



OSA PRAYER VIGIL FOR THE SYNOD

We want to be witnesses, Pope Francis tells us, like Peter and Paul, “who were capable of reassessing things in the light of events, witnesses of an impulse that led them to stop and think... They were disciples of the Holy Spirit, who showed them the geography of salvation, opening doors and windows, breaking down walls...”

(Address to the Faithful of Rome 18 Sept. 2021)

Monasterio Santa María de Gracia
Huelva
Federación Ntra. Sra. del Buen Consejo y San Alonso de Orozco. España.

SCHEDULE

1. Opening.
2. Invocation of the Holy Spirit. Song
3. Lights of the Word.
4. Contemplation and forgiveness.
5. Intercessions and Prayer.
6. Dismissal.

MATERIAL:

1. **PASCHAL CANDLE** that will be at the center of the Altar. It is lit during the song to the Holy Spirit.
2. Four candle holders placed around the paschal candle and four candles to be carried in due course and lit from the paschal candle.
3. Tray with a folded alb.
4. Flowers or petals.

1. Opening Welcome.

Augustinian brothers and sisters from all over the world: What a great synodal richness it is to call ourselves "Brothers and Sisters" and "of the whole world" because we are in it and because we belong to it!

Today we gather with the same joy of the People of Israel when they sang those songs of ascent on the way to their beloved Jerusalem.

Let us sing, then, with one voice, those words of David: (Select one of these Psalms or another)

1. Psalm 86, 11: "Teach me, Lord, your ways that I may walk in your truth."
2. Psalm 67, 4, 33: "Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth, sing praises to the Lord..."
3. Psalm 133: "How good and sweet it is to live together in harmony...!"

From this opening of our soul, we gather in PRAYER for the work and fruits of the Synod in a universal supplication, with an Augustinian heart that beats in each one of us and in the Order.

2. INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

We invoke the Spirit of Jesus by which we have been summoned to MEET and LISTEN to each other in the light of God's Word.

Song of the Holy Spirit.

With joy we see how this light multiplies with its brilliance in the Church, in our Father St. Augustine and in Humanity.

The Paschal candle is lit at this time.

3. LIGHTS OF THE WORD

““*Whoever has ears should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches*” (Rev 2:7). To have ears, to listen, is the first thing we need to do. To hear God’s voice, to sense his presence, to witness his passage and his breath of life....” Pope Francis (*Address to the Faithful of Rome*, 18 Sept. 2021)

3.1. A GOSPEL LIGHT

The universal gaze of Jesus: "*Father, may they all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they may be one in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me*" (Jn 17:21...).

And to fulfill this word of his testimony there is only one way: to live his "special commandment": "*I give you a new commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another...*" (Jn 13:34)

Let us savor this "as I do" and let us enter into the strength of his inner dynamism: "as He does". "Like Him..." in the Word and in our life of witness.

Let us ask ourselves if love is always our motivator of every action to arrive at UNITY.

Is our love our weight? Gospel and Augustinian Charism.

- ♥ A candle is lit from the Paschal candle. There are 4 candle holders around it.
- ♥ Silence.
- ♥ Song: Christ Be Our Light.

3.2. AN ECCLESIAL LIGHT.

The Church is the permanent Cenacle of Jesus' commission: to reach unity through the bond of love.

She has received the gifts of the Holy Spirit to enlighten men and women on the way to this goal. And she is Mother because she welcomes the life of all her children, who struggle in her womb as one or in discord, a permanent reminder of the painful experience of Esau and Jacob, wielding the rights of their birthright... Who is greater?

That is why the Mother cries out to us: "Return to unity". It is the cry of so many centuries in which her heart has been broken by the discord of her children on the road to the Promised Land.

Ecumenism, then, for the Church will be that of teaching her children in the light of the Holy Spirit to walk together to reach communion as a fulfillment of Jesus' ardent desire: "Father that they may all be one... as I am in You..."

Enlightened words of Pope Francis:

"Participating in a Synod means placing ourselves on the same path as the Word made flesh. It means following in his footsteps, listening to his word along with the words of others. It means discovering with amazement that the Holy Spirit always surprises us, to suggest fresh paths and new ways of speaking...Let us not soundproof our hearts; let us not remain barricaded in our certainties..." (Homily of Pope Francis at the Opening of the Synod 10 October 2021)

The teachings of the Proverbs that bring us closer to being Family:

"Listen, son, to the desires of your Father, and do not despise the counsel of your Mother" Prov 23:22.

