

SYNOD JOURNEY 2021-2023



Catholic Diocese of Sale

February 2022

Let's Walk Together!

During January 2022 we will be focussing on the **second** of the Synod Themes:
Mission

Further Synod resources can be accessed via our Diocesan website at
<https://www.cdsale.org.au/synod-of-bishops>

This Mass resource has been prepared for your use for the Sundays of Ordinary Time in January:

- Bulletin notice
- Reflection on Scripture
- Prayers of Intercession
- Quote of the Day (Pope Francis on Synodality)
- PowerPoint Slides for each Sunday in January (separate file) using a weekly question from the **Mission** section of the Synod Questions – a good time to display these is in the time after Communion, inviting some quiet reflection.
- The Ordinary Time and Synod themes have been woven together in this Mass kit so that the selected Scripture quote of the day and the message of the Synod (**Mission**) may be transmitted to your assemblies during the liturgy and at community gatherings.

To underline **Mission**, key messages to transmit include:

- Synodality is the call of God for the Church in the Third Millennium.
- The synodal path is one that is guided by the Gospel and grounded in Tradition and requires that all the People of God engage in mission in the various pathways of life.
- Together, as the People of God we participate in the **mission** of the Church to together, listen and discern the work of the Spirit within the world.
- We enter into **mission** through our daily living, being attentive to recognising the face of Christ in all those we encounter in our home, work and community.
- Focusing on **communion**, **participation** and **mission**, Pope Francis desires this Synod to be an experience of *encounter*, *listening* and *discernment*. He reminds us that in Jesus' own encounters, he walks with people and listens to the questions and concerns deep in their hearts. Jesus shows us that God is not found in neat and orderly places, distant from reality, but walks ever at our side on the rocky roads and in the dark places of life.
- Being immersed in the **mission** of Jesus is not a temporary phase in preparation for this next Synod in 2023, but is meant to animate and enliven our lives as Catholic Christians. What are we really on about as baptised members of Christ's body, if not to be on mission and spreading his good news?
- This Synod is the biggest ecclesial event in our Church since the Second Vatican Council.

Prayer for the Synod

As we embrace this Synodal Process, this prayer invites the Holy Spirit to be at work in us so that we may be a community and a people of grace.

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,
make Yourself at home in our hearts;
Teach us the way we must go
and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful;
do not let us promote disorder.
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path
nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity
so that we may journey together to eternal life
and not stray from the way of truth
and what is right.

All this we ask of You,
who are at work in every place and time,
in the communion of the Father and the Son,
forever and ever.

Amen.



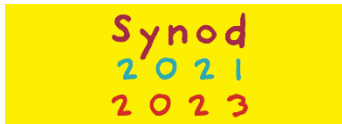
This prayer can be used throughout the duration of the Synodal Process from October 2021-2023.



SYNOD OF BISHOPS 2021-2023
DIOCESAN CONSULTATION PERIOD
(December 2021-February 2022)

MASS KIT FOR FEBRUARY 2022

6th February – 5th Sunday Ordinary Time (C)



Word of God Sunday

Synod Theme: Mission

This week's focus: Our common mission

Bulletin Insert – Synod of Bishops

SYNOD OF BISHOPS: Have you taken up Pope Francis' invitation to participate in a global conversation about the Catholic Church? You still have three weeks to make a submission to your local consultation for the international Synod on Synodality, calling the People of God to walk together in our mission as Christians. Submissions close on February 27. Find out more at: <https://catholic.org.au/synodalchurch>

Bulletin Insert - Synod Questions for Discussion & Reflection



Synod 2023: Our Common Mission: Walking together enables us all to accept our mission to share the Good News. Do we take this mission seriously? What stops us from being active in mission?

Have your say by **February 27, 2022**

<https://tinyurl.com/HavingASay> or scan this QR code



Introduction to Word of God Sunday

The Church in Australia celebrates the Sunday of the Word of God on the first Sunday in February – February 6 in 2022. Pope Francis established the day, which is devoted to “the celebration, study and dissemination” of the Word of God. Visit www.catholic.org.au/wordofgodSunday to access resources to help commemorate the day and for suggestions on how to better engage with Sacred Scripture in various ways and settings.

Penitential Rite ¹

Presider The Lord Jesus, who invites us to the table of the Word and of the Eucharist, calls us to conversion; let us acknowledge that we are sinners and confidently invoke God's mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the Word of God made flesh. Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you restored sight to the blind by the power of your word, Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you free our lives from sin. Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

Amen.

Reflection on Scripture ²

Peter said: "Leave me Lord; I am a sinner."

Jesus replied: "Do not be afraid;"

Lk 5: 8, 10

One significant, common element in each of the three Scripture readings today is that all three central characters – the prophet Isaiah, St Paul the Apostle and the first disciple of Jesus, Peter – acknowledge their sinfulness and unworthiness before the Lord. At the same time, all three discern a call to something greater.

