

LOCAL GATHERINGS



Your task is to *facilitate*.....

.....to assist the progress of the meeting

.....to ensure its aim is achieved



Remember an effective meeting gets a task done but also looks after people.

Suspend your own opinions and judgments and **LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN!**



BEFORE THE MEETING

- You generally need to spend twice as much time on preparation as on the meeting itself
- You want people to be there - publicise the meeting well!
- Ensure you are well-prepared: that you have all the materials & resources you need, pens, paper, microphone (if necessary) etc
- Try to choose a place that is well- lit, warm and welcoming
- Arrange the room in a way that is conducive to a relaxed informal atmosphere - ensure people can see and hear each other, especially in the small groups
- If it is possible, work as part of a team, eg: you might have a co- facilitator; someone else might lead prayer. You will need a notetaker, maybe a timekeeper



- Arrange for someone to look after refreshments. A cup of tea is welcoming and a useful icebreaker. If this is not possible, provide a glass of water.

AT THE GATHERING



- Welcome everyone
- Start with the Synod Prayer or another prayer from the Synod Liturgy Resource'. In this way the centrality of awareness and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit in the meeting and indeed the whole enterprise of Synod2020 is recognized.
- Explain clearly the purpose of the meeting
- Give a gentle reminder about turning off mobile phones
- Let people know where toilets and fire exits are located
- Outline the limits of confidentiality - people's views will be fed into the Synod process but no individual names will be used
- Give people the timetable and agenda for the meeting [on slide]
- Keep to your timings and finish on time
- Stress the importance of listening with respect and without judgment
- Assure people that every idea and opinion is valued
- Encourage people to be open and honest
- Always use the '*talking piece*' to facilitate equal participation, drawing out those who are reticent and limiting the contributions of those who might dominate
- Go around groups and gently check everyone is focused on the task

AT THE END OF THE GATHERING



- Thank people for their contribution
- Assure them that what they have said will be communicated to the Synod Working Group
- Invite people to continue to pray for positive outcomes from Synod2020