

## "Synods and Synodality: History, Purpose, and Current Controversies"

Co-sponsored by En Route Books & Media (<https://enroutebooksandmedia.com/>) and the International Catholic Jurists Forum (<https://icjurist.org/>). Dr. Robert Fastiggi and Michael Vacca, J.D., M.A. will co-moderate the podcast interviews.

**Description:** The 2023 and 2024 Synods on Synodality have generated both interest and controversy. This seven-part series explores the role of Church synods (or councils) in Catholic history; the different types of synods (e.g. local, regional, ecumenical); and why the recent synods under Pope Francis have generated so much controversy. The final two podcasts will explore possibilities for the future of the Church. The podcasts will be scheduled for Wednesday evenings from January 15, 2025 to February 26, 2025. Most begin at 7 PM EST except for the February 12, 19, and 26 podcasts (see indicated times).

**1. (Jan. 15, 2025):** What is a Church synod or council? How does the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15 serve as a prototype? What is the difference between a local diocesan synod, a regional provincial synod, a national synod, and an ecumenical synod or council? How are we to understand the Synod of Bishops begun by Paul VI after Vatican II? What were some good and not so good local synods in Church history? Interview with Dr. Robert Fastiggi. 7 PM EST.

**2. (Jan. 22, 2025):** What is an ecumenical council? How do we know that a council is ecumenical? Why does the Catholic Church accept 21 councils as ecumenical but the Eastern Orthodox only accept the first 7? What have been some of the most important ecumenical councils in Catholic Church history? Interview with Dr. Robert Fastiggi and (possibly) Dr. Matthew Bunson of EWTN: 7 PM EST.

**3. (Jan. 29, 2025):** How does Synodality work within the Eastern Catholic Churches? How do these synods enjoy authority without compromising the authority of the Roman Pontiff? Is Eastern Catholic synodality a possible motivation for Pope Francis's desire to promote synodality in the Catholic Church today? Interview with Father Deacon Robert Kelsko of EWTN and Fr. Daniel Dozier, Pastor of St. George the Great Byzantine Catholic Church, Olympia, WA (and possibly Fr. Marcus Shammami, Chaldean Catholic priest of the Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle Southfield, MI, and Fr. Christiaan Kappes, Dean of St. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary, Pittsburgh): 7 PM EST.

**4. (Feb. 5, 2025):** The Synod of Bishops from Paul VI through Benedict XVI: What topics have been discussed? What documents of note have been issued as a result of these Synods? Interview with Dr. Eduardo Echeverria of Sacred Heart Major Seminary, Detroit, Michigan). 7 PM EST.

**5. (Feb. 12, 2025):** The Synods of Synodality under Pope Francis. Why have some of the Synods generated so much controversy? What documents have resulted from these Synods? How are we to understand synodality? What are some highlights of the final document of the Synods on Synodality? What parts might need further clarification and development? How will synodality influence the Church's future? Interview with Sr. Bernadette Reis, FSP, who has worked for the Holy See, and Dr. Pedro Gabriel, author of *The Orthodoxy of Amoris Laetitia*; 3 PM EST/ 8 PM in Portugal (where Dr. Gabriel lives).

**6. (Feb. 19, 2025):** Interview with Edward Pentin, who will discuss his College of Cardinals Report (time to be determined)

**7. (Feb. 26, 2025):** Interview with author George Weigel, who will discuss what he believes is needed for revitalization and renewal in the Catholic Church; (scheduled for 11 AM EST).