In this way, these biblical heavyweights prefigure the situation we find ourselves in today some 2000 years later: we are graced sinners, hearers of God's Word and called to a deeper mission.

It has been noted that one of the characteristics of the earliest disciples of Jesus is that they responded to a personal call from the Lord, in the same way that the prophets did in the Old Testament – the Hebrew Scriptures. In light of their experience, some questions might be proposed for those of us who seek to follow in their footsteps:

¹ Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation. *Liturgical and Pastoral Resources for Word of God Sunday 2022*. <http://www.pcpne.va/content/pcpne/en/attivita/parola/2022.html>

² *Homily Notes for Word of God Sunday* <https://www.catholic.org.au/wordofgodSunday>

Our call to mission

- What call from the Lord have I discerned in the past week or today? How did I or how will I respond?
- What concrete tasks is God asking of me, my family, my colleagues and friends, my parish community in relation to the Church and society at the present time? This call will be different for each person or community depending upon the gifts received from the Lord.
- What message does the abundant catch of fish and the call of the disciples in today's Gospel reading teach us about the loving providence of God?
- If we are members of Christ's Body through Baptism, and affirm this union through our participation in the Eucharist, what are the implications for our missionary discipleship?

Some members of the congregation may think that it is not always obvious that God delivers abundantly when we follow his words. In response, we could suggest that maybe the gifts that God gives us are not so much an abundance of fish, food or financial support, but a new, life-giving way of looking at familiar daily tasks associated with our respective jobs, roles and vocations.

What God gives us, when we allow ourselves to be open to his transforming presence, is a renewed way of looking at our life, talents and mission – a gift of renewed sight, faith, insight, forgiveness, purpose and mission to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who is our way, our truth and our life.

During the Celebration of the Eucharist, after the Lamb of God at the Breaking of the Bread, we echo the words of the Centurion in Matthew's Gospel and say:

"Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."

Like the important biblical figures in today's readings, God calls us, "warts and all", to serve his purposes which are not always the same as our own.

Our readings today invite to look honestly at our lives, to acknowledge that we are sinners – albeit graced sinners – and are called by God to follow the Lord and his life-giving word in missionary discipleship, and thereby to attract others to Christ.

We are called by the Lord, on this Sunday of the Word of God, to be faithful members of his Body and willing witnesses to his Word in our world today.

Prayers of the Faithful ³

Presider Dear sisters and brothers, having heard God's life-giving Word on this Day of the Lord, let us be open now to the promptings of the Holy Spirit as we pray for the needs of the Church, the world and our local community.

Reader

For all servants of God's Word in the Church, particularly Pope Francis, and all members of the clerical, religious and lay apostolates: that they will always promote the proclamation of the Gospel and the practice of Christian virtue in their ministries. We pray to the Lord.

For all leaders in government and the legal profession, especially those who solemnly swear on God's Word to speak the truth from their heart: that their words and example will inspire others towards honesty and integrity of life. We pray to the Lord.

For all who research, teach and publish God's Word in our world: that their study, formation and resources will be fruitful in helping more people to know, love and serve the Lord. We pray to the Lord.

For all proclaim and preach the Word of God in our communities: that they will always treasure the opportunity to be formed by God's Word and to use their gifts to bring this Word to life in the liturgy and in the lives of those close to them. We pray to the Lord.

For ourselves: that we may participate in being a more synodal church, responding with generosity to Jesus' call to mission, sharing of ourselves as we accompany others in our daily living.

For all who suffer in mind, body or spirit: that they will never lose hope in God but place their trust in him, and find comfort, consolation and healing in the words of his Son. We pray to the Lord.

For all who have died recently or whose anniversaries of death occur around this time, especially N. _____: that they will rest in the peace of Christ and rise in glory on the last day. We pray to the Lord.

Presider Gracious and loving God, source of all wisdom and love, we ask you to hear the prayers we make this day in response to your life-giving Word. We make these prayers through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

³ *Prayers of Intercession, Word of God Sunday* (adapted) <https://www.catholic.org.au/wordofgodsunday>

Quote of the Day on Synodality ⁴

“I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security.”

Evangelii Gaudium, ‘The Joy of the Gospel’ (#49).

We are missionary disciples (*Evangelii Gaudium* 119-121; 48-49)

To encounter Jesus is to be sent forth to proclaim him joyfully: “We have found the Messiah!” (Jn 1:41). This is evangelisation: sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ in my life.

