



For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission
Pour une Église synodale



Catholic Church of Montreal

Facilitating a synodal meeting

Archdiocese of Montreal



Service for Discernment in Common
Service pour le Discernement en Commun



The Service for Discernment in Common



- Established in March 2019
- A service of the Jesuit Province of Canada
- Assisting religious communities and apostolates with communal discernment processes
- Trainings, workshops, facilitation of communal discernment processes...



Sr. Laurence Loubières, xmcj

Examples of missions

Jesuit Province
Congregation de Notre-Dame
Ignatian Spirituality Project
Christian Life Community
Conference Religieuse Canadienne
Ignatian Spirituality Centre of Montreal



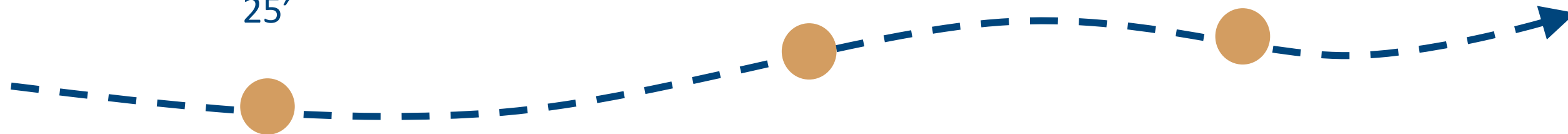
Steps and timing



Présentation
25'

Small groups
60'

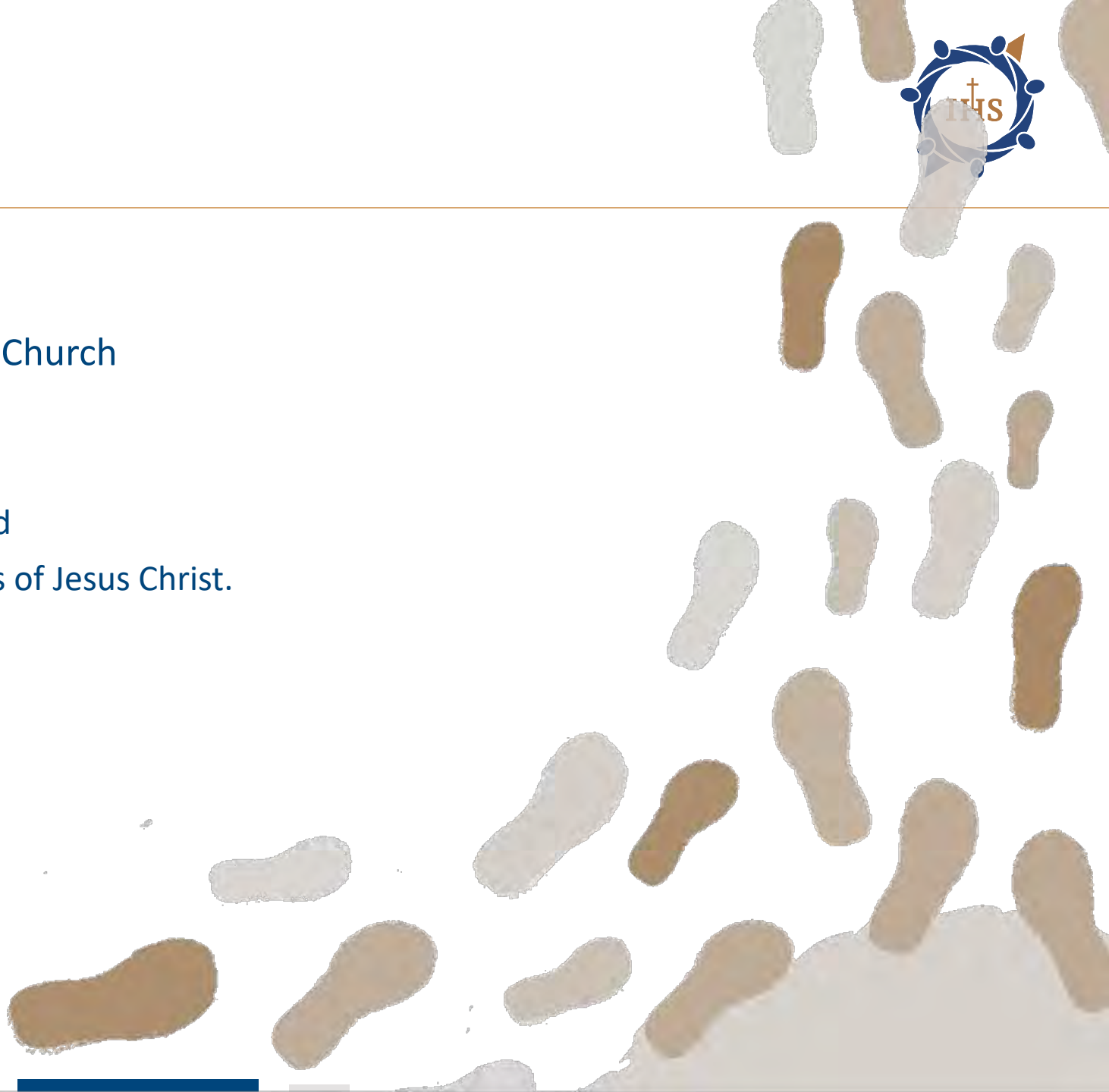
Assembly
15'



