

Walking Together



Synodal Update for the Diocese of Plymouth

Welcome to the July 2022 'Walking Together' Update

The National Synthesis has now been published and you can find a copy on our website. We feel that it reflects the voices that were heard during our own listening journey but would love to hear your thoughts. Cardinal Vincent Nichols shared his thoughts on the next steps in his homily on 29 June:

"At this time, as bishops, we are trying prayerfully to absorb and discern the presence of the Holy Spirit in all the voices we have been listening to on this Synodal Pathway to which Pope Francis has called us. We will shortly complete our 29-6-22, page 2 own reflections on all we have received. There are many different voices, and many different gifts of the Holy Spirit." He noted that *"These responses give rise to a most important challenge: that as a church we learn how to accompany each other, especially through those difficult times and places."*

Canon John Deeny and Deborah Fisher, Diocesan co-contacts.

WHAT NEXT IN OUR DIOCESE?

The synodal journey continues in our Diocese with the materials we sent out with our diocesan synthesis and the questions raised by Bishop Mark which can be found on our website <https://www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/key-documents/parish-resources/>

Cardinal Nichols reflected that accompaniment is a challenge for every parish. He invites us to consider who are those who feel that they do not belong, or fear they may not be made welcome?

"It is a challenge for every organisation to look at itself and ask how easy is it for those who are different to join in our activities. It is a question for each one of us: do we try to be close to those we meet regularly, with whom we might work or live, simply making it clear that no matter what happens we will not turn away, not in judgement, nor in disdain, nor in fear?"

Let's continue to listen to the Holy Spirit and to each other as we reflect on how we accompany each other in the coming months and years.

We will be sending out further resources later this year.

Listening

Much more than hearing will be our listening:

That vain words are carried away by the wind.

And to enter into idle chatter outside the path of the synod.

Courage is asked of us in speaking

On the way to better discernment,

our hearts uncovered and the hearts of others to be found.

The successful encounter is not nameless,
nor are efforts anonymous,
for in the midst of it we have the One who amazes.

From the Spirit comes this reinforcement.

And from Him we ask that He may unmask
what we have within us of twists and turns.

Pedro Jaramillo Rivas (Guatemala)

the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.

Matthew 13:31-32

The thoughts of Pope Francis

In his homily on 29 June 2022, Pope Francis shared his reflections on our synodal journey:

“The Synod that we are now celebrating calls us to become a Church that gets up, one that is not turned in on itself, but capable of pressing forward, leaving behind its own prisons and setting out to meet the world, with the courage to open doors.

....A Church without chains and walls, in which everyone can feel welcomed and accompanied, one where listening, dialogue and participation are cultivated under the sole authority of the Holy Spirit. The Church that is free and humble, that “gets up quickly” and does not temporize or dilly-dally before the challenges of the present time. A Church that does not linger in its sacred precincts but is driven by enthusiasm for the preaching of the Gospel and the desire to encounter and accept everyone. Let us not forget that word: everyone. Everyone! Go to crossroads and bring everyone, the blind, the deaf, the lame, the sick, the righteous and the sinner: everyone!”

“Here two questions come to my mind. The first is: What can I do for the Church? Not complaining about the Church, but committing myself to the Church. Participating with passion and humility: with passion, because we must not remain passive spectators; with humility, because being committed within the community must never mean taking centre stage, considering ourselves better and keeping others from drawing near. That is what a synodal Church means: everyone has a part to play, no individual in the place of others or above others. There are no first or second-class Christians; everyone has been called.”

“So, the second question is: What can we do together, as Church, to make the world in which we live more humane, just and solidary, more open to God and to fraternity among men?..... Together we can and must continue to care for human life, the protection of creation, the dignity of work, the problems of families, the treatment of the elderly and all those who are abandoned, rejected or treated with contempt. In a word, we are called to be a Church that promotes the culture of care, tenderness and compassion towards the vulnerable.”

You can find the full text here

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2022/documents/20220629-omelia-pallio.html>

Resources for the ongoing synodal journey

New prayers are regularly added to the Synodal webpage

<https://www.prayforthesynod.va/en/><https://www.synodresources.org/>

Resources shared from across the world

<https://www.synodresources.org/>

Our Diocesan website <https://www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/synod/>

