



PROCESS FOR SYNODAL CHURCH 2021-2024
Pope Francis launched the *Synod on Synodality*, now known as *Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission*, in October 2021. He recently extended the process to October 2024 to provide 'two moments' for deeper reflection by the Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome.

Continental Assemblies

For this synod, the subdivision decided for continental assemblies are:



CONTINENTAL PHASE OF THE SYNOD

Australia is included in the Oceania Continent which includes the Bishops Conferences of Australia, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, New Zealand and Pacific Nations. These are all part of the Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania under the leadership of Archbishop Peter Loy Chong, Archbishop of Suva.

<http://www.gcatholic.org/dioceses/conference/314.htm>

2021	Local Diocesan Listening Phase
2022	Continental Phase ♦ Diocesan Synthesis Reports ♦ National Synthesis Reports ♦ Continental Synthesis Document
2023	Universal Phase Continental Assemblies January to March Synod of Bishops Assembly 4 to 29 October
2024	Universal Phase continued Synod of Bishops Assembly October

PREPARING CONTINENTAL PHASE DOCUMENT



From 22 September to 2 October, around 30 theologians, bishops and church workers, representing six continents gathered in Frascati to draft the working document for the continental phase of the Synod.

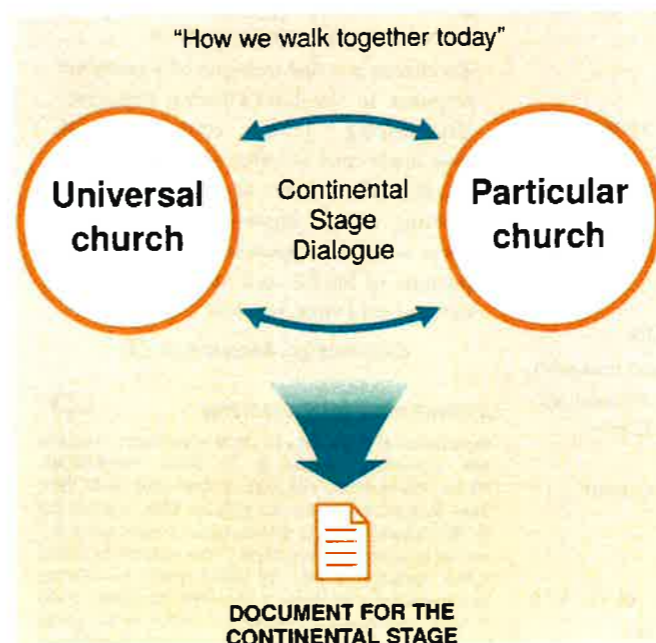
Their task was to authentically synthesise the reports from 112 bishops conferences around the world to produce a new document. This document will guide the next phase of the Synod in 2023.

Three Australians Susan Pascoe, Fr Ormond Rush and Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president Perth Archbishop Timothy Costelloe were part of this group. Susan Pascoe said that all participants were asked to bring a symbol of what synodality means to them. She chose to bring a copy of the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* which invites all Australians to walk with Australia's First Nations peoples in a movement for a better future.

The Synthesising Process

Before the meeting began, Susan Pascoe told *NCR* that each participant was given the synod reports from around 10-15 countries and were asked to read them at least three times and then to offer a country by country analysis and then to draft a synthesis of the themes that emerged.

All of the participants were organised into different rounds of conversations in different small group configurations based separately on their continent of origin, their place in church (laity, religious, clergy) and gender.



Austen Ivereigh from the UK said the process allowed different perspectives on the same material. He also noted that the process reflected the realities of the synodal processes, where the voices from Africa, Asia and Latin America are just as strong as those coming from Europe, North America and Oceania.

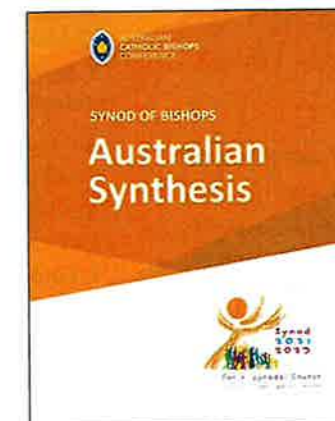
The final document will be available when it is launched at a Vatican Press Conference on 27 October.

BROKEN BAY SYNTHESIS DOCUMENT



Available at: <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/our-faith/evangelisation/synod-of-bishops-diocesan-synthesis>

AUSTRALIAN BISHOPS SYNTHESIS DOCUMENT



Available at: <https://www.catholic.org.au/synodalchurch>

CHALLENGE OF THE CONTINENTAL PHASE

Sr Nathalie Bequart, Under-Secretary of the Secretariat of the Synod stated:

The challenge is to continue the synodal conversion of all parts of the Church. This requires a real change of mentality as well as new ways of living out the life and mission in the Church as brothers and sisters in Christ, clothed in equal dignity. This requires, among other things, training in listening, discernment and teamwork. This cannot be done without young people, women, the poorest and those who are suffering, especially victims of abuse. We must continue to hear and include these voices in the process of discernment because they are the driving forces of synodality.