Synodality?



- For the Pope: a call from God
- An invitation to return to who we are as a Church
 - People of God on the move
 - discerning together
 - where the Spirit invites us to move forward
 - to proclaim more and more the good news of Jesus Christ.
- In the spirit of Vatican II
- Syn-odos: "with" - "walking".
- A key moment to reclaim our identity as members of a pilgrim Church



Three manifestations of a humble church



■ Participation

- Ensuring that all voices are heard
- Opening spaces for creativity
- Letting others teach you

■ Communion

- Christ-centred
- Talking and discerning together
- Open to diversity

■ Mission

- Recognising our poverty
- Serving the poor
- Responding to all types of hunger
- Needing the poor



The two fundamental questions of the Synod in Montreal



- Question 1: In our diocesan Church, What is the current state of health of our "walking together" and what steps is the Spirit inviting us to take to grow towards this goal?
- Question 2: As we listen to the world around us, what are the calls that the Spirit invites us to hear to guide our missionary action?



Suggestion of two meetings



- Question 1: In our diocesan Church,
What is the current state of health of our "walking together"
and what steps is the Spirit inviting us to take to grow towards
this goal?
- Question 2: As we listen to the world around us, what are
the calls that the Spirit invites us to hear to guide our
missionary action?



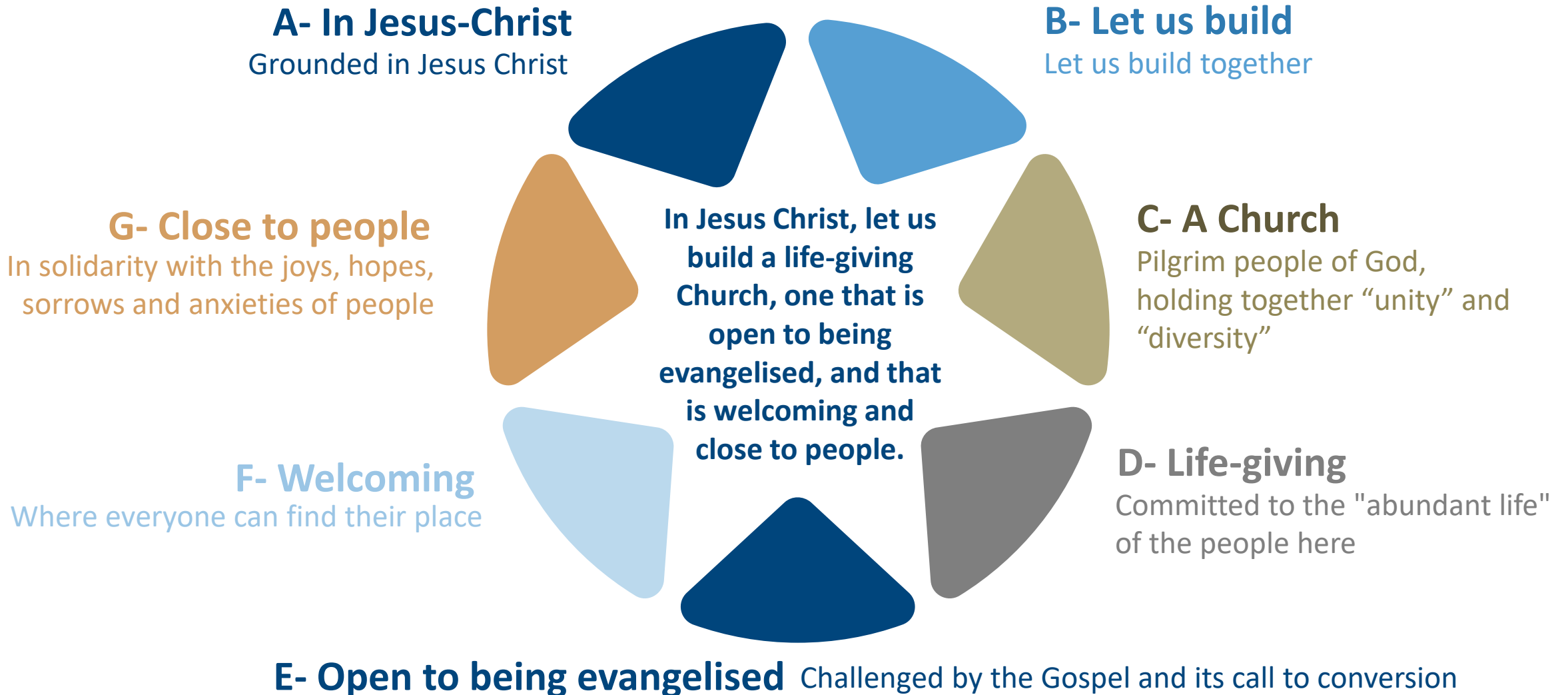
First meeting:
Reviewing our way of walking
together



