



SYDNEY SYNOD 2026

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY

SYNOD DIRECTORY FOR THE SYNOD OF SYDNEY 2026

30 APRIL - 3 MAY 2026



1. NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE SYNOD

The Code of Canon Law outlines the diocesan synod in nine canons (Canons 460–468), establishing it as a forum convened to discern pastoral initiatives for the good of the local Church.¹

In 1997, the Congregation for Bishops and the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples issued an Instruction on Diocesan Synods to be of assistance to those involved in the preparation of diocesan Synods in the Latin Rite.

The Instruction defines the nature and purpose of the diocesan Synod as follows.²

- The Code of Canon Law describes a diocesan Synod as an assembly of ‘selected priests and other members of the Christian faithful of a particular church who offer assistance to the diocesan bishop for the good of the whole diocesan community’ (Can. 460).
- The Synod offers the Bishop the opportunity of calling to cooperate with him and with his priests some members of the laity as well as some chosen religious.
- The Bishop determines the Synod’s convocation, and following consultation, proposes the questions to be discussed in the Synod, and presides at the synodal sessions.
- Those who participate in the Synod assist the diocesan Bishop by formulating their opinion or “votum” regarding the questions which have been proposed by him. This “votum” is defined as consultative.
- The Bishop is the sole legislator who signs the synodal declarations and decrees and orders their publication.
- The work of the Synod is to promote acceptance of the Church’s salvific doctrine and to encourage the faithful in their following of Christ; to further that apostolic zeal which inspires so many ecclesial activities.
The Synod aims to build up and foster ecclesial community and ongoing unity in the declarations and decrees. As such, the synod documents should accurately reflect the universal Magisterium of the Church and apply common canonical discipline to the circumstances in the diocese.
- The Synod will evaluate the adequacy of pastoral programmes already in place, and with the help of divine grace, propose new pastoral plans where such are deemed desirable.

1 *Code of Canon Law*, cc. 460 – 468

https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/eng/documents/cic_lib2-cann460-572_en.html#CHAPTER_I.

2 *Instruction on Diocesan Synods I* (1997) https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cbishops/documents/rc_con_cbishops_doc_20041118_diocesan-synods-1997_en.html

2. CONVOCAATION OF THE SYNOD

A diocesan Synod may be convoked ‘when circumstances suggest it in the judgment of the diocesan Bishop after he has heard the presbyteral council’ (Can. 461 §1). Once he has decided to convoke a Synod, the diocesan Bishop is ‘required to issue a decree of convocation which is promulgated in his diocese, usually on the occasion of some liturgical festival of particular solemnity’ (Instr. III, A, 1).

On the Feast of the Chair of Peter, 22 February 2025, Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP convoked a Synod of the Archdiocese of Sydney to be held from 30 April to 3 May 2026, in line with the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia’s resolution that each diocese should conduct a diocesan Synod within five years of that Council.³

After reviewing submissions from consultations leading up to the Synod on Young People, the Plenary Council and the Synod on Synodality, and having heard from the Council of Priests, the purpose of Sydney Synod 2026 will be to respond – with prayerful trust in the Holy Spirit and fidelity to Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium of the Church – to three specific longings that had emerged in the aforementioned consultations:

- **That our liturgies be more prayerful**, occasions of real encounter with God and opportunities to enrich our faith lives. This will require reflection and action bearing upon the quality of our sacramental programs, liturgical preparations, preaching, music, devotional life, and more.
- **That our parishes and other Church communities be more Christ-centred**, places where all are called to ongoing conversion and living out their baptismal dignity. This will require reflection and action bearing upon the cultivation of faith, charity, and holiness.
- **That our people be more mission oriented**, carrying Christ to the world, and committing themselves to the service of all, especially the marginalised.

The Archbishop appointed a Synod Working Party to advise and provide recommendations for the preparations and organisation of the Synod, as well as a Sydney Synod Project Officer, Varun Perera, to ensure the practical coordination and implementation of a suitable consultation process and the celebration of the Synod itself.