Pope Francis makes the point that evangelisation is not to be left to the “professionals” while the rest of us are passive recipients. Through baptism every Christian is challenged to be actively engaged in evangelisation, and there is a certain urgency about this calling. (EG 120)

Indeed, anyone who has truly experienced God’s saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. (EG 120)

Think of St Paul. After his encounter with Jesus he “immediately proclaimed Jesus” (Acts 9:20).

“So, what are we waiting for?” asks Pope Francis (EG 120).

Prayer ⁵

Pilgrim God,
you walk alongside us
and speak to us throughout
the Scriptures:
in the message of the prophets,
the songs of David
and the vision of Paul.
Your Son, Jesus Christ,
listens to our hopes and fears
and shows us how to live:
in our love of neighbour
our desire for justice,

⁴ Pope Francis. *Evangelii Gaudium: The Joy of the Gospel*. www.vatican.va. Teresa Pirola and the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay, *The Joy Of The Gospel: Seven Challenges From Pope Francis*, 2013.

⁵ Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation. *Liturgical and Pastoral Resources for Word of God Sunday 2022*. <http://www.pcpne.va/content/pcpne/en/attivita/parola/2022.html>

and in our dying and rising each day.
Send us the Holy Spirit to open
our hearts and minds
so that we may be your witnesses
throughout the world:
in our protection of the vulnerable,
our words and actions
and in our communion with the earth.
Amen

Pray at Home

Daily Prayer (Madonna Magazine/Australian Jesuits)

Access to daily readings and Scripture reflections. Free subscription.

<https://www.pray.com.au/>

Connect@home (Diocese of Bathurst)

A range of resources to assist parishioners with worship and prayer at home. Daily emails include a link to the Scripture readings of the day, together with a short reflection and prayer. You could do this sacred reading on your own, or with members of your household. There are also links to Mass for You at Home and other prayer resources. Subscription is free. Follow the links at [Connect@home](#) or visit <https://www.bathurst.catholic.org.au/>

Pray at Home (Australian Catholic Bishops)

A comprehensive listing of Prayer resources and Mass offerings from Dioceses around Australia. <https://www.catholic.org.au/prayathome>

Walk together as a Church with the Holy Spirit

The purpose of the Synod is
"to plant dreams", to "journey together"
following the course of the Church in
the third millennium with a truly
synodal mentality.

Join us!



www.synod.va



[synod.va](https://www.facebook.com/synod.va)



[synod_va](https://twitter.com/synod_va)



[synod_va](https://www.instagram.com/synod_va)



[synod.va](https://www.youtube.com/synod.va)

For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

Synod
2021
2023

13th February – 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Synod Theme: Mission

This week's focus: Our conversations with one another

Bulletin Insert – Synod of Bishops

SYNOD OF BISHOPS: Hundreds of groups and individuals across the country have shared their stories about how all members of the Catholic Church can walk together to carry out our mission as Christians. Have you? The local consultation process for the global Synod on Synodality is open for two more weeks – until February 27. Join with family, friends, parishioners or participate yourself. Find out more at: <https://catholic.org.au/synodalchurch>

Bulletin Insert - Synod Questions for Discussion and Reflection



Synod 2023: Our Conversation: Genuine conversation requires patience and perseverance but leads to understanding. How good are we at both listening and sharing? Do we collaborate well in our Catholic communities AND in our broader social communities? How can we do better?

Have your say by **February 27, 2022**

<https://tinyurl.com/HavingASay> or scan this QR code



16th Anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations.

Today we commemorate the 16th anniversary of the historic national apology to the First Nations People of Australia, in particular to the Stolen Generations, by the Prime Minister of the day, Kevin Rudd, on 13th February 2008.

The unanimous parliamentary apology committed Australia to carry on the process of reconciliation through symbolic and practical actions. One of these was to set a range of targets in achieving equality between Indigenous and other Australians. The targets, sadly, have generally not been reached. All Australians are urged to support and commit to assisting our First Nations People. As Catholics on the Synodal journey, we are invited to hear their stories and learn from their rich spiritual and cultural traditions. We are invited to play our part in closing the gap, fostering understanding and committing to the journey of reconciliation.

Read the text of the National Apology [here](#).

Acknowledgement of Country (Catholic Diocese of Sale, Victoria) ⁶

You may wish to include the following acknowledgement of Country in your parish bulletins and in your opening Mass Commentary this Sunday.



