

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:

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ST ANTHONY'S & ST MARK'S SYNOD

MEETING FOUR

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:

- **DISCERNING AND DECIDING**

In a synodal style we make decisions through discernment of what the Holy Spirit is saying through our whole community.

What methods and processes do we use in decision-making?

How can they be improved?

How do we promote participation in decision-making within hierarchical structures?

Do our decision-making methods help us to listen to the whole people of God?

What is the relationship between consultation and decision-making, and how do we put these into practice?

What tools and procedures do we use to promote transparency and accountability?

How can we grow in communal spiritual discernment?

- **FORMING OURSELVES IN SYNODALITY**

Synodality entails receptivity to change, formation and on-going learning.

How does our church community form people to be more capable of 'walking together', listening to one another, participating in mission, and engaging in dialogue?

What formation is offered to foster discernment and the exercise of authority in a synodal way?

PART 1

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

LUKE 24.34-48

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.

³⁶ They were still talking about all this when he himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!'

³⁷ In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost.

³⁸ But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts stirring in your hearts?'

³⁹ See by my hands and my feet that it is I myself. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.'

⁴⁰ And as he said this he showed them his hands and his feet.

⁴¹ Their joy was so great that they still could not believe it, as they were dumbfounded; so he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?'

⁴² And they offered him a piece of grilled fish,

⁴³ which he took and ate before their eyes.

⁴⁴ Then he told them, 'This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, was destined to be fulfilled.'

⁴⁵ He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures,

⁴⁶ and he said to them, 'So it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,

⁴⁷ and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

⁴⁸ You are witnesses to this.

PART 2

GROUP RESPONSE

• DISCERNING AND DECIDING & FORMING OURSELVES IN SYNODALITY

There is an inherent contradiction in the setup of the Synod for Synodality and the actual hierarchical structure of the church. Are we democratic? How can all the differing views be distilled into a coherent response? Is this consultation to be used as a rubber stamp for some already determined changes?

The Church is not a democracy, and the hierarchy of the Church is off-putting. It indicates authority which means do as I say, without question or discussion. Open discussion is not encouraged due to deference to hierarchical structure of church. How can we be guaranteed that our ideas and thoughts are respected and acted upon by the hierarchy?

Future consultation papers for the laity to consider should be in plain English, not in "management speak".

Talking is as important as listening; dialogue is important. Informing the people of the parish is important.

A Parish Council or similar group is essential so that parishioners know what is going on and have a say in how the parish should be run. How do we improve communication? We need to look again at methods and processes: things like group meetings questionnaires and censuses: is the message getting through to all in parish? Social media can provide a wide range of information

We cannot listen to the whole people if the whole people are not here?

How do we make "new" people feel welcome?

There should be a place for at least an acceptance in the Church for same sex relationships and transgender individuals – it is, after all a Catholic Church, a church for all and at the very least such individuals should be treated as human beings.

Who is deciding what is the message of the Holy Spirit?

The Church must urgently review its teaching on:

Marriage Breakdown

Divorce

LGBT issues

The Right to Death

Birth Control

Role of the laity

Role of Women in the Church

Advances in birth control should be considered.

In light of the massive advances in social change and medicine, we need a Church for present day needs and situations.

The involvement of young people is essential.