Second meeting:
Hearing the calls to orient
our missionary action



The diocese's Vision of Hope and the 7 themes



The first meeting

Reviewing how we “walk together”



- **Objective: to gather recommendations to improve our "walking together" as a Church**
- Prayer and rereading suggestions according to the 7 themes
- For each theme, a review of a stimulating and/or discouraging event
 - An energizing event is a sign that there is something in this way of doing things that needs to be strengthened, continued
 - A disheartening event is a sign that there is something in this way of doing things that needs to be changed, transformed



Example of prayer paths - Theme B – Let us build



Placing myself in the presence of the Lord and contemplating his way of being and acting

Letting the Lord show me some events

Filling the chart

- I place myself in the presence of the Lord, among us and of the assembly gathered for this meeting.
- I spend some time contemplating Christ and his "synodal" way of being, of walking with his disciples, of listening to the men and women of his time, of carrying out the will of the Father, in word and deed. How am I touched?
- I consider how people are included in the consultation and decision-making processes in "synodal structures", meetings and dialogues (e.g parish meetings, diocesan councils; work teams, committees), instances of discernment together listening to the Spirit, and I ask the Lord to show me:
 - **An energizing diocesan church experience where I felt part of a common construction of our Church and why this was the case**
 - **A discouraging experience of diocesan church where I felt I was not part of a common construction of our Church and why this was the case**
- Fill in the chart at the end of the prayer paths to prepare for the time of sharing

A tool to review my experience



	Event What happened?	What feelings does this trigger in me?	Why am I feeling this? What needs have been met or not?	Is what I understand true?	And so...? What do I feel invited to propose for the Church to progress in this area?
Energizing event					
Disheartening event					

The second meeting

Listening to the calls to direct our missionary action



- **Objective: to collect and relay calls to orient our missionary action**
- Prayer paths according to the 7 themes
- For each theme, contemplate what we experience and see in Montreal
- Listen to the particular cries and calls we hear in this context
- Write a short text for sharing in small groups



Sample paths - Theme D - (a) Life-giving (Church) (Committed to the 'abundant life' of the people here)



Placing myself in the presence of the Lord and contemplating the city and the people

- I place myself in the presence of the Lord, who is present among us and of the assembly gathered for this meeting.
- I consider my life, my relationships, the people I meet, that I see in Montreal....
- I consider what is life-giving and good in the city, in the Church of Montreal, what makes people happy.
- I consider what is painful in the city, in the Church of Montreal, what is a source of hurt or suffering for people.

