



December 7, 2022

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

A synodal Church is one that walks together. We are pilgrims on a journey but not as isolated, solitary travelers. United as the Body of Christ, we walk together, supporting, encouraging, sharing and discerning the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Pope Francis asked the Church to pray together, to hold conversations, to listen to one another and the Holy Spirit. In the Diocese of Ogdensburg, pastors attended regional gatherings with parish delegates to pray and share their answers to meaningful questions. Pastors and delegates were asked to bring the same process to their parishes, and then report the nature and content of those conversations.

In that same synodal process, the submitted reports and surveys were synthesized in our 10-page diocesan report. Our report was then included in a similar state-wide effort, resulting in a regional document. The regional reports from around the country were used to create the national synod report. Our national report and those from around the world will be used by Church leadership during the formal Synod meetings planned for 2023 and 2024.

In the meantime, I pray our local conversations continue to bear fruit. I hope we apply our synodal synthesis to our diocesan goals. We are working to apply what we learned in these discussions to our diocesan mission, ministry and offices.

I invite you to read the report and pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance. Consider the themes that emerged from the conversations, as well as the *Committee Observations*. Do they strike a chord as we journey together as the Body of Christ? Do they highlight areas where you and your parish radiate the love of Christ or areas for improvement?

This report is the culmination of many, many hours of planning, prayer, discussion and reporting. My gratitude goes to all who participated. Whether at a Pastoral Council meeting or a catechesis discussion or around the dining room table, I pray we continue drawing closer to one another and to God, praying together, speaking about our faith, encouraging one another and building up our local Church by being Christ-led, Christ-fed and hope-filled.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg