

## Walking together



In 2023, the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops will take place in Rome. While recent Synods have examined themes such as the new evangelization, the family, young people, and the Amazon, the present Synod focuses on the topic of synodality itself. For this Synod the preparation will extend over two years beginning October 2021.

What does synodality mean? Essentially it is a walking together...a listening together to the Holy Spirit and one another...a discerning together...a participating together in the mission of the Church, which is evangelization. Every member of the Church is called to share in this way of synodality.

For this Synod focused on synodality itself, the Church has called upon those who live the contemplative, monastic life to show the way, so to speak, as they live the mystery and the practical reality of synodality everyday. For this reason Cardinal Grech, the Secretary General of this Synod addressed a letter to all monks and nuns ahead of the opening of this synodal process. Here in Fatima our Sr. Maria of the Eucharist was asked to share her thoughts on this theme in a short video made in our parlour by our Diocesan representative for the Synod, Leopoldina Reis Simões. Among other thoughts Sr. Maria shared the following:

“Our life is always a life of silence because only in silence there is listening, and the first thing that we ought to listen to is the voice of God in us, His presence in us. When we understand the presence of God, of His love for us, we are ready to open ourselves to love for others, to enter in communion with others, to give them not our love, but the love of God which lives in us.”

The objective of this Synodal Process ...is a journey of growing authentically towards the communion and mission that God calls the Church to live out in the third millennium.

### **Prayer for the Synod**

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name. With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts; Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it. We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions. Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right. All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever. Amen.