The letter of convocation and information about the Sydney Synod was made available on the Archdiocesan website at <https://www.sydneycatholic.org/sydney-synod/>. Social media, video and written material about the convocation of the Synod, its foci, and related consultations were made available in parishes, chaplaincies, schools and other faith communities within the Archdiocese. This accords with the Instruction on Diocesan Synods which notes that all should be informed regarding the nature and purpose of the Synod and the scope of its deliberations (Instr. III, C, 1).

3 Fisher, A. (2025, March 12). *Toward a more prayerful, Christlike and missionary church – Pastoral Letter to the Archdiocese of Sydney regarding the Synod of Sydney 2026*. Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. <https://www.sydneycatholic.org/addresses-and-statements/2025/toward-a-more-prayerful-christlike-and-missionary-church-pastoral-letter-to-the-archdiocese-of-sydney-regarding-the-synod-of-sydney-2026/>

3. COMPOSITION OF THE SYNOD

As the diocesan bishop for the Archdiocese of Sydney, Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP will preside over the Synod of Sydney 2026 ([Can. 462 §2](#)).

The Code of Canon Law ([Can. 463](#)) specifies those other persons who are members of the synod. The following must be called to a diocesan synod and are obliged to participate in it: auxiliary bishops, vicars general, episcopal vicars and the judicial vicar, members of the presbyteral council, the rector of the diocesan major seminary, deans, at least one presbyter from each deanery, some superiors of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life.

As indicated by [Canon 463 §1.5](#), lay members of the Christian faithful can be chosen in a manner determined by the Archbishop. In so far as possible, lay members were selected in ‘such a way that they truly reflect the entire portion of the people of God which constitutes the diocese, with consideration given to the different areas of the diocese, social conditions and professions, and the role which they have in the apostolate whether individually or joined with others’ ([Can. 512 §2](#)). These lay members of the Synod are also to be distinguished by their ‘firm faith, good morals and prudence’ ([Can. 512 §3](#)) and in a ‘canonically regular situation’ ([Instr. II, 3.1](#)).

Additionally, the Archbishop may freely nominate others to be members of the diocesan Synod, whether clerics or members of institutes of consecrated life or lay members of the faithful. ⁴ ‘This group of synod members should be selected from among *those ecclesial vocations or the various apostolic works* not sufficiently represented amongst elected members, to give adequate expression to the true make up of the diocese’ and ‘should be chosen for their “knowledge, competence and position” whose valued opinion will undoubtedly enrich the synod discussions’ ([Instr. II, 4](#)). The Instruction also emphasises the important presence of permanent deacons amongst the clergy. ⁴

Regarding the invitations:

- The Archbishop shall communicate in writing to members, their designation as members and likewise, members, not bound *ex officio* and *de jure*, shall communicate their acceptance in writing.
- Synod members once lawfully designated, have a right and duty to participate in the sessions of the Synod. If they are unable to attend a proxy cannot be sent in his or her place.
- One may lose one’s membership by reason of loss of title – that which qualified one to become a member – or by removal by the Archbishop for a lawful reason.

As provided in [Canon 833,1°](#), before commencing the synod discussions, the members of the Synod, as ecclesial officers, shall make the Profession of Faith and an Oath of Fidelity.

The Archbishop may also invite to the Synod as observers some ministers or members of other Christian Churches or ecclesial communities which are not in full communion with the Catholic Church.

Details on which members were selected and the overall composition for the Synod can be found in [Appendix A](#).

⁴ Instruction on Diocesan Synods, II, 4

4. OFFICERS OF THE SYNOD

President

Archbishop Fisher OP will preside over the Synod. ‘He can, however, delegate a vicar general or episcopal vicar to fulfil this responsibility for individual sessions of the synod’ ([Can. 462 §2](#)).

Moderator

In accordance with [Instr. III, B, 2.3](#), Archbishop Fisher OP has appointed Auxiliary Bishop Daniel Meagher as Moderator of the Synod.

Secretariat and Communications

The Archbishop shall ensure the establishment of a synodal secretariat, to be overseen by the secretary, a member of the Preparatory Commission. ‘The function of such a secretariat is to assist the Synod as far as organisational matters are concerned: transmission and archiving of documentation, drawing up minutes, direction of logistical matters, as well as matters relating to finances and accounting.’ ([Instr. III, B, 1](#)).

