

Synod Open Meeting

Holy Rosary, 7 November 2018

[Slide 1] Part 0 – Opening Prayer: A House built on Rock

[Slide 2 - 5] Opening Hymn

[Slide 6] Opening Prayer – Holding Slide for the Gathering

[Slide 7] Jesus said, “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord’ and not do what I say?
Everyone who comes to me and listens to my words and acts on them
– I will show you what they are like.

[Slide 8] They are like the man who when he built his house dug and dug deep,
and laid the foundations on rock;
when the river was in flood it bore down on that house
but could not shake it, it was so well built.

[Slide 9] But the one who listens and does nothing
is like the man who built his house on soil, with no foundations:
as soon as the river bore down on it, it collapsed;
and what a ruin that house became!”
Luke 6:46-49

[Slide 10] In this parable Jesus challenges us to think about how well we listen. He draws a very vivid picture to make His point clear. If we try to build without His words as the foundation of our actions then we are told clearly what will happen.

[Slide 11] Let’s take a moment to let this message touch our hearts.
How do we build our lives on the words of Jesus?
How can we make sure that what we do in the Church
is strong enough to stand when the flood bears down?

[Slide 12] Psalm 126

If the Lord does not build the house,
in vain do its builders labour;
If the Lord does not watch over the city,
in vain does the watchman keep vigil.

[Slide 13] In vain is your earlier rising,
your going later to rest,
you who toil for the bread you eat:
when he pours gifts on his beloved while they slumber.

[Slide 14] Holding Slide for silent reflection

[Slide 15] *We pray together:*
**Father we thank you for the Word you have spoken to us
in the gift of Jesus, your Son.
In our busy lives make us stop and listen to Him
so that all we do might be rooted in your merciful love.
We make this prayer through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.**

Slide 16 is the holding slide before Part I

[Slide 17] Part I – Vision

[Slide 18]

Having gathered together in prayer let us now explore the vision that is Synod 2020.

The Synod is not just a meeting, it is not just one day. **[Click]** It is a journey – a journey of prayer, listening, discerning and planning.

If you go away with one thing tonight it is this:

[Slide 19]

The Holy Spirit is at work in the people, the priests, the deacons, and the bishops of our Archdiocese.

Because he believes this, Archbishop Malcolm has called a Synod.

It is a long established practice in the Church to use the term ‘Synod’ for decisive meetings at significant times where members of the Church come together to review one or more issues and make decisions.

[Slide 20] Whitby – to decide the date of Easter!

[Click] Synod of Bishops – has met a number of times in the last 50 years

[Slide 21] Diocesan Synods – see web sites of Detroit (2016), Limerick (also 2016) and Wellington (2017)

[Slide 22] Our Bishops went to Rome recently on their ad limina visit, Archbishop Malcolm told the priests, the atmosphere is now different – instead of feeling that they had to report on what they have been doing – a dialogue is now taking place between our Bishops and the various Vatican Departments. They are listening to each other.

Pope Francis also talked to the Bishops but he listened as well. Something is changing.

In the light of this, Archbishop Malcolm’s vision for our Archdiocese is a Synod where everyone will have a contribution to make.

[Slide 23 – only click when ready to play] Video of Pastoral Letter Extract

In that same Pastoral Letter Archbishop Malcolm says:

[Slide 24] I need each one of you to play your part in our Synod process. Without you we will not hear the call of God guiding us and walking with us on our journey.

[Slide 25] In his letter, 'The Joy of the Gospel', Pope Francis wrote: I dream of a "missionary option", that is a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. We need to regain our missionary spirit so that the call to holiness we heard in our baptism is expressed by a change of direction.

[Slide 26] The Pope says clearly that the way for the Church to exist in the 3rd millennium is synodality. Speaking recently at the conclusion of the Synod on Youth he said,

I would like to say that the first fruit of this Synodal Assembly of Young People should be in fact in the example of a method that one tried to follow, from the beginning; a Synodal style.

It is important to spread a way of being and of working together, young people and elderly, in listening and in discernment, to arrive at pastoral choices that respond to the reality.

The Spirit is at work amongst the people, deacons, bishops, and priests of our Archdiocese.

[Slide 27] That is the invitation given to each one of us now as an Archdiocese: that is our Synod 2020 journey!

[Slide 28] Immediate Reaction - Invitation to talk together and receive feedback

[Slide 29] Part II – Our Synod Journey

[Slide 30] We are already some way into our Synod Journey which began in October 2017 with a year of prayer which culminated **[Click]** with the Eucharistic Congress last month.

During that year, behind the scenes, various bits of groundwork were being readied.

[Slide 31] Matthew and Philip have appointed Synod Moderators

[Slide 32] A Synod Working Party was brought together to help co-ordinate the Synod

[Slide 33] A Synod Co-ordinator started last month

[Click] And Jacqui, our Synod Administrator, started just today – far too recently for us to have a photo!