"Mine is the counsel..." Prov 8, 14. Mother Church instructs us on the way.

Let us allow ourselves to be carried within ourselves by the experience of sharing together the search for the Promised Land that we already live on the path of unity.

Silence. The second candle is lit

Song: Christ Be Our Light

3.3. A CHARISMATIC LIGHT: SAINT AUGUSTINE

"*Magne Pater Augustine*". I believe that these words initiate in our Augustinian hearts the singing of that hymn that has us stand together with the great lover and defender of the Church, Augustine.

All the charism that the Holy Spirit poured into his heart was like that resounding, "That they all may be one...."

Fight again, continue to fight in your children so that Christ's desire may be fulfilled, that which you made your own by the gift of the Spirit and which you give us every day to share and distribute.

If the world, in the words of Pope Francis, "demands from the Church the strengthening of synergies in all areas of the mission" (50th Anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops), who better than us, the Augustinians, can take up this invitation and make it come alive around us in the synergy of "one heart and one soul towards God" and of the shared restlessness in the search for the Truth in community?

Our Father exhorts us with those words: "Snatch, lead, drag as many as you can. Be sure that you lead them to the One who does not displease those who contemplate him and pray that he will enlighten them and that they will look well upon him" (Enarr. in PS 96, 10) or with these others: "If you love God, draw all to the love of God! draw as many as you can, exhorting, bearing, praying, dialoguing with gentleness, with kindness: draw all to the love of God" (Enarr. in PS 33, S 2, 6-7. Serm. 78, 6).

Is it true that with our life we lead our brothers and sisters, near and far, to the love of God?

May these words, the fruit of true charity, of true love, come from our hearts today: Brothers and sisters of the world, travelers towards the Homeland, count on our "Augustinian journey" at your side. We want to listen to you, dialogue and commune with you in unity. We say to you, with the generous heart of Augustine: "If you need a hand, remember that I have two".

I visualize before you today, Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, my capacity and attitude of listening and welcoming on the path of reciprocal love towards unity.

From the experience of being Church, we open the doors of our Order offering our charismatic synodal style of welcome and family.

Silence. The third candle is lit.

Song. Christ Be Our Light.

3.4. A LIGHT CALLED HUMANITY.

"The perspective of "walking together" is even broader, embracing the whole of humanity, with whom we share "joys and hopes, sorrows and anxieties" (*Gaudium et Spes* 1)" (D.P. 15).

At dawn, Jerusalem, at dawn... let us go on our way in a shared embrace that gives us security; together we will overcome dangers and we will amass hopes; together we will seek the light in the darkness and the goal among the shortcuts that are lacking.

Since the expulsion from paradise, man needs to share his weaknesses. The united reeds overcome their emptiness. The birds in flocks tame the winds; the deer in a flock overcome the currents.

What has broken the fortress of Humanity? Division, because unity is similar to the divine and multiplicity disintegrates the unity and leads it to death. But, by the marvelous effect of divine love, in that in the disintegrated one there have remained seeds of unity, which cry out to meet again.

Thus, the dream of unity pushes us all in the caravan of life and St. Augustine, the wanderer in pursuit of multiplicity, affirms that "harmony begins with unity" (Mu 6, 17-56).

Today we see that Humanity, disintegrated in the multiple, but in need, even without knowing it, of the health of unity, of the life of a communion that makes it emerge from the region of dissimilarity, which is called sin, which is called disorientation, which is called, in the words of Pope Francis, "self-referentiality".

From I to We is the leap that establishes the starting point for praying the Our Father... and walking towards Him in the embrace of brothers and sisters. "My little children, good Pope John XXIII told us, seek more what unites you than what separates you".

The cry for unity springs from every loneliness, from every weakness, from every helplessness; we need the common strength to advance in the search for the good, which is the patrimony of the small goods such as harmony, health, work, friends, family, education, and the great Good, God, which is the great patrimony of Humanity.

Brother, sister, friend, stranger or... perhaps enemy... all "together" because He and we are the majority, the majority that seeks to reach the Promised Land. It is up to us to walk "together" the path in its efforts and its enjoyments... beyond, beyond, beyond. The ideal is always beyond, so that we seek it and, in the trail of its search, we share the flavors of its encounter. As an Augustinian, does this expression resonate in you?

