we are, Lord. Holy Spirit, teach us what and how to speak and when to keep quiet. Help us to be a synodal Church, capable of discovering and transmitting the mystery of walking together, finding each other, and supporting each other.



Teach us to leave ourselves to join others and do good. May this group meeting be a healing and hopeful path. Spirit of God, who invites us to the risk of meeting others in an appropriate attitude: make us a synodal Church, in which we experience a home and a school of communion.



Help us move the Church to go out of itself in mission, to taste the pure air of the Spirit that frees us from being focused on ourselves and invites us to seek out those who are indifferent, and those who don't believe.



Think of a word, phrase, or sentence from the prayer that is special to you?

For two minutes, close your eyes and silently repeat the words that were special to you several times.

Let us Pray:

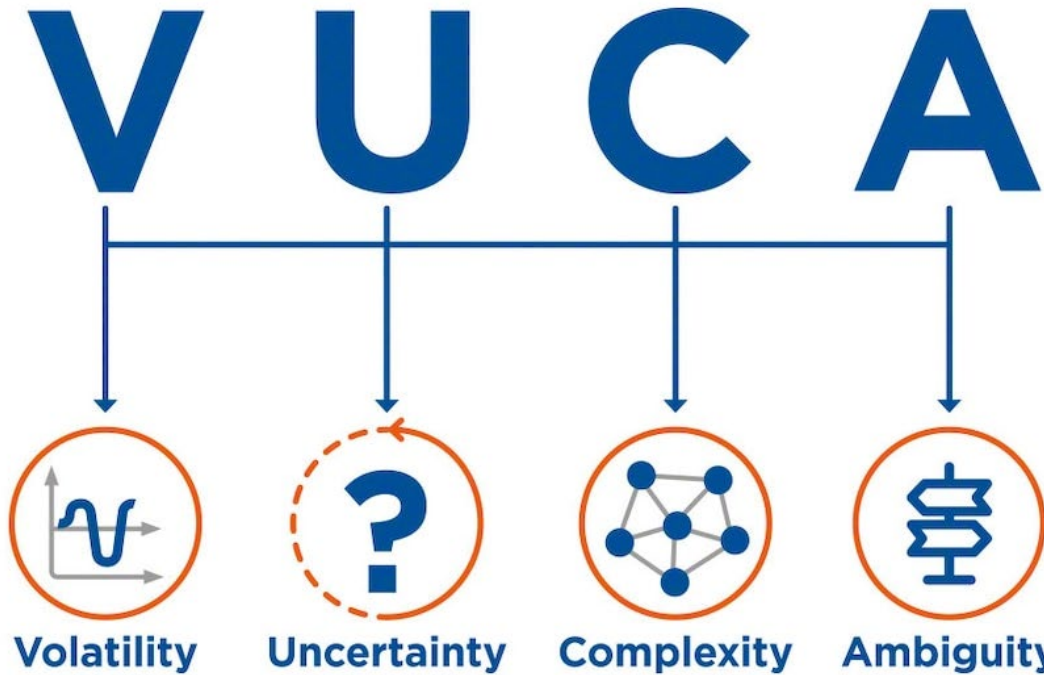
Bring us the Holy Spirit of God, keep us in unity, being aware that we are in the same boat and going towards the same port. Lead us to be Church in the street, full of life and peace, in the communion of solidarity and missionary fruitfulness. Allow us to meet again to listen to each other, dialogue, and make decisions.





Revisit Synodality as a Path to Transformation

Participation • Communion • Mission



Presentation: Leadership Challenges



What is a VUCA environment?

Volatile: The environment demands you react quickly to ongoing changes that are unpredictable and out of your control

Uncertain: The environment requires you to take action without certainty

Complex: The environment is dynamic, with many interdependencies

Ambiguous: The environment is unfamiliar, outside of your expertise.



Technical Problems


- Experts can solve

Adaptive Challenges

- Volatile, unpredictable, complex, ambiguous



Adaptive Challenges

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- Systemic Thinking
 - Values, beliefs, roles & relationships
 - Adopt an experimental mindset



Silent Reflection & Small Group

Consider the main challenges you currently face in your life. Those challenges could be positive (a goal you are striving to achieve) or negative (a threat you want to turn into an opportunity). Write a list of two or three.

- Which one seems the most complicated?
- What makes it complicated?
- What do complicated challenges have in common?



Presentation





Adaptive Skills

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- 1. Get on the balcony,** Distinguish Subject from Object: Maintain perspective by observing the system above the action.
 - 2. Think politically:** What are each stakeholder's values, loyalties, risks of loss, and hidden alliances?
 - 3. Orchestrate the conflict:** Create a "holding environment" where people can tackle tough questions honestly.
 - 4. Discipline attention to the real issues:** Don't be distracted by the noise and confusion.
 - 5. Give the work back:** Avoid trying to handle everything and resist giving people the answer.
 - 6. Regulate disequilibrium:** Increase or lower the heat/pressure/motivation.
 - 7. Infuse the work with meaning:** Focus on why, not just how. Connect tactics to the mission.



Adaptive Leadership Examples

Don't attempt to lead on your own. Move toward a more distributive leadership with teams working collaboratively.





Focus on followers' beliefs, needs, and values to get people to want to change and lead change.





Conduct a “listening tour” of people in your organization to know what motivates them. People want to be seen, heard, and understood.





Remind people of the mission and vision (what and why) when they are distracted by "noise."





Always put a human face on what you and your team do and the contribution you make.





Share success stories to communicate to everyone their role and importance in achieving mission success.





Explore differences
and creatively solve
problems through
collaboration.
Defining the problem
and finding a solution
require collaboration
and co-creation.





Practice
listening, being
open-minded,
dialogue, and
discernment.





Ask reflective questions (e.g., What are the three biggest challenges we face that may undermine mission success? What are two things we could change to make us more effective?).





Create small and diverse groups for dialogue and collaboration to identify problems and create solutions.





Personal & Small Group Reflection

What is one example of how you are leading adaptively?

How could you apply one of these practices to your most complicated challenge?



Concluding Commitments

What commitment do you want to make to practice adaptive leadership for the next two weeks?



**Adaptive
Leadership**





Closing Prayer



Looking to the Next Session

Assignment: Reading and Video
(in handout)

Reflection: How have you experimented
with using one of the seven practices of
Adaptive Leadership?

