

Dear Parishioner,

### **Synod – Introduction**

On 10 October 2021, Pope Francis formally opened a worldwide two year process officially called 'Synod 2021 – 2023: For a Synodal Church'. A Synod means a Council of the Church, and comes from the Greek word meaning *a shared journey*. Synods usually involve the Bishops of the Church coming together to discern matters of doctrine or faith. Pope Francis has called for this Synod to be much wider in its consultation, so that the voices of all who follow Jesus, within the worldwide Catholic Church, can be heard. We are asked by Pope Francis to reflect on three areas;

#### ***Communion***

#### ***Participation***

#### ***Mission***

Within our Archdiocese, each parish has been asked by Archbishop Leo Cushley to gather the views of all parishioners on these three topics.

In our parish, Father Tony has begun that process by providing more information on the Synod, including a letter from the Archbishop. Further information is available in the weekly bulletin and on our website [www.stjohnogilvies.co.uk](http://www.stjohnogilvies.co.uk)

### **Reflection and Feedback**

We are now asked to reflect on the three areas of Communion, Participation and Mission in the context of being followers of Jesus within the parish, and in relation to the wider Catholic Church. The attached questions are designed to guide us in our reflection, and there is also a prayer to help us. There may be other issues or themes that seem important to you. If so, please include them in your feedback.

We ask that you return your feedback by Sunday 19 December. Feedback can be submitted in paper form or by e mail to the following address; [st.jh.ogilvie@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:st.jh.ogilvie@blueyonder.co.uk)

### **Parish Gathering**

When feedback has been received, there will be an opportunity to come together with fellow parishioners, so that our thoughts can be shared with one another. As we offer our thoughts – and listen to others with respect – we will grow as a community, led by the Holy Spirit. With possible restrictions on numbers in an ever changing pandemic situation, we are unsure whether we may require more than one gathering.

Gathering/s are likely to be held in late January or February 2022.

Joe McGeough, Michael Ayanbowale and Trish Middlemist.

3 December 2021

Prayer and Reflection Questions

Prayer

Loving Father, we are called into your family to love as Jesus loved and to live as Jesus lived. As we reflect on your call, help us deepen our sense of communion with you, and with our church family. Although we may see failings in ourselves and others, may we appreciate, also, the worth of our parish community in its endeavours to live by faith in a secular society. Send your Holy Spirit to strengthen and guide us as we look for ways to build up and renew the Church within our parish, nation and world. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your son. Amen.

Reflection Questions

Theme 1; **Communion** and **Participation** within the Church

What does participation in the life of the parish mean?

How can we foster a culture of participation that encourages a true gift of each person to the Lord Jesus?

What would my meaningful participation in the parish look like?

How can we, as a Parish, reach out to those who don't feel welcome or who no longer feel connected to Jesus Christ?

How can we support and encourage parents whose children are leaving the Church?

How can we support engaged and married couples to renew and build their marriages on Jesus Christ?

How can we support and encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life?

See over

Theme 2; **Mission**

Do I believe that God has called me to follow him as a disciple? If so, have I responded to this call? What is the work of a missionary disciple?

How have I been prepared to live my life at home, in my place of work or study, and in my social life?

Am I comfortable talking about Jesus to others? If not, what would help me be more confident in doing this?

What can my parish do in preparing me, and others, to be a committed disciple of Jesus?

What does my parish need in order to become an evangelising community?

How can I respond to those needs? What can I realistically give?

How can our parish be a light for our local community, to share with others the love of Jesus and his saving truth?

The above questions are for guidance and to help us reflect on our own part, and our parish part, in spreading the good news of Jesus. If there is something else that seems, to you, to be an important or key point, please include it below.

To help us plan the best times for coming together please tick the best time, for you, to attend a parish gathering:

Saturday morning    Saturday afternoon    Weeknight    Sunday Afternoon

Name (Optional)

Date