**For a Synodal Church 2021-2023**

**in the parishes of Christ the King and St Patrick’s**

**What is the Synod?**

The word Synod means “to journey together”. Pope Francis has called all Catholics throughout the world to join him in becoming a synodal church, journeying together led by the Holy Spirit. This is not a something new. St Peter led the first synodal meeting at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 10-11). This is “a spiritual process, not a mechanical data gathering exercise or a series of meetings and debates”. The fundamental question Pope Francis asks us to consider is *“A synodal church, in announcing the Gospel, journeys together. How is this journeying together happening today in your local church? What steps does the Holy Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our journeying together?”*

**What does this mean?**

There are resources out there to help us understand what we are being invited to take part in (see links below). We are being called to communion, participation and mission. We are invited to speak with courage and to listen with humility, and to discern together what the Holy Spirit is calling us to be. This is “not only a one- time exercise, but ultimately a way of life, grounded in Christ, following the lead of the Holy Spirit, living for the greater glory of God”

**So, what happens next?**

There will be a meeting at Christ the King parish hall on Tuesday, February 8th, at 6.30pm. There is a suggested format for the meeting, which is a little different to meetings we may have attended in the past. It is very similar to the type of meeting used for centuries by many religious orders when they come together to discern important decisions. This will be explained in greater detail at the start of our meeting, but the aim is to allow everyone to have time to pray, to speak and be heard, to listen, reflect and discern, and to come to a common understanding of what the Holy Spirit is calling us.

Similar meetings are taking place throughout our diocese, our country and the whole world.

All are welcome!

**These are some resources that might be helpful:**

Austen Ivereigh YouTube presentation and article

Austen Ivereigh, on Pope Francis' vision for a synodal church - Bing video

Synod 2021-23 -Vatican documents: Vade mecum and Preparatory document

Synod 2021 – 2023

Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales “Approaches to the Synodal pathway”

Approaches-to-Synodal-Pathway-041021.pdf (cbcew.org.uk)

Fr John Dardis discusses spiritual conversations

Introduction to Spiritual Conversation by Fr. John Dardis, S.J. - Educate Magis