

• DIALOGUE IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

It is all about dialogue and need for provoking a reaction by questioning – or some intervention.

A meeting or encounter with another allows us to develop an understanding of the message of God through listening, reading, contemplating and interacting with others.

The question is what do we then do about it? We can observe and recount events and news but is this enough? Reflection on the message of what we interpret on these occasions can/ought to be developed on a daily basis.

There is a need for explanations/proof of the truth of what we are told – or do we just accept without engaging?

Can we encourage speaking in the parishes? How, where, when? A fear of judgement and lack of opportunity prevent many from speaking. A lot of encouragement is needed – who can do this?

Change to digital media – the people simply do not know where to look for those who speak on behalf of Christians? Where can we find this?

We should tell people how to find Christian digital messages.

What is not working, why aren't people listening anymore?

People find the moral precepts on Marriage/Sex/Divorce difficult to accept.

Catholic Education/Secondary seems to be ineffectual.

Why aren't people coming to the Mass anymore?

Parish Contribution

These notes will be delivered to the Diocese as part of our contribution to the Synod, along with the feedback from the first meeting and the next two meetings.

Do you agree with the points raised during the meeting? Are there points you would like to make on the themes of:

Speaking Out

Sharing Responsibility for our Common Mission

Dialogue in Church & Society?

If you would like to make a written contribution to the parish response there will be a box in the porch of each Church where you can leave your response.

You may also email any contribution to the parish by emailing:

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ST ANTHONY'S & ST MARK'S SYNOD

MEETING TWO

RESPONSE

In the first part of the meeting we read and prayed through part of the Road to Emmaus story.

In the second part we focused on the following themes:

• **SPEAKING OUT**

All are invited to speak with courage and parrhesia, that is, in freedom, truth, and charity.

What enables or hinders speaking up courageously, candidly, and responsibly in our local Church and in society?

When and how do we manage to say what is important to us?

How does the relationship with the local media work (not only Catholic media)?

Who speaks on behalf of the Christian community, and how are they chosen?

• **SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR COMMON MISSION**

Synodality is at the service of the mission of the Church, in which all members are called to participate.

Since we are all missionary disciples, how is every baptised person called to participate in the mission of the Church?

What hinders the baptised from being active in mission?

What areas of mission are we neglecting?

How does the community support its members who serve society in various ways (social and political involvement, scientific research, education, promoting social justice, protecting human rights, caring for the environment, etc.)?

How does the Church help these members to live out their service to society in a missionary way?

How is discernment about missionary choices made and by whom?

• **DIALOGUE IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY**

Dialogue requires perseverance and patience, but it also enables mutual understanding.

To what extent do diverse peoples in our community come together for dialogue?

What are the places and means of dialogue within our local Church?

How do we promote collaboration with neighbouring dioceses, religious communities in the area, lay associations and movements, etc.?

How are divergences of vision, or conflicts and difficulties addressed?

What particular issues in the Church and society do we need to pay more attention to?

What experiences of dialogue and collaboration do we have with believers of other denominations and other religions and with those who have no religious affiliation?

How does the Church dialogue with and learn from other sectors of society: the spheres of politics, economics, culture, civil society, and people who live in poverty?

PART 1

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

LUKE 24:17-27

17. Jesus said to them, 'What are all these things that you are discussing as you walk along?' They stopped, their faces downcast.

18. Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 19. He asked, 'What things?' They answered, 'All about Jesus of Nazareth, who showed himself a prophet powerful in action and speech before God and the whole people;

20. and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified.

21. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have now gone by since it all happened;

22. and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning,

23. and when they could not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive.

24. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

25. Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe all that the prophets have said! 26. Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer before entering into his glory?'

27. Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself."

GROUP RESPONSE

Jesus refers to the men on the road as foolish men – is he calling all of us foolish? Even with the prophets we find faith difficult.

Jesus was handed over to the Romans by the religious leaders of the Jews. There was no resistance? Were people afraid to resist? The disciples were disappointed - they thought he would be all powerful and instead he is crucified. God's way is not our way.

If we were in the same position as the disciples, would we do nothing to resist? Should we? Should we fight? What form should resistance take? Protest? Refusal to co-operate?

The disciples were on a journey and are prompted by Jesus – are we?

Why did Jesus speak to Cleopas? Why not an apostle or a disciple? It appears that he is already spreading the work further perhaps? Perhaps we have a record of this encounter to show others were very aware of what had happened.

PART 2

GROUP RESPONSE

• SPEAKING OUT

What should we speak out about? What are the big concerns?

falling numbers

clergy numbers

Reform—is this too big an issue to tackle, are problems in the Church too entrenched?

Is it only the clergy who are allowed to solve them?

It is more important than ever to speak out and challenge cancel culture and the attempt to replace the culture rooted in Christian values with the new Woke set of acceptable beliefs.

Traditionally, this has not been possible for the laity. People (the laity) still find this difficult if not impossible. Religious education for the laity stops on leaving school. As adults they have forgotten much of what they have learned. It is only as adults they are faced with the Church's teaching on marriage, many aspects of which they find difficult.

It is important that we do speak out though; particularly on personal level, but we must take care not to lecture – we must be respectful, merely share a reflection, or share an experience.

Many people are reticent though, they are worried about being judged. There also seems to be huge passivity among Catholics. Are the laity kept mute? What stops Catholics attending Mass?

Some 'speaking out' structures are in place e.g. Parish Councils – do they work? Do they happen?

The problem may also be the Hierarchy; we have some poor 'leaders' in 'speaking out'

There doesn't seem to be a national voice on:

Immigration

Persecution throughout the world

COP26

Are the laity mute?

• SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR COMMON MISSION

Is Catholic education failing? Church leaders don't lead.

Missionary choices are still seen as responsibility of hierarchy/clergy.

Mention has been made of a Parish Council. We no longer have one. Why not? Surely this is essential. Mention was made that a high proportion of bishops are homosexual. Should this mean we should have women priests/married priests?

If the wrath of God is visited on our country for our complicit acceptance of the current situation, will anyone be able to claim he/she was unaware of the extent of the sinfulness in our midst?

We could make parishioners aware of how they already are active in mission – this in itself would be a support.

We participate in the World Day of Prayer – round different denominations' churches/places of worship.