

## Our preparation for the forthcoming Synod of Bishops

*As in our personal lives, so in the life of our families and communities, there are significant events which shape the future for us. Often, it is only in retrospect that we are able to see how momentous they were. Pope Francis is the driving force behind this whole synodal experience, asking us to share and listen to each other's experiences, a listening, which is now reaching out across the dioceses of the world.*



*Like the history of God's Chosen People in the Old Testament, the history of the Church has been a continual struggle to remain faithful to God's call. Sharing your story will allow the Church to plan its future course in the areas of Communion, Participation and Mission: We need to address the vast array of challenges facing Christian and all communities in the modern world and the pandemic has exposed some, which we may not have noticed in other circumstances.*

Last Sunday we shared with you Pope Francis' and our Cardinal's vision for preparation for the forthcoming Synod of Bishops. You can access the slides here <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/Synodal-Pathway-Information-Session.pptx> Or listen to the Cardinal's letter on the Westminster Diocesan website at <https://rcdow.org.uk/cardinal/homilies/pastoral-letter-for-27th-sunday-in-ordinary-time/>

This Sunday we will continue the process of responding to the invitation of Pope Francis and the Cardinal to take part and have shared the participant's guide to familiarise you with what to expect. Your experiences of being a member of and journeying with the Church will be the basis of our parish response which will be sent to those preparing the Synod of Bishops in 2023.

There are different ways of participating. Some might like to have a conversation with Fr Mark, or one another, others may prefer to have a conversation with a small group of parishioners. Others may wish to join the diocesan events <https://rcdow.org.uk/synod/events/> The hope is that anyone who wants to take part feels welcome to do so. Parishioners are also encouraged to have conversations with those who journey outside of our church community. We have to complete the parish response by the end of NOVEMBER.

Parish events for responding have already begun. Do sign up, it will help us begin our conversations and listening to one another's experience of parish life.

Future events are

- Small group meeting on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November after evening mass.
- A zoom meeting attended by Fr Mark on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> of November 2021 8.15pm to 9.15pm. Please register via the website or by emailing [osterley@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:osterley@rcdow.org.uk) so that you can be sent a joining link.
- A morning reflection after the Sat morning mass, 10.40-12 Noon, on 27<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021.

Parishioners will be able to sign up for events in the church lobby giving your name, phone number and email address. You can also register take part by email to [osterley@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:osterley@rcdow.org.uk) Please do see the resources in our church lobby and pick up a copy of the participants' guide. This will give you the information you need and a feel for what we are trying to do. Please take it home, read it carefully and if you had not intended to sign up on Sunday please think seriously about joining later.

### ***Westminster Synodal Pathway***

***"The Holy Father is offering us the opportunity to participate in a time of listening and reflecting. He hopes this will help us to discern how God's presence comes into our lives and what the Spirit of God is prompting us to do anew, so that we might be more alive and creative in our response to the call of Jesus, our Way, Truth and Life." (Pastoral Letter 2-3 October 2021, Cardinal Vincent)***

***"...the heart of the synodal experience is listening to God through listening to one another, inspired by the Word of God." (Synod Vademecum)***

### ***What and Why?***

From the Vatican Synod Office: [www.synod.va/en.html](http://www.synod.va/en.html)

From our Diocesan website: [www.rcdow.org.uk/synod](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/synod)

