

We want to know more about Doctrine/teaching v custom/practice.

This synod process helps with this personal learning.

How is the clergy ongoing development supported?

The Church is Catholic, i.e., for all – but it certainly does not appear to show love or concern for some people. There is concern about the moral teachings of the Church, especially with regard to issues such as abortion – in the context of when human life starts. Birth control, abortion, divorce, homosexual marriage, and LGBTQ+ issues.

Do the teachings of the Church need to be updated to suit modern living and circumstances?

The Synod should review the regulations on Moral precepts, especially on birth control, marriages/ sex before marriage/ divorce, and assisted dying.

Why do young people reject the Church? Why are they unwilling to engage? Do we need to change to attract them? Has the church become hopelessly corrupt at the highest levels? What can we do about that?

The Church should try to involve young people more, perhaps go into Secondary schools and have some kind of activity the young people would be interested in, e.g., foreign trip to Lourdes, or a study starting up a group interested in music, or drama, but give them the backing to become an organised group?

Most groups are made up from '50 years plus' age groups, from similar socio-economic backgrounds. How can we change this?

Can we have the courage to reach out and share our thoughts (often a very difficult thing to do) for fear of being criticised.

Are we capable of seeing the journey as an integral part of our live rather than an add-on?

Promoting an inclusive attitude to the many faithful, particularly the youth and the experiences they face in society today – we need to be proactive in guiding and supporting them on the journey.

Can we listen, and nurture and act on their behalf?

There has to be a greater involvement of the laity, with synods, Diocesan Councils, Annulment Procedures, parish Councils.

How does the Church work? What do we know about processes of church e.g., annulment/separation/divorce, who is banned from Sacraments?

What happens at the end of the consultation process?

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 two meetings and the final meeting.

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

Celebration

Ecumenism

Authority & Participation?

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:

stanthonystmark@rcdom.org.uk



ST ANTHONY'S & ST MARK'S SYNOD

MEETING THREE

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:

- **CELEBRATION**

“Walking together” is only possible if it is based on communal listening to the Word and the celebration of the Eucharist.

How do prayer and liturgical celebrations actually inspire and guide our common life and mission in our community?

How do they inspire the most important decisions?

How do we promote the active participation of all the faithful in the liturgy?

What space is given to participating in the ministries of lector and acolyte?

- **ECUMENISM**

The dialogue between Christians of different confessions, united by one baptism, has a special place in the synodal journey.

What relationships does our Church community have with members of other Christian traditions and denominations?

What do we share and how do we journey together?

What fruits have we drawn from walking together?

What are the difficulties? How can we take the next step in walking forward with each other?

- **AUTHORITY AND PARTICIPATION**

A synodal church is a participatory and co-responsible Church.

How does our Church community identify the goals to be pursued, the way to reach them, and the steps to be taken?

How is authority or governance exercised within our local Church?

How are teamwork and co-responsibility put into practice?

How are evaluations conducted and by whom? How are lay ministries and the responsibility of lay people promoted?

Have we had fruitful experiences of synodality on a local level?

How do synodal bodies function at the level of the local Church (Pastoral Councils in parishes and dioceses, Presbyteral Council, etc.)?

How can we foster a more synodal approach in our participation and leadership?

PART 1

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

LUKE 24:28-35

28 When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on;

29 but they pressed him to stay with them saying, 'It is nearly evening, and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them.

30 Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them.

31 And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight.

32 Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

33 They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions,

34 who said to them, 'The Lord has indeed risen and has appeared to Simon.'

35 Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

GROUP RESPONSE

It would seem that the Apostles disappeared after the Lord was arrested at the Garden of Gethsemane because of the fear and they hid. There is no evidence that they were at the crucifixion of the Lord, except John who was with Our Lady and when Jesus gave his mother over to the protection of John. It seems to show that our Lord had no brothers or sisters as in the Jewish tradition it is the practice that if the mother of the family was left widowed.

The breaking of bread and the real presence opened the disciples' eyes and they recognised Jesus. The real presence is central to our faith, it makes us different from some/many Protestant Christians. Catholics in name, who deny the real presence, are effectively Protestants.

The Disciples were on the journey, just as the Church on the journey. They were still afraid at this point – an absence of Jesus after Crucifixion – what will they do, how will they manage without him? Were they experiencing feelings of loss and abandonment?

They failed to recognise Jesus despite his expositions of scripture – how do we recognise him in our lives?

The joy they felt on recognising that he was alive is palpable.

This passage underlines the centrality of Eucharist in the Disciples recognition of Christ. As if it was the Act that said, "This is what I'm about". Christ's presence with us through strangers & unrecognised events is also underlined.

They pressed him to stay, did they have an idea of who he was? Do we invite Jesus to come into our lives? Can we identify when we know he is with us?

Where did the Lord go, what is meant by that, was he still there? Can we see him in ourselves and others? Can others see Christ in us?

How do we recognise Christ in our daily lives? Do we look/search for him? If we encounter him, what is our response?

The importance of recognition of Christ within our lives and journey with him through others and with others is fundamental.

PART 2

GROUP RESPONSE

• CELEBRATION

It is obvious from discussions today that there is great concern about the structure of the Mass.

Why aren't more young people going to Mass? How do we find out what young people want from the Church? Is the Mass a 'put off'?

The Readings and sermons are not in tune with everyday living.

How can the presentation & style of the Mass, beyond its core, vary to be more welcoming to more people, especially young people, and older people? Do we need to change the Mass?

The importance of sharing – how the Eucharist is central to our belief as Catholics – and how sharing is central to our daily life.

There is an emphasis on our humanity – as human beings sharing, and caring is essential.

Is it that the views of the Church are very dissimilar to aspects of their lifestyle?

• ECUMENISM

There is almost always a good & instructive experience and there's an openness to Ecumenism locally.

In a democratic Church confusion ensues though. There is a good reason for authority being hierarchical - the Pope and the hierarchy.

Are the fundamentals of Catholic Faith immutable? Do we need to change teachings that have been in place for 2,000 years?

• AUTHORITY AND PARTICIPATION

The current perception of the Catholic Church is Authoritarian and autocratic.

It has little to do with participatory and a co-responsible Church, or teamwork and responsibility.

Even clergy are disheartened with the Vatican and Church bodies, who seem not to be listening.

How will we engage/encourage groups back to the Church?

Are they still "faithful", what do we need to change? How do we implement change?

What can we change, what must remain?

There has been a large increase in atheism, how can we combat that? (Education programmes are needed for Catholics).

There seems to be a broad misunderstanding of Papal Authority.

We need a deeper understanding of why we believe what we believe & say what we say so that I can understand the Churches authoritative position on big social issues.

We should improve education - sharing what the Church is about. Why does our education stop when we leave school?