Secretariat

Bishop Daniel Meagher

Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney

Mr Varun Perera

Secretary, Sydney Synod Project Officer

Sr Anastasia Reeves OP

Parish Renewal Officer, Sydney Centre for Evangelisation

5. PREPARATIONS

In preparation for the Synod, the Archbishop is obliged to form a Preparatory Commission. 'The members of this preparatory commission are chosen by the Bishop from amongst the clergy and other faithful who are distinguished by their pastoral prudence and by their professional competence and who, in so far as possible, reflect the various charisms and ministries of the People of God.' (*Instr. III, B, 1*).

Its tasks are principally to assist the Archbishop in matters pertaining to the organisation and preparation of the Synod; in drawing up and publishing the synod Directory; in the designation of the synod members and in his determining the questions to be proposed for synod deliberation.

The Archbishop presides over the meetings of the preparatory commission. If he is unable to preside, his delegate does so.

Preparatory Commission

Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP	Archbishop of Sydney
Bishop Daniel Meagher	Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney
Mr Brian Anderson	Principal, St Francis Xavier Primary School, Ashbury
Mr Daniel Ang	Director, Sydney Centre for Evangelisation
Mrs Alison de Sousa	Head of Religious Education, St Aloysius' College, Milsons Point
Mrs Natalie Limbers	University Chaplaincies Coordinator
Mrs Philippa Manley	Family Educator, St Charles Primary School, Ryde
Fr James McCarthy	Parish Priest, St Aloysius of Gonzaga, Cronulla
Mr Varun Perera	Sydney Synod Project Officer
Sr Anastasia Reeves OP	Parish Renewal Officer, Sydney Centre for Evangelisation
Mr Kieran Walton	Private Secretary to the Archbishop

The Preparatory Commission supports the preparatory phases of the Synod, including the tasks outlined below. It may consult with canonical, liturgical, and other relevant experts as necessary to ensure the proper functioning and adherence to ecclesial norms of the Synod.

Diocesan Consultation

In its review of the submissions made to the Synod on Young People, the Plenary Council, and the Synod on Synodality, the Synod Working Party identified three significant and repeated longings that emerged: for more prayerful liturgies, more Christ-centred communities and a more mission-oriented Church in Sydney as outlined on [page 3](#). Upon approval from the Archbishop and the Council of Priests, it was decided that these three longings – which resonate with the three themes of participation, communion and mission from the universal Synod on Synodality - would constitute the themes of the Synod of Sydney 2026.

Further consultation with Sydney Catholics was sought in the months prior to the Synod in the hope of generating positive, practical, and faithful ideas to meet the three longings. Three regional consultations were held within the Archdiocese with the Archbishop participating in each.

Each consultation featured the Sydney Synod Prayer, the Nicene Creed, Lectio Divina on the Road to Emmaus Journey (Lk 24:13 – 35) and reflections on the three longings. This was followed by facilitated table sharing of ideas on how to meet each longing and subsequent discussion on how to strengthen the ideas shared.

At the conclusion of the consultations, the People of God in Sydney were invited to make formal submissions of ideas, either written or online, that addressed any of the three longings.

Spiritual, Catechetical, and Formational Preparation

‘The celebration of the Synod affords the Bishop *a privileged opportunity for the formation* of the faithful. It leads to a well-articulated catechesis of the faithful regarding the mystery of the Church and the participation of all the faithful in her mission. Such catechesis is carried on in the light of the teaching of the Church’s Magisterium and particularly that of the Second Vatican Council. To this end, concrete directives can be given to priests for preaching.’ ([Instr. III, C, 1](#)).

Resources such as prayer cards, brochures and social media content have been developed to promote the nature and purpose of the Synod to all the Sydney faithful and to invite prayer for its celebration and fruitfulness. Closer to the Synod itself, formation on synodality will be provided for Synod members.

Determining the Ideas

To formulate the topics of discussion at the Synod, Archbishop Fisher posed three questions to the Sydney faithful as part of the preparatory consultation phase:

- How can we have more prayerful liturgies?
- How can our communities be more Christ-centred?
- How can our local Church in Sydney be more mission-oriented?

Hundreds of submissions were generated in response. These were all collated and prayerfully discerned by the Synod Working Party. A refined list of positive, practical and faithful ideas for each longing was then presented to the Archbishop, who decided that the following ideas will be discussed at the Synod.

For more prayerful liturgies:

- Structured and regular training in Sacred Music for parishes and communities to be offered.
- Digital liturgical resources to be established and actively used in parishes and communities.
- Ongoing formation on the meaning and sacredness of the liturgy.
- A spirit of silence be encouraged before, during and after Mass.
- Instruction be offered yearly at clergy conferences to improve the content and delivery of homilies.
- In preparation for the International Eucharistic Congress to be held in Sydney in 2028, formation on the Eucharist be made widely available.

For more Christ-centred communities:

- Parishes in each deanery collaborate to offer more options for Sacraments and prayer; keep Churches open for longer.
- Inspiring catechesis emphasising our vocation as members of the Body of Christ.
- Develop new family-oriented and knowledge-rich children's sacramental programs that nurture ongoing Christian discipleship.
- Establish teams of parishioners to accompany the newly baptised for 12 months.
- Create parish-based prayer groups that bring people into personal relationship with Jesus.
- Parishes and communities have welcoming and hospitality ministries so that all are invited and welcomed.

For a more mission-oriented Church:

- Strengthen the formation and discipleship of those who lead, teach, and serve in Catholic education.
- Establish service and outreach groups in each parish.
- Strengthen digital evangelisation.
- Encourage and train clergy and parish/ community teams in different ways of evangelisation.
- Establish additional religious communities in the Archdiocese over the next ten years.
- Ensure wider availability of Alpha and similar programs.

Members will be asked to discern and vote on the ideas based on their potential practicality, fruitfulness and reception within parishes or communities. They will also have opportunity to suggest how to improve and/or implement the listed ideas.

The outcomes of the consultative vote at the Synod will strongly signal to the Archbishop where priorities for implementation should lie in the Archdiocese. Furthermore, any suggestions on how to strengthen and/or implement preferable ideas will help inform the synod documents and recommendations following the Synod.

Canonical Considerations

The Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese of Sydney, Fr Julian Wellspring, was consulted by the Synod Working Party to ensure conformity in all things pertaining to the Synod with the General Law of the Church. He shall, with others, expert in ecclesiastical disciplines, assist the Archbishop in drafting the Decrees and Declarations of the Synod. Upon review, Fr Wellspring confirmed that the proposed membership and conduct at the Synod complied with Canon 463 and the Instruction on Diocesan Synods.

Liturgy and Prayer

Liturgies for Sydney Synod 2026 include:

- Opening Mass (April 30) to commission members of the Synod.
- Daily Mass (May 1 and May 2).
- Closing Sunday Mass (May 3) to give thanksgiving for the Synod.

Prayer promoting the success of the Synod included:

- Synod Prayer Card provided across the Archdiocese.
- Sunday Mass General Intercessions provided to parishes for use prior to and following the Synod.
- Lectio Divina centred on the Emmaus Journey (Lk 24:13-35) at both the Synod regional consultations and at the opening session of the Synod.
- Intercessory Adoration for the Synod will be held inside the Crypt of St Mary's Cathedral during the synodal sessions on Friday (1 May) and Saturday (2 May). This will be open to all Sydney Catholics.

6. THE CONDUCT OF THE SYNOD

In accord with the Instruction on Synods, solemn liturgies will take place at the opening and closure of the Sydney Synod at St Mary's Cathedral, according to the prescriptions set out in *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*. As noted, members of the Synod will make the Profession of Faith and an Oath of Fidelity in accordance with the norms of [Canon 833,1°](#).