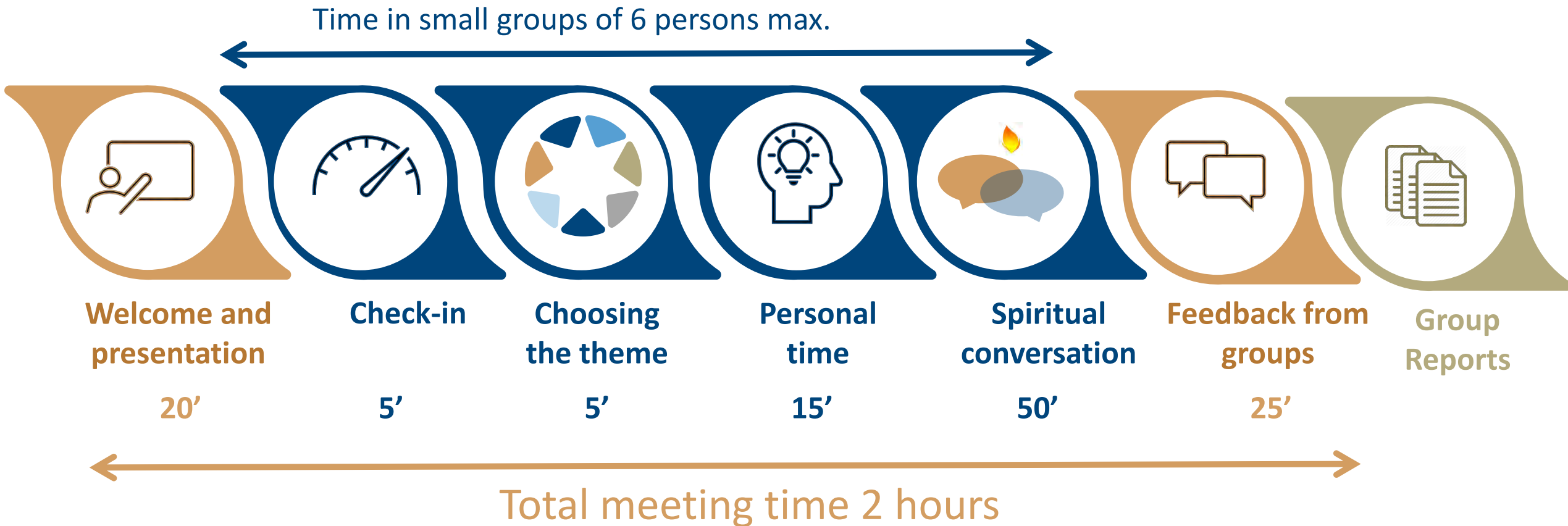
Letting the Lord show me the calls and cries to take into account

- Considering the interests and currents of thought that currently prevail in our society; the search for meaning and the aspirations for happiness that we see around us; the causes in which people invest themselves but also the dependencies and servitudes that hinder the lives of the people we meet; I ask the Lord to show me:
 - What are the most urgent cries that go up to Him?
 - What are the calls that the Church of Montreal must consider in its missionary action to be more of a source of abundant life?

