

CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF INDIA  
COMMISSION FOR BIBLE

# *Word of God Sunday 2022*

## **CELEBRATION RESOURCES**

Theme:

**Enlightened by the Word  
on the Synodal Path**

**THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
23 JANUARY 2022**



**For a synodal Church**  
communion | participation | mission



## 1. Background to the Theme

The theme for the Word of God Sunday 2022, "Enlightened by the Word of on the Synodal Path," is inspired from the apostolic letter *Aperuit illis* and the Preparatory Document for the Synod on Synodality. In October 2021 we began the synodal journey at the diocesan level, and in 2022 it unfolds in the continental phase. Our discernment through journeying together in and for communion, participation, and mission is possible when we open ourselves to the Word of God, by reading and listening to it. Being enlightened by the Word (i.e., Jesus), we will be able to listen to each other's words along the journey. The Word of God stands as a meeting point for ecumenism, interfaith dialogue, and dialogue with society, which are among the ten themes proposed for the synodal consultation.

## 2. Objectives of the Word of God Sunday 2022

- To initiate in each of us a personal commitment to the reading of the Word of God, and living by it through the year.
- To enable us to understand and share the richness of God's word through celebration, study, and proclamation.
- To strengthen biblical pastoral ministry in our families, SCCs, parishes, and dioceses.

## 3. Preparations for the Word of God Sunday 2022

- Disseminate the information about the day, and the theme of the Word of God Sunday 2022 at every diocese / parish / SCC, either through print or electronic media.
- A pastoral letter could be sent by the regional chairman to every diocese, and by the local ordinary to every parish, narrating the significance of the Word of God Sunday. The parish priest may inform the gathering through the announcements.
- Animate the bible apostolate team or the catechists or the catechism teachers or the volunteers in every diocese / parish for the effective celebration.





#### 4. Celebrations on the Word of God Sunday 2022

- Posters in your smartphone, church, and in your heart.
- Bible procession and enthronement.
- Celebration of the Holy Mass.
- Rite of installation of lectors / catechists at the Diocesan level.
- Exhibition on biblical themes / characters / books.
- Bible Sale.
- Quiz and Competitions.
- Film, Fest, and Fiesta.
- Bible marathon, Hand-written bible, and Bible through social media.
- Read the Bible in Original - Greek and Hebrew. Greek is no more Greek to you!
- Share a quote, and smile.

#### 5. Word of God through the Year

- Bible for all, and all for Bible. Let us make our people Bibliterate this year.
- Enrolling for postal / online courses on bible ([www.stpaulbiblecollege.com](http://www.stpaulbiblecollege.com)).
- Bible for the differently abled. Communicate to them in their way.
- Bible for the elderly and the old. Read a verse for them.
- Biblical formation programs at the parishes / schools / formation houses.
- Bible camps for the youth and the children.
- Reading the Bible everyday at home, and at neighbourhood.
- Promoting Lectio Divina (Divine Reading) in families, parishes, and religious institutions.
- Establishing 'Bible Banks' for free distribution of the bible.
- Presenting Bible on the occasions as gifts and mementos.
- Vacation Bible School during the summer holidays.
- Writing on the journals and the magazines. Publishing leaflets on biblical themes / texts.
- Establish Catholic biblical presence in the media, and in the social network platform.





## 6. Liturgy for the Word of God Sunday 2022

[The Order of the Mass to be taken from The Roman Missal, page no. 443.  
The Readings are from Lectionary: I, Sundays and Solemnities, section no. 69, page nos. 756-760]

### Introduction to the Mass

My dear brothers, and sisters, today we have gathered together to celebrate the Sunday of the Word of God. The theme that we have chosen for today's celebration is 'Enlightened by the Word on the Synodal Path.' Since October 2021 our Mother Church has been engaged in discerning the path for the local and the universal Church. In the process we are enlightened by the Word of God (Bible), the Word (Jesus), and the words of one another. Listening to the word is the first step towards the enlightenment. This celebration is a reminder that a life that is centred on the word will be fruitful, effective, and impactful. Now, the Word of God is being carried in procession. As we honour it let us resolve to be the keen listeners and constant doers of the Word.

[The Main Celebrant carries / receives the Bible and places it on a decorated ambo / table and garlands it. Homage could be done by incensing. As a sign of veneration, devotion, and love for the Word of God all would extend their hands towards the Bible enthroned and resolve to be listeners and doers of the Word.]