Six synodal sessions will take place from 1 May to 2 May 2026, providing sufficient time for members to listen to the ideas presented at the Synod, share their input and signal their preferences for implementation. These will include the following:

- The opening session will introduce the Synod's purpose and process alongside an explanation of the three longings for prayerful liturgies, Christ-centred communities, and a mission-oriented Church.
- The second session encourages Synod members to engage with the three longings and the Synod ideas that aim to meet them.
- Three main sessions, one dedicated for each longing, will feature expert testimony on the longing, a re-presentation of the Synod ideas for that longing and facilitated table sharing among the Synod members in response to these ideas. At the conclusion of each of these sessions, Synod members will have the opportunity to vote for their preferences.
- The closing session will summarise the results of the voting, after which, the Archbishop will conclude the synod sessions.

Further details on the procedures and schedule for the Synod can be found in [Appendix B](#).

The Instruction on Diocesan Synods notes, '[i]n view of the bonds uniting the particular Church and her Pastor with the universal Church and the Roman Pontiff, the Bishop has the duty *to exclude from the synod discussions* theses or positions - as well as proposals submitted to the Synod with the mere intention of transmitting to the Holy See "polls" in their regard - discordant with the perennial doctrine of the Church or the Magisterium or concerning material reserved to Supreme ecclesiastical authority or to other ecclesiastical authorities' ([Instr. IV, 4](#)).

Concerning the outcome of the synod votes, the Archbishop *always remains free* to determine what weight is to be attributed to their results. Since the Synod *is not a college* with decision-making capacity, such votes are not intended as a binding majority decision. It should be noted, rather, that their purpose is to indicate the degree of concurrence amongst the synod members regarding a given proposal. Consequently, the Archbishop may wish to accept the common view expressed by the members of the Synod, unless there should exist some grave obstacle to be evaluated by him "coram Domino" ('before the Lord').

The Archbishop will then entrust to the members of the preparatory commission the task of preparing the draft texts of the synodal documents.

7. DECREES AND DECLARATIONS

The synodal documents will include recommendations to the Archbishop for his consideration as possible actions to meet the needs of the Archdiocese.

The Archbishop then has responsibility to draw up decrees and statutes based on the recommendations that he accepts. He does this, cognisant of the needs, wishes, and desires of the People of God but also cognisant of the general law of the Church.

The Archbishop alone signs the synodal declarations and decrees, by which means he promotes and fosters the pastoral norms for diocesan life.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Selection of Synod Members

General Criteria

- ‘To assure the validity of their contribution for the good of the Church, it is important that the lay faithful taking part in the Synod should be chosen from amongst those distinguished by their ‘firm faith, good morals and prudence’ ([Can. 512 §3](#)). It is an indispensable requisite that these members of the lay faithful be in a canonically regular situation in order to take part in the Synod.’ ([Instr. II, 3.1](#)).
 - These criteria were communicated to those entrusted with providing nominations.
 - Prospective Synod delegates were required to fill in a nomination form confirming their parish and/or community, involvement in ministries, marital status and age.
- The following definitions were adhered to:
 - **Firm faith:** be a practicing member of the Catholic Church and be well catechised. To have undergone their own Christian initiation through Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.
 - **Good morals:** living a good Christian life and free from any impediment of canonical law.
 - **Prudence:** be known in the Catholic Community for their Christ-centred leadership and practical wisdom.
- Participants are invited as individual members of the people of God seeking to discern God’s will and not as representatives of any particular group.

Composition of the Synod

CATEGORY	#	COMPOSITION
Required Clergy	32	As per Canon 463 §1 , the following were obliged to participate in the Synod: The Archbishop, Auxiliary Bishops, Vicars General, Episcopal Vicars and the Judicial Vicar, Council of Priests, Rectors of the Diocesan Major Seminaries and the Deans.
Deanery Representatives	54	Each Deanery selects members of “firm faith, good morals and prudence” (Instr. II, 3.1) from amongst its numbers. 6 Synod members were nominated per Deanery according to the following profiles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 priest representative ordained in the last 15 years. • 1 young person (must be between 18-35 and must be a parish volunteer or work in the parish). • 3 other parish volunteers or paid workers (to include at least a man, a woman and at least one Dempsey medallist). • 1 person involved in Sacramental or formation programs (either as a paid or volunteer - possibly a pastoral associate, catechist, schoolteacher, alpha or RCIA coordinator, etc).