[Slide 34] Year 2 – our year of Listening and Discernment – was launched on Synod Sunday just over a week ago. With **[Click]** Year 3 being focussed on Themes and Proposals – the development of those ideas and actions that will be taken forward to Synod on 17 and 18 October 2020 and voted on.

[Slide 35] But it is this second year, the current year that I would like to speak about.

[Slide 36] The first part of this year will be spent confirming the Synod Membership.

[Click] The 500 people who will have a valuable and vital role in the success of our Synod.

[Slide 37] But before we look at this role it might be useful to look at how the 500 are chosen. The overwhelming majority fall into three categories: **[Click]** Priests, **[Click]** Parish Members, and **[Click]** Pastoral Area Members. There are others – retired priests, members of religious orders, and others who can make a special contribution to the Synod.

[Slide 38 – screen stays same initially] So, imagine a pastoral area that has four priests, serving six parishes, the membership would look something like this:

[Click] The four priests – every priest with an appointment in the diocese is a Synod Member

[Click] One Member chosen by each of the six parishes

[Click] A further 8 Members chosen by the Pastoral Area. (Note Widnes and Leigh)

[Slide 39] And the idea is that when taken as a whole, the Members from a Pastoral Area will look like that Pastoral Area. Everyone in your community should be able to look at the membership and ask, **[Click]** is there somebody a bit like me? And see that there is.

[Slide 40] So that when the membership is confirmed in January 2019 the rich diversity of the diocese is reflected in that Membership.

[Slide 41] And the Role of the Synod Member will be threefold:

[Click] It is they who will gather in Synod in October 2020 and vote on the proposals that are brought forward.

But before that they have two other tasks.

[Click] They will create opportunities for listening in their communities. Gathering where all the members of the community are able to speak freely and honestly about their experiences, their hopes, fears, and anxieties, and their dreams for the future of our Church. There will be reflective questions to help these conversations.

This is listening that needs to push out towards and beyond the boundaries of our worshipping communities. We will listen after mass and in parish meetings, but also with young parents at the school gates, with young people in the high school, at our parish groups, where there are people on the margins of our Church. Wherever there are people who identify as Catholic.

[Click] They will be the link between the Synod Process – the Synod Office – and the local community. Keeping you informed and up-to-date about how the journey is progressing.

The local Synod Members will be tasked with ensuring that when we say Together on the Road we do mean all of us, not just some of us, but everyone's voice matters, and everybody has a chance to be heard.

[Slide 42] But there will be other ways of making your voice heard. Alongside the **[Click]** local listening we have **[Click]** focus groups that will be co-ordinated by Liverpool Hope University and an **[Click]** online survey to ensure we can listen to as much of our community of faith as possible.

And in the summer of 2019, the data from all of this listening will be analysed and discerned and the themes that will be taken forward into our third year will begin to emerge.

Key Point: You will know someone who will be good at this. Take one of these at the end – Role of the Synod Member handout – and pass it on to that person. *You should think about doing this.* And mention that person's name to your priests who will be co-ordinating the recruitment.

Don't worry too much if it seems a daunting task – you won't be alone. There will be support locally and from the Synod Office.

[Slide 43] Immediate Reaction - Invitation to talk together and receive feedback

[Slide 44] Part III: Themes and Proposals

[Slide 45] Synod Sunday: A presentation of the themes that have emerged and all the listening that has taken place. The Archbishop will explain what will happen to issues that may not be discussed by a Diocesan Synod.

[Slide 46] Oct 2019 – Jan 2020: PA Pre-Synods 1: (All day Sat meeting)
Introduction and discussion of themes

[Slide 47] Feb – early May 2020: PA Pre-Synods 2: (Evening meetings)
To gather in theme groups to generate proposals, to Co-ordinator by 15th May

[Slide 48] June 2020: Members to be briefed on proposals that have emerged.

[Slide 49] June 2020 – Oct 2020: Local discussions about proposals.

June – Oct 2020: Synod proposals published / Members hold local meetings

[Slide 50] 8th - 16th Oct 2020: ARCHDIOCESAN NOVENA

[Slide 51] Friday, 16th October 2020: Evening of Prayer across the Diocese

[Slide 52] 17th October 2020: SYNOD SATURDAY (Sunloch Suite) 9.30am – 4.00pm

[Slide 53] 18th October 2020: SYNOD SUNDAY in the Cathedral 3.00pm Mass

[Slide 54] 25th October 2020: Acknowledgement of Proposals in Parishes
(Synod Sunday 3)

[Slide 55] Immediate Reaction - Invitation to talk together and receive feedback

[Slide 56] More information

[Slides 57 – 59] Synod Prayer

[Slide 60] More information – to be left on screen after the end