

## Synodal Leadership - Session Three Handout

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### **Session Theme**

Communal Discernment and Participatory Decision-Making

### **Preparation:**

You were asked to read the following homily of Pope Francis before Session 3: [Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis](#) - Encounter, Listen, Discern



### **Revisit the Previous Session – 15 Minutes**

*In groups of three or four people, discuss the following questions:*

- Did you practice using what you learned in the last session?
- Did you experience a greater awareness of how you listen in various aspects of your life or consider Otto Scharmer's four levels of listening (downloading, factual, empathetic, and generative) and Discerning Leadership's fifth level (contemplative) added as a faith dimension.
- Why is active listening so crucial for leadership in the Church?

### **Breakout Group Discussion – 15 Minutes**

- How were the community members in the passage including the Holy Spirit in their discussions?
- Was there time for silent discernment?
- How were people encountering one another?
- How were they listening to one another to understand differing perspectives?

### **Report Outs**

What were some of the insights from your breakout group on the discussion questions?

## **Spiritual Conversations**

A spiritual conversation is a means of readying the ground for collective transformation, assisting us in shifting from “I” to “we”, from “individualism” to “communion”.

Suggestions:

- Be brief... share what matters most.
- Speak slowly and intentionally.
- Allow pauses.
- Look at the person speaking.
- Listen without preparing a response.
- Keep creating shared meaning.
- Make time/space for each/all to share.

## **Personal Reflection – 5 Minutes**

- In my ministry or life, I can leave room for the Holy Spirit by...
- In my ministry or life, I can encounter people of different perspectives by...
- In my ministry or life, I can better understand people with different perspectives by...

## **Breakout Group Discussion - 25 Minutes (Total)**

*Part 1:* Briefly share your responses to the above questions. **(10 Min)**

*Part 2:* Now, look for common aspects of one another's insights. **(15 Min)**

What were common elements from among each person's insights on:

- Leaving room for the Holy Spirit at meetings and other activities
- Encountering people of different perspectives in my ministry/life
- Understanding people with different perspectives

## **Report Outs – 5 Minutes**

Share one insight or highlight from your breakout group.

## **Concluding Commitments and Prayer – 20 Minutes**

Let us consider how the early Christians discerned the Spirit.

- What is one way you will invite the Holy Spirit to guide the decisions you will make with others in the next two weeks?
  - How will you invite the Holy Spirit to guide your collective decisions in the next two weeks?
  - Does anyone have a prayer request or prayer intentions to offer?
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## **Looking to the Next Session – Paths to Transformation:**

### **Overcoming Biases and Assumptions – 5 Minutes**

Before the next session, read the following 4-page document on Spiritual Conversation: [The Spiritual Conversation](#) - Vatican Secretariat for the Synod



As you consider the question below, write down some notes to share in the next session: Can you think of ways to introduce the method of spiritual conversations into your life or ministry?