

Basic Information about the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of Bishops on Young People #Synod2018



Pope Francis has dedicated the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to be focused on the theme of "Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment." It will be held in Rome in October 2018.

Pope Francis noted: "The theme, an expression of the pastoral care of the Church for the young, is consistent with the results of the recent Synod assemblies on the family and with the content of the post-Synodal apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*. Its aim is to accompany the young on their existential journey to maturity so that, through a process of discernment, they discover their plan for life and realize it with joy, opening up to the encounter with God and with human beings, and actively participating in the edification of the Church and of society."

What is the theme of the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of Bishops?

"Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment"

What are the dates of the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of Bishops?

October 2018

Where will the 15th Ordinary Synod take place?

Vatican City

What is the purpose of the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of Bishops?

The *Preparatory Document* describes the purpose of the 15th Ordinary General Assembly as an opportunity for the Church "to examine herself on how she can lead young people to recognize and accept the call to the fullness of life and love, and to ask young people to help her in identifying the most effective way to announce the Good News today."

What documents were released in advance of the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops?

January 2017: The Synod Preparatory Document looks at the current global situation, the lives of young people in the modern world, and the process of walking with young people as they discern their personal "vocation of love." The document ends with a questionnaire about young people and

vocational discernment inviting responses that will be incorporated into a working document for the October 2018 synod.

"Make your voice heard, let it resonate in communities and let it be heard by your shepherds of souls"

Pope Francis also released his **Letter to Young People** in which he entrusted the *Preparatory Document* to young people as a "compass on this synodal journey". Pope Francis tells young people "do not be afraid to listen to the Spirit" and encourages them to "undertake a journey of discernment to discover God's plan" for their lives. Pope Francis' letter encourages young people to let their voices be heard throughout the synodal journey and he ends by entrusting them to the Blessed Mother that she might guide them in responding "Here I am" to God's call.

April 2017: During Palm Sunday weekend, Pope Francis addressed the global community of youth and young adults, and the ministry leaders accompanying them in Rome, connecting the journey of the Synod with the preparations for World Youth Day. He held a special prayer service dedicated to the Blessed Mother at which he spoke to the leaders and young people gathered in Rome. On Palm Sunday, he entrusted the WYD Cross to the young people of Panama.

June 2017: The Vatican Synod Office launched a special website and survey aimed directly at youth and young adults. The survey will help the Synod Office better understand the realities of young people today and their pathways to vocation and the Catholic faith.

Other Questions

Who are the "young people" of the Church?

Although the United States defines "youth" as ages 12-18 and "young adult" as ages 18-39, the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops will focus on ages 16-29, as defined in the *Preparatory Document*. The Synod on Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment will be aimed at this particular age group and their pastoral needs.

What does "vocation" mean in the context of this Synod?

The *Synod Preparatory Document* speaks of the "vocation to love," which "takes concrete form in everyday life through a series of choices, which find expression in the states of life (marriage, ordained ministry, consecrated life, etc.), professions, forms of social and civil commitment, lifestyle, the management of time and money, etc." In other words, the concept of "vocation" in this context is very broad. So when speaking of the states of life and the vocational journey of young people towards them, the U.S. bishops understand "vocation" to mean the pathway to marriage, ordained ministry, and consecrated life.

More Information on Young People

Youth Ministry: Youth are defined as young people ages 12 to 18 in junior high school or high school. Youth Ministry is the Church's pastoral action with this age group in parishes, grade schools and high schools, dioceses, movements, apostolates, and other ministry contexts.

Young Adult Ministry: Young adults are defined as young people ages 19 to 39 who are single or married, divorced or widowed, and in college, working, unemployed, incarcerated, or in the military. Young Adult Ministry is the Church's pastoral action with these age groups in parishes, college and university campuses, dioceses, movements, apostolates, and other ministry contexts.

Pastoral Juvenil: In Hispanic-Latino cultures, "jovenes" are those young people ages approximately 16 to 30 (or until marriage), and Pastoral Juvenil Hispana is the Church's pastoral action with these young men and women in parishes, schools, dioceses, movements, apostolates, and other ministry contexts.

Source: usccb.org