Vatican
Vatican News
Leafy green arches are visible in front of the dome of St. Peter's Basilica with people sitting in

Pope Francis, seated before an image of Our Lady, Undoer of Knots, leads an evening Marian prayer service in the Vatican Gardens May 31, 2021. The service finished a monthlong rosary marathon to pray for the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. (CNS photo/Filippo Monteforte, Reuters pool)

Cindy Wooden

View Author Profile



Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Vatican City — September 28, 2023
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

In addition to their three-day retreat outside of Rome, more than 350 members of the assembly of the Synod of Bishops are expected to go on a pilgrimage "to the roots of the Christian faith," visiting the Rome catacombs.

Paolo Ruffini, prefect of the Dicastery for Communication and president of the synod communication committee, told reporters Sept. 28 that the synod pilgrimage Oct. 12 "is an integral part of the synod program."

The pilgrimage, scheduled from 3 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., will take participants to the catacombs of St. Sebastian and of St. Callistus and the nearby "Domine Quo Vadis" Church. The church is where, according to tradition, St. Peter fleeing persecution in

Rome, met the risen Jesus and asked him, "Domine quo vadis? (Lord, where are you going) and Jesus replied, "I am coming to Rome to be crucified again." St. Peter, taking it as a rebuke, turned back to Rome where he was martyred.

Advertisement

Ruffini said the pilgrimage along the ancient Appian Way will be a time "to pray and walk together and reflect on the spiritual experience of the synod."

In addition to daily prayer together and Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the beginning of each section of the synod discussions, synod members will join migrants and refugees Oct. 19 for a special evening prayer service in St. Peter's Square, Ruffini said, and they will pray the rosary together in the Vatican Gardens the evening of Oct. 25.

The Vatican also will livestream the synod Masses and the introductory sessions for each section of the synod discussions: Oct. 4, the opening synod session and introduction of the theme, "For a synodal church: An integral experience"; Oct. 9, introduction to the discussion on "A communion that radiates"; Oct. 13, introduction to the discussion on "Co-responsibility in Mission"; Oct. 18, introduction to the discussion on "Participation, governance and authority"; and Oct. 23, the presentation of an outline of a synthesis of the work.

This story appears in the **Synod on Synodality** feature series. View the full series.