### First Reading (Nehemiah 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10)

**Commentary:** The people of Israel, who returned to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity, under Nehemiah rebuild their city. In the renovated city, Ezra, the priest, enthrones the Book of the Law of the Lord, as a reminder to the covenantal fidelity of the Lord. The people are moved to tears when the Book is being read. The day has been declared as the day of feasting and rejoicing.

### Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 15)

### Second Reading (1 Corinthians 12:12-30; or 12:12-14, 27)

**Commentary:** Saint Paul, writing to the Corinthian community, which was full of dissension and strife, invites them to unity and solidarity. Using the functional model of the church, where all have a role to play for the entire community, Paul insists that they make use of their charisms for the growth of the community.

### Gospel Reading (Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21)



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## Homily Notes

**Tagline:** Enlightened by the Word on the Synodal Path.

We are always surrounded by words. The words are powerful. Words console and comfort us; they set the broken relationships right. Some words discourage us. Some words are worthless. Some words despise us. Words reflect our own inner life. We are what we speak. "In the act of speaking, creation happens; it is a blessing or a curse for those who speak and those who listen and hear. In listening, the voice is heard, and recognition of the one who speaks may dawn. This dynamic of speaking, listening and knowing the one who speaks is the very dynamic of how God's word is addressed to the people of Israel."

The first reading is set in the background of Nehemiah rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem city and Temple, around 450 BCE. He initiates a social and economic revolution as well. The Babylonian exile left negative scars on the people because they thought that they were punished by the Lord. Many quit faith. Many were attracted to the religions and the practices of the neighbouring countries. Hence, a religious instruction became an imperative. Ezra, the priest, gathers the people together at the Water Gate, and reads the Book of the Law. The enlightenment of the people happens in three stages: (i) 'People stand up when the Book is opened;' (ii) 'People bless the Lord together with Ezra;' and (iii) 'They understand what is being read.' 'Standing up' refers to their readiness; 'prostrating' refers to their surrender; and 'understanding' refers to their comprehension. People wept when they heard the words of the Law, being moved with guilt / remorse, thinking of their present condition, and for repentance. Nehemiah and the team instruct them: (i) Not to mourn or lament; (ii) To share their food with the needy; and (iii) To rejoice. The people who are enlightened by the Word are asked to walk hand in hand with one another in the society.

Saint Paul's exhortation in the second reading consists of three parts: (i) Theology of unity given through the metaphor of body; (ii) Explanation of the metaphor; and (iii) The believers, who are the members of the body of Christ are called to interact with one another sharing their gifts and charisms. Paul enlightens them on their charisms and leads them to collaboration and synergy.

The gospel reading divides into two sections: (i) Preamble to Luke's gospel; and (ii) Inauguration of Jesus' ministry at Nazareth. In the preamble Luke mentions that what is being written to Theophilus is meant for certainty that the Word of God dwelt among us. The second section divides into three parts: (a) Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee; (b) Jesus reads from Isaiah 61; and (c) Impact of Jesus' reading on the people. Jesus begins his ministry in the peripheries. He chooses the text from Isaiah. Through this he proclaims that he is the 'anointed one.' He announces that the Scripture has been fulfilled in their hearing. The eyes of the people are fixed on him. But their sense of wonder later turns out to be an act of intolerance.



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How are we enlightened by the Word of God? (i) By reading the Word; (ii) By listening to the Word; and (iii) By making a response to the word through our deeds.

What are the obstacles that we need to overcome? (i) Indifference to the Word; (ii) Familiarity (assuming that we know everything of it) with the word; (iii) Not putting the word into action.

How does the Word help us in our life's journey? (i) It invites us to rejoice; (ii) It inspires us to share our gifts and charisms with others; and (iii) It keeps the community alive.

### Prayers of the Faithful

**Celebrant:** Gathered as the people of God, sustained by the Word of God, and called to be missionary disciples of Christ, together let us pray:

For the Church: that rooted in the Word of God, we may continue to build up the Body of Christ and promote the common good. Lord, we pray.

For all who teach and preach the Word of God: that their words may renew the faith of those who listen and encourage them to trust in the promise of God. Lord, we pray.

For this community: that we may have an ever-greater openness to the Word of God and allow it to enlighten the darkness of our hearts and free us to follow Jesus evermore faithfully. Lord, we pray.

For our companions on the synodal journey: that God will heal us from indifference and intolerance, so that all may work together for care for common home and humanity. Lord, we pray.

[In silence let us pray for our personal and local needs.]

**Celebrant:** Everlasting God, when he read in the synagogue at Nazareth, your Son proclaimed the good news of salvation for which he would give up his life. Bless us. As we proclaim your words of life, strengthen our faith that we may read with conviction and boldness, and put into practice what we read. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