Ecclesial Communities	7	Representatives from the Legion of Mary, Disciples of Jesus, Servants of Jesus, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Emmanuel Community, Neocatechumenal Way and Couples for Christ.
Migrant Chaplaincies and Communities	12	Representatives from the Tongan, African, Syriac, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Samoan, Chinese, Korean, and Fijian Catholic communities.
Religious Communities	7	Representatives from the Sisters of Our Lady of China (SOLC), Marist Brothers (FMS), Sister Disciples of the Divine Master (PDDM), Patrician Brothers (FSP), Pauline Fathers (OSPPE), Capuchin Franciscans (OFM Cap) and Missionary Sisters of the Holy Spirit (SSPS).
Education Apostolate	21	Were chosen from Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS), Independent Catholic Schools, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD), Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services (SCECS), Tertiary Education and University Chaplaincies.
Parents with Children in Catholic Schools	4	Parents with children were nominated from SCS and Independent Schools.
Health and Welfare	10	Were nominated from Catholic Mission, David's Place, Ephpheta Centre, St Vincent de Paul Society, Justice and Peace Office, CatholicCare, Catholic Healthcare and St Vincent Hospital.
Aboriginal Catholic Ministry (ACM)	2	Executive Officer and Reconciliation Community Member.
Sydney Centre of Evangelisation (SCE)	5	SCE Director along with leaders from Life, Marriage and Family (LMF), Parish Renewal Team (PRT) and Sydney Catholic Youth (SCY).
Archbishop's Delegates	20	Chosen by the Archbishop as per the Instruction on Diocesan Synods (Instr. II, 4).

B: Procedures for the Synod

General Schedule

DAY	TIME	DETAILS
THURSDAY (30 April)	5.30 PM	<i>Opening Mass</i> * Includes Profession of Faith and an Oath of Fidelity as per Canon 833,1° .
	Light Supper	
FRIDAY (1 May)	8.00 AM	<i>Daily Mass</i>
	9.00 – 10.30 AM	<i>Session 1: Prayer and Introduction</i>
	Morning Tea	
	11.00 – 12.30 PM	<i>Session 2: Responding to the Longings</i>
	Lunch	
	1.30 – 4.00 PM	<i>Session 3: More Prayerful Liturgies</i>
SATURDAY (2 May)	8.00 AM	<i>Daily Mass</i>
	9.00 – 11.30 AM	<i>Session 4: More Christ-centred Communities</i>
	Lunch	
	12.30 – 3.00 PM	<i>Session 5: A More Mission-oriented Church</i>
	Afternoon Tea	
	3.30 – 4.00 PM	<i>Session 6: Closing Session</i>
SUNDAY (3 May)	10.30 AM	<i>Closing Mass</i>
	Celebratory Sausage Sizzle	

Synod Voting Guidelines

- Synod members serve a consultative function to assist the Archbishop.
- The following discernment criteria regarding voting has been suggested at the Synod:
 - How practical is the idea?
 - *Is it realistic, actionable and suitable to the Archdiocese's mission and capacity?*
 - *Can it be implemented within the next 5 – 10 years?*
 - How fruitful will this idea be in meeting the longing?
 - How will this idea be received in the community?
 - *Does the idea resonate with people's faith experience, foster unity and align with present pastoral realities?*
 - *Is the idea readily implementable and can it operate sustainably?*

- Voting will be conducted using voting cards to indicate preferences.
 - Members possess three “placet” (affirmative) votes for the presented Synod ideas for each longing to indicate preferences.
 - Members will also have the option of attaching a brief comment to their vote.
 - They may wish to suggest how the idea may be strengthened – in the sense the idea is built upon to be made potentially more practical, fruitful, and well-received.
 - They may also suggest how the idea may be implemented.
 - Voting will be secret.
 - The results of voting will be tallied up electronically and presented to Synod members at the end of each longing session.

Structure for Session 1: Prayer and Introduction

The Master of Ceremonies (MC) for the Opening Session will be Ms Selina Hasham.