Writing down my sharing

- Prepare a short sharing in writing for the first round of the small group

Steps and timing for parish meetings



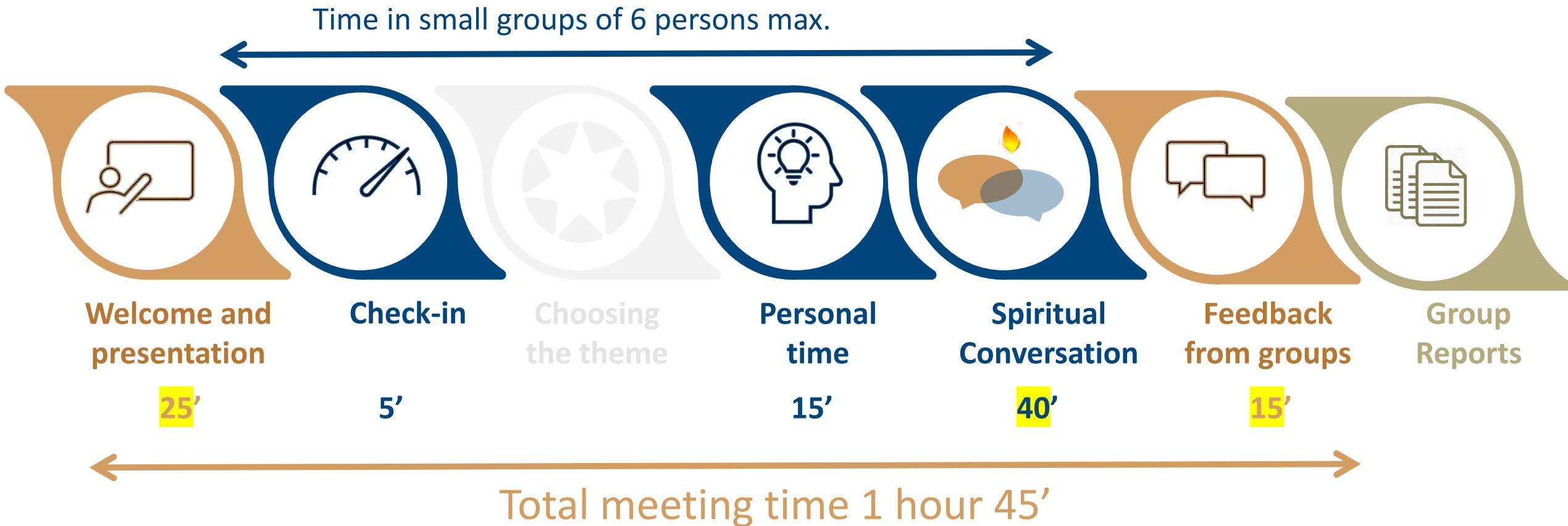
Spiritual Conversation



- Round 1: Invite participants **to read what they have prepared in writing about the fruits of their personal prayer**. After each person has spoken, invite participants to take a moment of silence, to reflect on what touched them most about what they heard in the first round.
- Round 2: Invite participants to take turns sharing **what touched them most in the first round**. When the round is over, pause again to reflect on what seems to converge or emerge in common at this point in the conversation
- Round 3: Invite participants to share **what seems to be converging or emerging at this point** (direction, theme, insight, invitation from the Lord...).



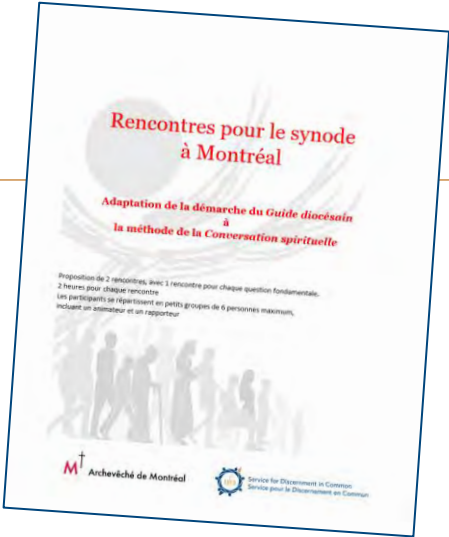
For this training session
1st meeting – Reviewing our « walking together »



For the personal time






- The tracks for each theme and the template for the chart to review my experience can be found in this document



	Event What happened?	What feelings does this trigger in me?	Why am I feeling this? What needs have been met or not?	Is what I understand true?	And so...? What do I feel invited to propose for the Church to progress in this area?
Energizing event					
Disheartening event					



Time in small groups 60'

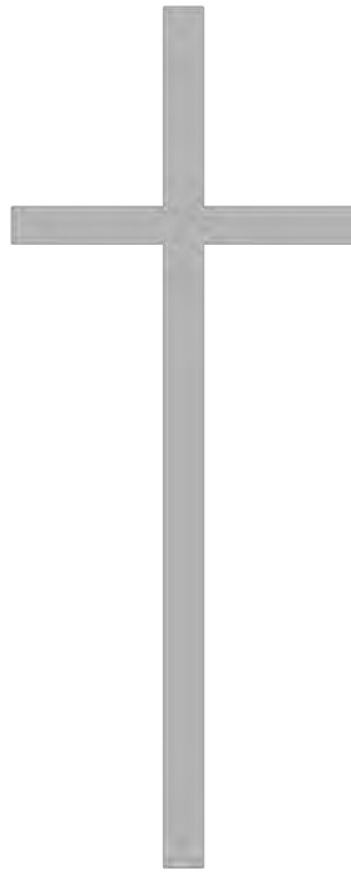
- 5 minutes check-in / how I get there (1' per person)
 - Who is OK to share when we come back as a large group?
 - Who is willing to write and send an account of the conversation afterwards?
- 15 minutes of personal time
- 15 minutes for the 1st round - (3' per person x 5 = 10') 
- 2 minutes of reflection on what touched me most in the first round
- 10 minutes for the 2nd round - (2' per person x 5 = 10') 
- 2 minutes of reflection to look for what converges and emerges from our sharing
- 5 minutes for the 3rd round - (1' per person) 
- 6 minutes to agree on what to share

For any questions regarding the synod or other requests, contact the Archdiocese at:

synode@diocesemontreal.org



Catholic Church of Montreal



For questions regarding the Spiritual Conversation Method, contact sister Laurence Loubières, xmcj at:

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