



Synodality

Moving forward in St Mary's and St John's Parishes

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SYNOD PRAYER:

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever.

Amen.

Synodality

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Agenda

Reflection and Prayer on Synodality

Consider *the challenges* of moving Synodality forward in our parishes

Consider *ways to lead* the Synodal journey within each parish

Synodality

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Pope Francis on Synodality and the Holy Spirit

“..the pope recalled the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at Pentecost, noting that (the) spirit descended at a time when the apostles were gathered together.

“They could also worship God and do good to others separately, but when they came together in unity, the doors to God's work were opened wide,” he said, saying Christians are therefore called “to come together so that the marvellous works of God may be accomplished in our midst.”

Synodality

Moving forward in St Mary's and St John's Parishes

Reflection

The Early Church living as Synod

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together... but encourage one another.

Hebrews 10:24-25

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service.

Ephesians 4:11-13

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2-3

Upon arriving in Antioch, they called the church together and reported everything God had done through them.

Acts 14:27-28

Synodality

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Reflection

God's Creation as Synodality

Lord, you love all that exists, you hold nothing of what you have made in abhorrence, for had you hated anything, you would not have formed it.

Wisdom 11.22ff

No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:39

Synodality

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Reflection

Seeing the global church as lived Synodality

"The Church-home does not have doors that close, but a perimeter that continually widens"
(EC Italy).

"Those who feel at home in the Church feel the absence of those who don't"
(EC Ireland).

"Instead of behaving like gatekeepers trying to exclude others from the table, we need to do more to make sure that people know that everyone can find a place and a home here"
(USA).

"It is important to build a synodal model (where) the only legitimate authority in the Church must be that of love and service, following the example of the Lord"

Synodality

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Reflection

How we already see St John's and St Mary's parishes as synodal communities

- A church for all generations.
- Sharing our resources and skills.
- Inclusive, open to all and a church in which more people would participate.
 - Supporting the whole community both practically and spiritually.
 - Providing more and different spiritual experiences based on the Gospel.
 - Known in the community, reaching out to families and marginalised
 - More than just a Sunday Mass provider.
- Communicating much better, keeping everyone informed, making use of technology and media.
 - Involving a wider range of gifted people in sacramental roles.

Synodality

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Reading

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

John 13:34-35

Our Father

Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Amen.

Synodality

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Reflections and responses

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Our challenge, opportunity, commission.....

Pope Francis on Synodality in 2022

**It is already what we are; we should work to become more
synodal**

**Each parish should reflect its own vision and model of
Synodality according to local circumstances**

Shared leadership and responsibility

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Leadership and Authority

Generally we tend to feel that all authority rests with Parish Priest from whom we also seek leadership

Synodality suggests a different approach based collaboration and shared responsibility with the laity for the life of the church

This recognises the unique 'Sacramental' and 'Spiritual' authority and leadership uniquely vested in our Priest but distinguishes it from other parish and community 'leadership' roles.

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Moving forward in St Mary's and St John's Parishes

Leadership and Authority

Synodality asks for an extension to the wider, shared and collective leadership we already express in different ways within our parishes where the Priest shares in that collective leadership as an *equal partner*.

This can be a difficult change for some; a departure from tradition and taking on of a more shared responsibility for the shared life of the parish.

But in many ways it can be seen as returning to the origins of the early church as we have seen in our reflection.

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Leadership and Authority

Parish Pastoral Councils already provide:

- a recognised and accepted leadership role within the parish
 - a general leadership and advisory role
 - a stimulus and support to parish initiatives
- encouragement and advice to others in developing services and activities
 - Links into other church and community organisations

Parish Pastoral Councils are uniquely placed to guide Synodal development.

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Discussion:

How do we move Synodality forward in our parishes,
developing a local model and sharing
leadership and responsibility?



Closing Prayer

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