

# Malcolm



## Archbishop of Liverpool

### *Decree for the Convocation of Synod 2020*

It is now well over sixty years since the last diocesan synod in the Archdiocese of Liverpool. In the intervening period the Church has changed greatly, and we face very different challenges than our predecessors. In 2005 Archbishop Patrick Kelly initiated a process of consultation and planning, *Leaving Safe Harbours*, across the whole archdiocese to respond to the pastoral difficulties generated by a diminishing number of diocesan priests and a declining regular Mass attendance by Catholics. This led to changes in parish organisation through mergers and to the closure of several churches, though the degree of change was not uniform across the archdiocese as a whole. In 2000 there were over 200 diocesan priests available to assign to parish ministry; by 2020 there will only be around half that number.

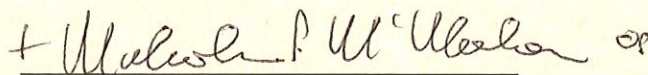
In September 2017 I issued a pastoral letter in which I signalled my intention to call a synod to be celebrated in 2020. I envisaged a synod as an opportunity for us in the Archdiocese of Liverpool to discern how we might respond in a practical way, both now and in the future, to the call of the Gospel to be missionary disciples. The first year of preparation was planned as a year of prayer and it culminated in the National Eucharistic Congress and Pilgrimage celebrated here in September 2018. Beyond that it was envisaged that there would be time for discussions to take place in parishes and pastoral areas across the archdiocese before the celebration of the synod itself. Indeed, Pope Francis has outlined his vision for the Church, which is synodal not only at the level of the Universal Church but also in dioceses throughout the world. Thus, I am confident that now is the right time to prepare for, and celebrate, a diocesan synod.

Therefore, having consulted the Council of Priests on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2017, and in accordance with the requirements of canons 460-468 of the Code of Canon Law and the Instruction on Diocesan Synods issued by the Congregation for Bishops in 1997, I hereby decree the convocation of a Diocesan Synod to be celebrated in Liverpool from 17<sup>th</sup> until 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and to be called *Synod 2020*. The formal preparatory phase of archdiocesan consultation for *Synod 2020* shall begin after 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2019.

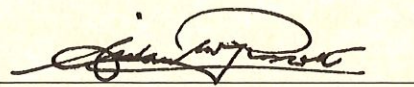
In addition, I hereby decree the following:

- That the preparatory commission be formally constituted according to the schedule of names hereunto attached in accordance with the requirements of the *Instruction* of 1997.
- That membership of the *Synod 2020* be determined according to the standing orders hereunto attached.
- That members of *Synod 2020* gather at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King, Liverpool, on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2019 in order to make the profession of faith in accordance with the requirement of canon 833 1°.

Given at Liverpool, this **sixth** day of **January**,  
in the year of Our Lord **two thousand and nineteen**.



Archbishop of Liverpool



Chancellor



Prot. No. G 2019/01