

ToolKit

02

Conversation in the Spirit



World Union of
Catholic Women's
Organisations



Dear sisters in faith,

Welcome to this workbook. It is a dedicated resource for Catholic women designed to equip you for communal discernment through the practice of **Conversation in the Spirit**.

This is a way of "**journeying together**" that moves us past the surface of our opinions and into the deep waters of the Holy Spirit. Central to the synodal journey, this method creates a **sacred space for the Church to grow, act, and respond to the Spirit's prompting**. It moves a community beyond individual perspectives toward a **collective recognition** of where the Holy Spirit is leading.

The World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO) created this toolkit thanks to the public resource materials made available by the General Secretariat of the Synod, as well as other synodality schools and institutions with whom we walk together in this mission.

This workbook is your companion on this journey, providing a structured way to listen to and respect every voice as we seek to recognise where God is leading us today.



The conversation in the Spirit

A dynamic of discernment in the synodal Church



PERSONAL PREPARATION

By entrusting oneself to the Father, conversing in prayer with the Lord Jesus and listening to the Holy Spirit, each one prepares his or her own contribution to the question about which he or she is called to discern.

Silence, prayer and listening to the Word of God

1

«Taking the word and listening»

Each person takes turns speaking from his or her own experience and prayer, and listens carefully to the contribution of others.



Silence and Prayer



«Making space for others & the Other»

From what the others have said, each one shares what has resonated most with him or her or what has aroused the most resistance in him or her, allowing himself or herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit: "When, listening, did my heart burn in my chest?"

2

Silence and Prayer

3

«Building together»

Together we dialogue on the basis of what emerged earlier in order to discern and gather the fruit of the conversation in the Spirit: to recognize intuitions and convergences; to identify discordances, obstacles and new questions; to allow prophetic voices to emerge. It is important that everyone can feel represented by the outcome of the work. "To what steps is the Holy Spirit calling us together?"



Final prayer of thanksgiving

Conversation in the Spirit

Do you know what it is and how to practice it?



[Watch now >](#)



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Preparing the Sacred Space and the Heart

Before we begin our holy listening, we must prepare both our physical environment and our interior selves to be "hospitable to the Spirit."

Personal Preparation:

Find a comfortable position and enter into 10 minutes of silence. Use these four steps to dispose your heart toward God:

Acknowledge the Presence: Take a deep breath. Settle into the reality that God is gazing upon you with infinite love at this very moment.

Gratitude: Look back over your recent prayer regarding the question at hand. Where have you seen God's "fingerprints"? What small graces have you received?

Review with Honesty: Notice the movements in your soul. Where did you feel a sense of "consolation" (peace, hope, or love)? Where did you feel "desolation" or "resistance" (anxiety, frustration, or a closing of the heart)?

Entrustment: Converse with the Lord Jesus as a friend. Entrust your words and your silences to the Father, asking for the grace of "holy listening" today.

Physical Setting Checklist

The Circle: Arrange 6–8 chairs in a circle. In a circle, there is no head of the table; we are all equal disciples.

The Prayer Table: Place a small table in the center as a visual anchor.

Sacred Elements: Include a lit candle (the Light of Christ), an open Bible (the Word), a cloth cover, and a symbol that represents your specific community of women.

Workbook & Pen: Ensure every woman has this guide and a pen to record the movements of her heart.



Preparing the Sacred Space and the Heart

Once you have identified a theme, craft a single, clear question to guide the conversation.

- **Our Selected Theme:**
- **Our Guiding Question:**

Preparing for the Conversation

Personal Preparation (10 mins): Enter into silence and prayer with the Word of God. Use an Examen to prepare your heart to share honestly.

ROUND 1 - Taking the Word (3 mins each): Share your response to the question freely. Everyone else listens with the "ear of the heart" without interruption.

ROUND 2 - Resonance (2 mins each): Share what "resonated" with you or where your heart "burned" while listening to others.

ROUND 3 - Building Together (1 min each): Identify convergences (agreement), divergences (discordances), and prophetic voices. Ask: "To what steps is the Holy Spirit calling us together?".

Capturing the fruit

After your three rounds, record the results of your chosen theme.

Convergences

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New Questions / Prophetic Voices

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Recommended Actions

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Closing prayer

"Lord Jesus... give us the grace to live in communion with you and with each other... and to advance your mission in the world. Amen".



GUIDELINES

How to choose the Conversation's theme | 5 pathways



CONTEXTUAL THEME (Reality-based)

Look at the current reality of your group or parish to **identify the "burning" questions or joys** living in your community.

- **The Practice:** Sit in silence for five minutes.
- **The Prompt:** Ask yourself, "What is the one 'burning' question or specific joy currently living in our community?"



SCRIPTURAL THEME (Contemplative)

To see where your "heart burns" when encountering the Gospel. (Luke 24:32)

From a Gospel passage, you can either:

- **Ask a direct question:** "What touched me most from this passage and why? How am I called to live it this week?"
- **Create a "Living Question":** For example, using the Woman at the Well (John 4): "Where are the 'wells' in our specific neighborhood where people seek living water, and how are we present there?"



THE "TENSION" PATHWAY (Growth-Oriented)

The Spirit often speaks through the areas that feel uncomfortable or challenging.

- **Unity in Testimony:** "What are the tensions that prevent us from being 'one body' or hinder our testimony of communion to the world?"
- **Charity:** "How do we handle disagreements within our group while remaining rooted in charity?"



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SYNODAL IMPLEMENTATION (Strategic)

Focus on the three pillars of the Synod on Synodality to evaluate your shared mission.

- **Communion:** "What barriers currently prevent us from feeling truly 'one' in our local faith community?"
- **Participation:** "Who is missing from our table, and what is one small step we can take to invite them in?"
- **Mission:** "How can we exercise our leadership as women to bring the Gospel into our professional and family spaces?"



Structural Pathway (Institutional Focus)

Address the need for concrete change and leadership within your Institutions.

- **Institutional Structures:** "How do our current local structures support—or accidentally hinder—the full participation of women in decision-making?"
- **Concrete Proposals:** "What specific structural changes are needed to enhance our mission, and how can we personally contribute to making them a reality?"



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CONVERSATION IN THE SPIRIT

TRAINING | RESOURCES | EVENTS



Conversation in the Spirit is a process of communal discernment within the synodal journey. It draws deeply from the tradition of Ignatian discernment, focusing on listening to the Holy Spirit's movement within the individual and the group



[Rules for discernment](#)



Practical "how-to" guides for hosting sessions, focusing on embodying helpful synodal habits.



[CiS: Methods - Best practice](#)



Strategic training for facilitators on hosting sessions with ease and practical wisdom.



[CiS: Webinar](#)



How to host Conversations in the Spirit - easy to follow methods, practical considerations and helpful habits to embody.



[Religious life resources](#)



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CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, We thank You for this time of encounter. You who met the woman at the well, who called Mary Magdalene by name, and who sat at the table with Martha and Mary, we ask You to remain with us as we leave this circle.

Holy Spirit, You are the breath that sustains our dialogue. We thank You for the courage to speak with parrhesia and the humility to listen with love. Take the seeds of the "we" that were planted in this conversation and nurture them into fruits of action within our parishes and homes.

Heavenly Father, grant us the grace of true co-responsibility. May our leadership as women be a reflection of Your inclusive love. Help us to be bridge-builders in times of tension, witnesses of hope in times of desert, and joyful workers in Your vineyard as we journey toward 2028.

Mary, Mother of the Church and Star of Evangelisation, teach us your "Fiat." Help us to treasure these words in our hearts so that our participation may always lead to a deeper communion and a more vibrant mission.

Amen.