Let us listen to the cry of the brother or sister in the silence of the heart who asks us to "walk together" to find "together" the treasure of Truth, which is God himself, and let us unite our listening to that of the Father: "The cry of my people has come up to me... I know their sufferings" (Ex. 3:7).

Today, with our hearts broken by war, we ask God to hear the cry of his people.

How can we be his voice and his angels?

Let us offer reconciliation, dialogue, peace, listening.

Fraternity is made by walking, peace can be rebuilt by offering humanity "a journey together" without protagonism or arrogance, without indifference or partisanship: we want to be unifiers and peacemakers.

★★★

Bring together the four flames around the Paschal Candle. Song.

4. CONTEMPLATION AND FORGIVENESS BEFORE THE SEAMLESS ROBE OF JESUS

An Alb can be placed on a tray and, as the petitions are read, flowers or rose petals can be placed on it.

- For the **tears** we have made in the tunic of the unity of the Church in the history of our Order.
Forgive us, Lord.
- For the **stains** of errors against the Truth of your Church sustained by our arrogance.
- *Forgive us, Lord.*

- For the **offenses** against the holiness of your Bride, the Church, in the relationship with other charisms, maintained by our indifference and lack of fraternal dialogue.
- *Forgive us, Lord.*
- For the **lack of appreciation** of the treasure of the living fabric of your Church manifested in the individualism of "not knowing how to walk together" building your Mystical Body with other brothers and sisters.
- *Forgive us, Lord.*
- For so many centuries in which we have **not known how to share** as brothers and sisters the shelter of the sacred tunic of your love and we have raffled it to the highest bidder, instead of letting ourselves be embraced and healed by it.
- *Forgive us, Lord.*
- For so many times in which, being children of the Augustinian charism, we have **broken the harmony** of "one heart and one soul" and have not walked together as one big family on the path of searching for God.
- *Forgive us, Lord.*
- For the **delay we have taken** to discover the richness of all the members of the Order, religious, laity, brothers and sisters... and in not having enjoyed the richness of all, not knowing the miracle of the synodality of our life, for our own good and for the good of Humanity.
- *Forgive us, Lord.*

FINAL PRAYER

This can be shared prayer.

Jesus, Word of God on the way from the bosom of the Father to the bosom of Mary, sacred land of Humanity:

We ask you to "walk together", making synodality:

- On your way to **Bethlehem**, living with you and your family in obedience to God's plans, even when they surpass us, and sharing in

the caravan of life the strengths and weaknesses of our brothers and sisters.

- On your way to the extension of the **Kingdom**, rekindling that first love that called us to your side to follow you and serve you unconditionally.
- On the risen road to **Emmaus**, welcoming each day the surprise of recognizing you in your Bread, in your Word and in the fraternity of your discipleship.
- On the way of the **Being Sent**, feeling that your Spirit is with us, giving us the strength of unity to evangelize in your Name, each one from his own vocation, but living members of the Augustinian Order.
- And, always, at your side on the way of the **Cross**, which is the way of Mercy, that which is given without reserve in forgiveness, compassion and charity.

Give us the joyful experience of an incarnated fraternity, like yours, in the dry dust and in the small grass of the road, in the daily synod of detail and close love.

We ask you to live it in the Church, Mother of all, and in our Order, our great family, with the Augustinian synodal charism of "the one soul and the one heart on the way to God".

Go forth, Father, on the way with us to change our heart from that of the quasi-perfect elder brother to that of the brother of all, Jesus, your Son who gave his life so that we may be one in you.

Mary, Mother, in your ways of Visitation, of Bethlehem, of the Temple and of Calvary, show us Jesus. Give us your company, as Grace; your presence, as Consolation; your light as Good Counsel and do not cease to be, as always, our Perpetual Help on all the roads we have to travel in our life. If walking is the way to the Homeland, make the way with us so that we may sing with the joy of the pilgrim.

Conclusion.

“Sing and walk”. Augustinian brothers and sisters live the joy to which Our Father St. Augustine calls us. “Sing... Don't lose the way. Do not turn back. Do not stand still.” (Serm. 256, 3)

And, above all, remember: we have to “WALK TOGETHER”...

Let us end by praying together the OUR FATHER.

St. Joseph, Father of welcoming and creative courage. Patron of the Universal Church and Protector of our Order, pray for us in this event of grace which is the open road of synodality.

Amen!

The Prayer of the Synod of the Church and of the Order may be recited.

“Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all.”

(Pope Francis. *Fratelli Tutti*)