News



Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Brownsville, Texas, speaks June 15, 2023, during the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' spring plenary assembly in Orlando, Fla. Bishop Flores is chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Doctrine. (OSV News photo/Bob Roller)

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An upcoming webinar series hosted by a U.S. bishop will explore synodality through the prism of Jesus Christ's words at the Last Supper.

Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville, Texas, leads three "John 14 and Synodality" webinars, with the sessions taking place over Zoom Feb. 14 (Ash Wednesday) at 4 p.m. EST, March 6 at 3 p.m. EST and March 19 at 4 p.m. EDT. A separate Jan. 31 webinar titled "Conversation in the Spirit" at noon EST features U.S. Jesuit Fr. David McCallum, executive director of the Discerning Leadership Program in Rome.

Participants can obtain more information about and register for the sessions at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' dedicated webpage for the Synod on Synodality .

Flores, who serves as chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Doctrine, has shepherded the synodal process in the U.S.

Launched by Pope Francis, the first session of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops organized around the theme "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission," commonly known as the Synod on Synodality, took place Oct. 4-29, 2023, in Rome.

Ahead of the concluding session of the synod, which will take place in Rome this October, dioceses across the U.S. have been asked to hold additional listening sessions in the next few months, following a request from the Vatican's Secretariat for the Synod of Bishops.

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Flores' upcoming webinars will examine a portion of John's Gospel that forms part of the "Last Supper Discourse" (Jn 14:1-17:26), which the bishops' U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults says "reflects Eucharistic themes of divine love, a union with Christ as intimate as a branch is to a vine, and a priestly prayer for the Apostles and those who would believe through them."

In this catechism, the U.S. bishops note that unlike the other three Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, John's Gospel narrative does not contain a specific account of the institution of the Eucharist. Instead, John recounts Jesus washing his disciples' feet (Jn 13:1-20), which the bishops' catechism notes "sets the tone of humble service, exemplified by Christ and fulfilled in his death on the cross."

In John 14, Jesus reassures the disciples that he is entering into his suffering and death "to prepare a place" for them (Jn 14:2-3), and affirms that he is "the way and the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6), as well as his oneness with the Father (Jn 14:10-11, 20).

He also promises the coming of the Holy Spirit, "the Advocate," who will "be with you always" and who "will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you" (Jn 14:16, 26).

The U.S. bishops have stressed the vital role of the Holy Spirit in the synod, as the universal church has invited synod participants to invoke the Holy Spirit in synodal activities by using the the prayer "Adsumus Sancte Spiritus" ("We stand before you, Holy Spirit") adapted from the prayer that opened each session of the Second Vatican Council.

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