1. **Welcome of Synod Members and Observers:** Ms Selina Hasham.
2. **The Archbishop’s Welcome:** Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP.
3. **Welcome to Country:** Aunty Barbara Simms.
4. **Synod Prayer and Reflection:** Sr Anastasia Reeves OP. Includes the Sydney Synod 2026 Prayer and Road to Emmaus Lectio Divina (Lk 24:13 – 35).
5. **Synod Purpose and Process:** Mr Daniel Ang.
6. **Explanation of the Longings:** Bishop Daniel Meagher.
7. **Explanation of Discernment and Voting Criteria:** Sr Anastasia Reeves OP.
8. **Close Session:** Ms Selina Hasham.

Structure for Session 2: Responding to the Longings

The Masters of Ceremonies (MCs) for this session will be Mrs Natalie Limbers, Mrs Philippa Manley and Mrs Alison de Sousa. All three belong to the Synod Working Party.

This session will consist of three half-hour slots, one for each longing. The following structure will be repeated for each of the three longings:

1. **Attuning to the Longing:** consists of the MC providing a heartfelt reflection on the longing, followed by a short video highlighting the longing, a presentation and explanation of the Synod ideas for that longing followed by a reminder of the discernment criteria for voting.
2. **Prayerful Silence:** ideas will be present on the screens during this time.
3. **Table Discussion:** facilitator ensures each person has equal time to share initial thoughts on which Synod idea resonated most with them for that longing.
4. **Break:** time for light refreshment, prayer and reflection in between the longings.

Structure for Sessions 3, 4 & 5: The Longings

The Masters of Ceremonies (MCs) for these three sessions will be Sr Anastasia Reeves OP and Mrs Philippa Manley. Both belong to the Synod Working Party.

1. **Expert Testimony:** qualified people in the longing were asked to speak during each of the three sessions. They will be required to explain the longing, speak to the “pain” and yearning people may experience in relation to the longing and what can be possible in meeting the longing.

The following speakers were chosen to provide expert testimony:

- 1) *Prayerful Liturgies:* Fr Bijoy Joseph STL.
 - 2) *Christ Centred Community:* Mr Kevin and Mrs Helen Wagner (Emmanuel Community).
 - 3) *Mission Oriented Church:* Fr Christopher Ryan MGL.
1. **Re-presentation of the Ideas:** the six ideas selected by the Archbishop for the longing will be presented and elaborated upon by the MC for the Synod members.
 2. **Silent Prayer:** Synod members will be given a few minutes to pray and reflect on the Expert Testimony in the context of the Synod ideas for that longing.
 3. **Spiritual Conversation:** will be conducted within the tables.
 - 1) *Question 1:* “Which one idea is most important and why?”
 - 2) *Silent Prayer.*
 - 3) *Question 2:* “How would you strengthen or implement one of these ideas?”
 4. **Break:** a time of refreshment, prayer and reflection.
 5. **Facilitator Summaries:** facilitators on several tables will be asked by the MC to summarise the spiritual conversation that occurred at their tables.
 6. **Break:** a time of refreshment, further prayer and reflection.
 7. **Prayer:** a period of prayer will be observed in the hall in preparation for the voting.
 8. **Voting:** each member on the table (except facilitator) anonymously places 3 *placet* votes for most preferred ideas on the voting card. There is also the option for members to leave a brief comment on how they may strengthen and/or implement the idea for their selected ideas. Facilitator to collect voting cards and submit them electronically into the digital voting platform. After the submission of votes is complete, the facilitator completes and signs a voting certification form. The voting cards, the facilitator summary, and the voting certification form is then packed and sealed in an envelope to be handed to a Synod Working Party member.
 9. **Results Announced:** upon conclusion of the voting, the MC will announce the results for that longing.

Structure for Closing Session

The Master of Ceremonies (MC) for the Closing Session will be Ms Selina Hasham.

1. **Invite Members to Seats:** Ms Selina Hasham.
2. **Thank You to Synod Members from the Synod Working Party:** Bishop Daniel Meagher.
3. **Summary of Voting Results:** Ms Selina Hasham.
4. **Archbishop’s Reflection and Close of Synodal Sessions:** Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP.