

## *Dialogue I*

# *How do we listen to each other in the Church?*

### ***Let's introduce ourselves***

- Each person briefly introduces themselves.
- Activity to put people at ease: each person is asked to describe their favorite food.
- Go around the table briefly to ask each participant how they feel and validate it.

### ***Introduction***

In this meeting, we want to reflect on our experience of listening in our Christian community, our movement, our diocese? It is precisely an exercise of listening that we will deepen this great theme. We will reflect and pray together, sharing our experiences of listening and not listening. Ask ourselves: what is my experience of listening in the Church? Am I being listened to and am I being heard?"

### ***Prayer time***

Let's take the time to arrive with who we are and center ourselves on our breathing. Let's unite our spirit with our body, without judging ourselves; let's dispose ourselves to hear the breath of the Holy Spirit breathing in us and uniting us to one another. Let us be willing to enter into an attitude of listening and discernment.

Let us recite together the prayer to the Holy Spirit for the beginning of a synodal meeting.

### ***Prayer for the Beginning of a Synodal Meeting***

*Here we are before you, Holy Spirit; in your name we are gathered.*

*You, our only counselor, come to us, dwell with us, deign to dwell in our hearts.*

*Teach us where to go, show us how we should walk together.*

*We who are weak and sinful, do not allow ourselves to cause disorder.*

*Let us not be led astray by ignorance, nor let partiality influence our actions.*

*May we find our unity in you, without straying from the path of truth and justice, advancing together towards eternal life.*

*We ask this of you, who act in all times and places, in the communion of the Father and the Son, for ever and ever. Amen*

### **Word of God**

Mark, 7:31-37

Jesus left the territory of Tiro, and returned by Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, crossing the land of the Decapolis. A deaf man was brought to him, who had difficulty speaking, and he was asked to lay his hands on him. He took him aside from the crowd, put his fingers in his ears, and touched his tongue with his own saliva; then, raising his eyes to heaven, he sighed, and said: Ephphatha, that is to say, open yourself. Immediately his ears were open, his tongue loosened, and he spoke very well. Jesus told them not to tell anyone about it; but the more he recommended it to them, the more they published it. They were in the greatest astonishment, and said: He does everything wonderfully; even he makes the deaf hear, and the dumb speak.

*(Time of silence)*

**Song** Be Not Afraid (John Michael Talbot)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2oSiX1WKg4w>

You shall cross the barren desert  
But you shall not die of thirst  
You shall wander far in safety  
Though you do not know the way  
You shall speak your words in foreign lands  
And all will understand  
You shall see the face of God and live

Be not afraid  
I go before you always  
Come follow me  
And I will give you rest

Blessed is your poor, for the kingdom shall  
be theirs.  
Blessed are you that weep and mourn  
For one day you shall laugh

And if wicked men insult and hate you all  
because of me.  
Blessed, blessed are you

Be not afraid  
I go before you always  
Come follow me  
And I will give you rest

Be not afraid  
I go before you always  
Come follow me  
And I will give you rest

Be not afraid  
I go before you always  
Come follow me  
And I will give you rest

### **First round of dialogue (twenty minutes)**

*You identify an experience where you felt listened to or not listened to in the Church.*

*(What happens to you when you let this experience of listening or not listening come up?)*

Everyone has an equal time to speak. There is no discussion during this round: each participant listens deeply to what the other is expressing, in an attitude of listening to what the Holy Spirit is trying to tell us in ourselves, through the person who is expressing himself or herself and in the group.

*(Time of silence)*

### ***Second round of dialogue (twenty minutes)***

*As you listen to others, what does this bring out in you as joy and hope or as difficulty, obstacles or wound?*

In a second round, the participants express what struck them most in what was shared, in the words expressed as well as in the silences (an attitude of attentive and spiritual listening is maintained, not confrontation or debate) but a respectful dialogue.

*(Time of silence)*

### ***Third round of dialogue (twenty minutes)***

*What does the Holy Spirit whisper in you, what does he teach you about yourself, your environment, your community, towards what growth does he direct your steps; towards what strength to develop, charisma to discover, to cultivate as an individual and also as the Church.*

In this third round, the participants reflect on what seems to emerge, what resonated during the conversation and which touched them, moved them and made sense to them, followed by a time of silence. We seek to discern what the spirit is saying to the Church through our dialogue.

### ***Conclusion***

Go around the table and ask participants to summarize in a few words what they remember from the workshop on "How do we listen to each other in the Church" and how they found the process. A secretary takes note of these comments and prepares a summary to conclude the meeting. (See the last page of this document for tips on writing your report).

### ***Prayer of thanksgiving***

Let us recite together Psalm 99:

Praise the Lord, all the earth; serve the Lord with gladness; come to him with songs of joy!

Know that the Lord is God: he has made us, and we are his, his people, his flock.

Come to his house and give thanks to him, to his dwelling place and sing his praises; give thanks to him and bless his name!

Yes, the Lord is good, his love is eternal, his faithfulness remains from age to age.

### ***A time of gratitude***

*As you return home and think about what you have heard in these exchanges, in the presence of the Risen One, ask yourself today and in the days to come: What is rising in me? What is the call that the Lord is placing in me? Perhaps you might catch yourself saying, "Lord, what do you want me to do?"*

### ***To write the meeting report***

This report should not exceed 2 printed pages.

1. Describe the group that met: level of involvement in the church, membership (parishioners, religious, committee, service or movement members), young or old, homogeneous or diverse group, etc.
2. How did the process go: smoothly? with difficulty? Why did it happen? If you adapted it, how?
3. From the notes that were collected at the conclusion (after the third round of dialogue), present the main conclusions reached by the group: findings, sources of joy or sadness, awareness, proposals, hopes, etc.
4. Did the group members leave satisfied with the experience? Why or why not?

Please send your report to Mr. André Inkel.

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