We gather today on the land of the Gunai-Kurnai people of the Kulin Nation, the traditional custodians of much of the country of the Diocese of Sale. We also acknowledge the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation upon whose country the western part of the diocese rests. Care for country, knowledge of the environment, familial and societal structures and spirituality are all evident in the traditions of First Nations people and their traditions and culture and have enriched our diocese and enhanced the fibre of this great nation. We acknowledge the traditional owners who have walked upon and care for this land for thousands of years. We pay particular respect to their elders, past, present and emerging and we commit ourselves to walking with them in the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

Reflection on Scripture

***A blessing on those who put their trust in the Lord.
They are like trees by the waterside.
They never cease to bear fruit.***

Jeremiah 17: 7, 8

- Luke's account of the Beatitudes is given to us in today's readings. Many of us are more used to more familiar rendition from Matthew's Gospel. The Beatitudes are not sentimental desires but in themselves, provocative and uncomfortable. They offer a perspective of God that we often overlook – that God promises to act on behalf of the impoverished and vulnerable. This preferential action is emphasised by Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* and in many of his other addresses. Jesus vision for the transformation of the world is our vision too. How are we exercising a preferential option for the poor and marginalised? In what ways can we help God's kingdom come?
- The strongly worded admonition from Jeremiah finishes with a beautiful image of what happens when we trust in the Lord. Despite all of the situations thrown at us and throughout all the dry times of our lives, we are reassured that our trust in God will not be misplaced.

⁶ Image: Cross commissioned for the First Assembly of the 5th Plenary Council of Australia.

Prayers of the Faithful ⁷

For Pope Francis and the leaders leading our Church to the Synod of 2023: that they remain faithful to the Gospel and tradition, and eager to make Jesus Christ known and loved in the world today. Let us pray to the Lord.

For the Church in Australia: that we continue to open our hearts in trust to the Holy Spirit as we journey towards the conclusion of the Plenary Council in July this year. We pray to the Lord.

For all political and religious leaders: that they may be single-minded in working for the greater good of the people they serve as we cope with climate change and the pandemic. We pray to the Lord.

For the First Nations People in Australia: we give thanks for their rich spiritual and cultural traditions and their care for country. May we support them by playing our part in closing the gap, fostering understanding and committing to the journey of reconciliation with them. We pray to the Lord

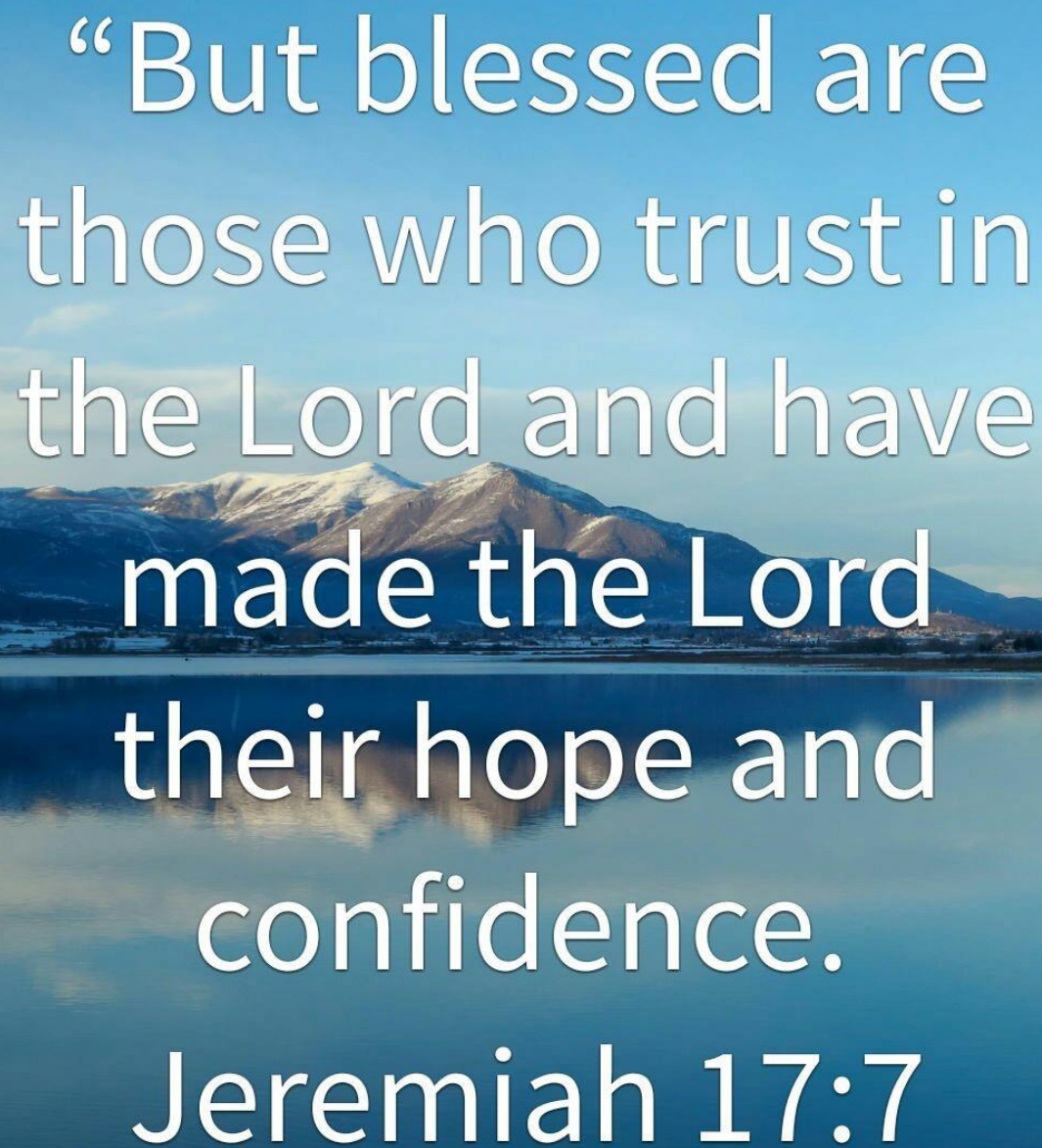
(Pope Francis' intention for February) For religious sisters and consecrated women in gratitude for their mission and courage. May they continue to show the beauty of God's love and compassion to those they serve. We pray to the Lord.

For the homeless and abandoned people in our world: that they may know God's healing and comfort through the compassionate hands of those who care for them. We pray to the Lord.

For our parish community: that we may be missionaries in our families and within our local community bearing fruit by our living witness to the Gospel. We pray to the Lord.



⁷ Selected prayers taken from Pastoral Liturgy, Vol. 52 [2001], Iss. 1, Art. 32 (adapted) <https://researchonline.nd.edu>



“But blessed are
those who trust in
the Lord and have
made the Lord
their hope and
confidence.
Jeremiah 17:7

zachj3v16 | tumblr

Quote of the Day on Synodality ⁹

“All the baptised have a voice in the Church, all have responsibility for **mission**. The Greek word *synod*, which in Latin becomes *council*, means “on the road together”. Not just the ordained but all the People of God are pilgrims together; and as we journey we listen to each other in an attempt to listen to God.

On the journey we have no road-map or GPS; we don't know exactly where we're going.

But God does know; and that's why it's crucial that we keep our eye and our ear on God.

If we don't, it's highly likely, in fact almost certain, that we will go astray. In that sense, we really are daughters and sons of Abraham. He was called to leave all that was familiar and undertake a journey with no roadmap. He had to trust the one who did know, to listen to the one who led him step by step.

Prayer ¹⁰

You challenge us to follow you;
not by staying as we are
but by stepping out in faith,
casting our net into deeper water
as with Simon Peter, fisherman.
You challenge us to trust you
and be prepared for all
eventualities,
even when the load is heavy
and we struggle to succeed.
But with your challenge comes
blessing.
Flimsy nets are filled,
broken lives made whole.
From emptiness
to abundance.
Thank you for your challenge
Grant us courage to follow. Amen

⁹ Archbishop Mark Coleridge, Homily at the Launch of the Synod 2021-2023, Brisbane, 17th October 2021
<https://brisbanecatholic.org.au/articles/homily-at-the-launch-of-synod-2021-23/>

¹⁰ Prayer of Thanksgiving. © 2016 John Birch in *Praying through the Lectionary – Prayers for Year C*
https://www.faithandworship.com/Lectionary_C/lectionary_readings_year_C.html#gsc.tab=0

Synod
2021
2023

20th February – 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Synod Theme: Mission

This week's focus: **Walking with other Christians – the way of Ecumenism**

Bulletin Insert – Synod of Bishops

SYNOD OF BISHOPS: People around the world have been participating in an international conversation about the Catholic Church. You are invited to join the discussion, helping shape a major global meeting in 2023. You have one more week to make a submission to your local consultation for the international Synod on Synodality, calling the People of God to walk together in our mission as Christians. Find out more at: <https://catholic.org.au/synodalchurch>

Bulletin Insert - Synod Questions for Discussion and Reflection



Synod 2023: Walking with other Christians is essential to our mission to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. How well do we know our brothers and sisters from other Christian Churches and what do we share? Why don't we do more together?

Have your say by **February 27, 2022**

<https://tinyurl.com/HavingASay> or scan this QR code



Reflection on Scripture

*As a father has compassion on his children,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him.*

Psalms 102:13

- Today's readings again pose a challenge and an invitation. They urge us to act radically – to love our enemies and do good to them, to show compassion, to refrain from, judging others.
- As we have been treated with mercy and compassion by our living God, so must we act towards others. The image of God's abundant mercy is eloquently described in the Gospel: in the giving in of ourselves to others, we receive God's gifts in overflowing abundance, plentiful and without measure. What would it mean to give to others, especially those with whom we don't get along, without hoping for any reward or return?

- As we strive to become a more synodal Church, how do we measure up in our dealings with other people? Do we accord them dignity and respect, especially when their views are in opposition to ours?
- Could we commit to being more open to learn from others, to humbly receive new perspectives and to hear of experiences and reflections other than from our own world view.

Prayers of the Faithful ¹¹

For Pope Francis and his brother Bishops: that they will show the face of God to the world through their example, as the entire Church journeys together towards the Synod in 2023. We pray to the Lord.

For all Christian communities: that their shared belief in Jesus Christ as Lord will assist them in drawing closer together to each other in prayer, respectful conversation and in their sharing of faith. We pray to the Lord.

That the Dioceses and Parishes of Australia, currently engaged in both the local Plenary Council and international Synodal processes will be open and responsive to the movement of the Holy Spirit in our time. We pray to the Lord.

For our civic leaders, that they will govern with mercy and compassion particularly as we all struggle with the problems of climate change and the pandemic, along with bushfires, floods and drought. We pray to the Lord.

(Pope Francis' intention for February) For religious sisters and consecrated women in gratitude for their mission and courage. May they continue to find new responses to the challenges of our times. We pray to the Lord.

For those burdened by the rupture of relationship and connection, that God may open their hearts and grant them healing from their pain so that they may reach out to reunite with their families and loved ones. We pray to the Lord.

For our own community, that through God's grace we will be abundantly forgiving, loving and generous and be compassionate as our Father is compassionate. We pray to the Lord.

For all those who are suffering from COVID-19, domestic violence and other illnesses of mind, body and spirit. May they find support through our frontline health workers, agencies and family members to give them strength and the will to get well. We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the community gathered here to become the Body of Christ. May we go forth today renewed so that we can witness to all we meet that Christ is the centre of our existence. We pray to the Lord.

¹¹ Selected prayers taken from Pastoral Liturgy, Vol. 52 [2001], Iss. 1, Art. 32 (adapted)
<https://researchonline.nd.edu>

Quote of the Day on Synodality ¹²

“The Church, in her entirety, has undertaken a synodal process, and counts on your contribution. Let us recall, in this regard, that synodality is not a simple discussion. Nor is it an “adjective”. Never adjectivize the substantiality of life.

Nor is synodality the search for the consensus of the majority; this is what a parliament does, this is what is done in politics. (Synodality) is not a plan, a programme to be implemented. No. It is a style to be assumed, in which the main protagonist is the Holy Spirit, who is expressed first and foremost in the Word of God, read, meditated upon and shared together.

Let us take the concrete image of the cross: it has a vertical arm and a horizontal arm. The horizontal arm is our life, our history, our humanity. The vertical arm is the Lord who comes to visit us with his Word and his Spirit, to give meaning to what we are living. To focus on Jesus’ cross, as Saint Paul says (cf. *Gal 2:19*), means accepting to place my life under his gaze, to accept this encounter between my poor humanity and his transforming divinity.

Please, always leave an important place for the Word of God in the life of your groups. And likewise, leave space for prayer, for the inner life, for worship.

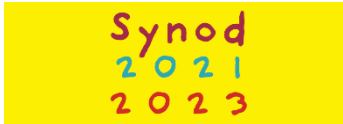
I hope so much that everyone will find or rediscover the joy of knowing the friendship of Christ and proclaiming the Gospel.”

Prayer ¹³

For love that offers refreshment
to all who drink of it
Light to all who walk in it
Strength to all who hope in it
Healing to all who have need of it
Wholeness to all who live in it
This is the God we serve
The God we worship
The God we proclaim
This day and all days
with our words and our lives.

¹² Pope Francis’ Address to the Delegation of the Catholic Action Movement of France, 13 January 2022
<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2022/january/documents/20220113-azionecattolica-francia.html>

¹³ Prayer of Thanksgiving. © 2016 John Birch in *Praying through the Lectionary – Prayers for Year C*
https://www.faithandworship.com/Lectionary_C/lectionary_readings_year_C.html#gsc.tab=0



27th February – 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Synod Theme: Mission

This week's focus: Journeying together on mission

Bulletin Insert – Synod of Bishops

SYNOD OF BISHOPS: Don't miss out on this opportunity to take part in a global conversation about the Catholic Church. How are we called to walk together as Christians? How can we listen to one another in making important decisions about our faith and our mission? The deadline for online submissions in the local consultation for the international Synod on Synodality is Sunday, February 27. Find out more and share your contribution at: <https://catholic.org.au/synodalchurch>

Bulletin Insert - - Synod Questions for Discussion and Reflection



February 27: 8th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Synod 2023: The Big Questions: How do we journey together? How might we do it better?

Have your say Have your say by **February 27, 2022**
<https://tinyurl.com/HavingASay> or



Reflection on Scripture

*Shine on the world like bright stars,
you are offering it the word of life.*

Phil 2:15-16 (Gospel Acclamation)

- This excerpt of Paul's letter to the Corinthians gives Christians such hope and reassurance. In these times of challenge, both for the Church and the world, when there is pressure on us and our institutions to change, adapt, renew and be transformed, it can be easy to lose heart and not have the energy to keep going. But we, as Christians, are meant to move, not to become stagnant and not to lose hope.

- Pope Francis urges us forward: *“Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus, let us never give up, come what will. May nothing inspire us more than his life, which impels us onwards!”* (Evangelii Gaudium #3)

Here is the text of the joyful hymn written by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. He was inspired by today’s excerpt of St Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. (1Cor 15:54-57) ¹⁴

**Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate.
Light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.
Vict’ry is ours, vict’ry is ours through Him who loves us.**

Prayers of the Faithful ¹⁵

For Pope Francis as he leads the bishops and the entire People of God towards the Synod of 2023. May he remain strong in mind and body to bring about God’s will for the Church. We pray to the Lord.

For the Church that the forgiveness and healing power of your love will strengthen its values and produce good fruit. May healing come to those who have been hurt by the Church and sadly carry their woundedness. We pray to the Lord.

For all nations of the world, that conflict and disharmony can be dissolved through compassion and goodwill. May the needs of people suffering from COVID-19 and from climate change be addressed with care and compassion. We pray to the Lord.

For those working in frontline emergency services: that in their responding to the needs of others, they may be kept safe from harm. We pray to the Lord.

For our community as we share in the Eucharist: may we acknowledge those from other cultures, backgrounds and abilities, so that in becoming a more Christ-centred and missionary Church, our prayers and action may shine on the world like bright stars. We pray to the Lord.

For those who enlighten our lives via the creative arts: that they receive recognition for their contribution to our culture and society, as their work broadens our outlook and develops our understanding of each other. We pray to the Lord.

(Pope Francis’ intention for February) For religious sisters and consecrated women in gratitude for their mission and courage. May they continue to show the beauty of God’s love and compassion to those they serve. We pray to the Lord.

¹⁴ Text: © 1996, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, published in *An African Prayer Book*. iAdmin. Lynn C. Franklin Assoc. Ltd. Music by John Bell, © 1996 Wild Goose Resource Group, Iona Community. Administered by GIA Publications. One License A-640527.

¹⁵ Selected prayers taken from Pastoral Liturgy, Vol. 52 [2001], Iss. 1, Art. 32 (adapted)
<https://researchonline.nd.edu>

Quote of the Day on Synodality

Jesus asks you to accept him in the daily reality that you live; in the Church of today, as it is; in those who are close to you every day; in the reality of those in need. in the problems of your family, in your parents, in your children, in grandparents, in welcoming God there. It takes humility to encounter God, to let ourselves be encountered by him.

Pope Francis ¹⁶

“Pope Francis encourages us to actually hear what one another is saying and then realize that we have to come to some kind of a consensus to move forward. To be a missionary church is not just to preach at people and proclaim the good news but also to encounter them and encounter Christ by doing so.

Pope Francis’ vision for the church is not that it’s a community of the perfect; it’s pilgrim people on the way. It’s very much the Second Vatican Council’s vision of the church.” ¹⁷

Prayer ¹⁸

Reveal yourself, Gracious God,
within this time of prayer:
Speak to us through songs we sing, prayers we speak, words we hear.

Reveal yourself Gracious God,
within your family here:
In our speaking and listening, tears and laughter, love that’s shared.

Reveal yourself, Gracious God,
within these coming days:
In the places we live, the lives we live, people we meet.
Amen

¹⁶ Pope Francis: Angelus address 30th January

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2022/documents/20220130-angelus.html>

¹⁷ Bishop John Stowe in US Catholic <https://uscatholic.org/articles/202201/catholics-must-take-discipleship-seriously-says-bishop-stowe/>

¹⁸ © 2016 John Birch in *Praying through the Lectionary – Prayers for Year C* (adapted)

https://www.faithandworship.com/Lectionary_C/lectionary_readings_year_C.html#gsc.tab=0

Walk together as a Church with the Holy Spirit

The purpose of the Synod is
"to plant dreams", to "journey together"
following the course of the Church in
the third millennium with a truly
synodal mentality.

Join us!



www.synod.va



[synod.va](https://www.facebook.com/synod.va)



[synod_va](https://twitter.com/synod_va)



[synod_va](https://www.instagram.com/synod_va)



[synod.va](https://www.tiktok.com/@synod.va)

For a synodal Church

communion | participation | mission

February 2022

Synod Focus – Mission

When you gather in your groups to reflect and discuss the Synod questions, you might like to begin with asking yourself the following:

1. Can I define what the mission of the Church is in a few words? How am I currently involved?
2. How would I like to be involved in decisions about the life of the parish?
3. If I am involved, what would I like to improve?

Read more at: <https://international.la-croix.com/news/religion/synod-update-parish-in-normandy-focuses-on-church-governance/15381>

Synodality and the role of the Church in a post-COVID world

Extract from article by Frank Callus, published in The Tablet 26th January 2022

The call of Pope Francis to synodality is significant as much for its timing as for its intent. As the world emerges from a pandemic, it is right that we address the key questions of what the Church is for, how it should engage and how these changes might transform its sense of being Church.

These are matters that are important, not only for practising Catholics, but for those who have walked away over the last four or five decades. The themes of the Synod – Communion, Participation and Mission speak eloquently of the need to re-imagine our sense of being a community of faith, of our capacity for collaborating with others and for reaching out to those who feel excluded.

By definition, the synodal process is inextricably linked to the need to share the Gospel message, to live it out in our communities and to make all welcome in those communities. Synodality is not just a better means of Church governance, but an essential element of evangelisation. Having witnessed the serious decline in participation, the Catholic Church has an opportunity to listen, to listen with attention and some humility to the experience of the disaffiliates.

If the Church is to regain the trust and commitment of such people it needs to hear and respond. Listening involves an active commitment to action; it implies a capacity to be responsive. And that is the problem. Synodality is not how the Church has operated in the recent past. For sure, there have been Synods of Bishops since Pope Paul VI, but no synod involving the views of all the laity.

This is new territory. This is not how the laity are used to being involved. There will be suspicions and doubts as to the value of the process. Many disaffiliates will be sceptical, and yet theirs are the voices that need to be heard most clearly, theirs are the views that the Bishops should be most anxious to hear. Most of the synodal activity in England and Wales will be centred on parishes.

Diocesan contacts will have been encouraged to recruit members to spread the message of the synod and to engage in prayerful discussion within the parishes. Most of the people who respond to this invitation will be, in both senses of the word, the faithful few. The Church will be conducting a dialogue with its most committed members. There is nothing wrong with that. That situation is perfectly acceptable. To a point.

We need a mechanism, a process for listening to those who are often unheard; the silent majority who have chosen not to be part of the community. We need to build a trusting relationship with at least, some of those who have not found it possible to stay. We need every diocese to ensure that the voices from the margins are heard.

Pope Francis referred, in a speech early in his papacy, to the Church as a field hospital. The qualities of a field hospital are a capacity to meet urgent need, to be immediately responsive, to treat people as they are, and not as a medical textbook describes them.

Our Church of the future needs to have these characteristics. And, just as important, people need to see the Church as being of this kind. Field hospitals are temporary. They are set up where the need is greatest. They are staffed by people who recognise the need for flexibility, for compassion, for listening. They provide the remedy to the most pressing need. Every diocese should be giving serious consideration to how to encourage the participation of the disaffiliates.

Read <https://www.thetablet.co.uk/blogs/1/1976/synodality-and-the-role-of-the-church-in-a-post-covid-world>

To Be On Mission

By Sr Nuala Kenny OC

"Called to make people's hopes flourish"

Such a light was provided to us on October 10 when Pope Francis opened preparations for the next assembly of the Synod of Bishops, which will take place in 2023.

The purpose of this preparatory phase is not to produce formal documents by bishops and "experts". "Rather, it is intended to inspire people to dream about the Church we are called to be, to make people's hopes flourish, to stimulate trust, to bind up wounds, to weave new and deeper relationships, to learn from one another, to build bridges, to enlighten minds, warm hearts, and restore strength to our hands for our common mission," as the Synod's vademecum (or handbook) says.

The Synod and a synodal culture have immense potential to heal and renew the wounded post-pandemic Church if we can trust in the Holy Spirit and actively participate. This new process has been met with anticipation, but also with disinterest.

Focusing on **communion**, **participation** and **mission**, Pope Francis desires this Synod to be an experience of *encounter*, *listening* and *discernment*. He reminds us that in Jesus' own encounters he walks with people and listens to the questions and concerns deep in their hearts. And Jesus shows us that God is not found in neat and orderly places, distant from reality, but walks ever at our side on the rocky roads and in the dark places of life.

Encounter requires not just hearing the other but a deep listening. Real listening is difficult, especially when others have very different thoughts and understandings. It is a risky but necessary first step.

Read more at: <https://international.la-croix.com/news/religion/incarnation-encounter-and-synod/15415>

Living The Mission of Jesus

By Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, Bishop of Bridgeport, Connecticut

“That they be one” (Jn. 17:21).

These four words of Jesus summarize what my heart desires for our Church as we go into mission near and far.

The unity that Jesus desires in this passage is for his followers to share in the unity that Jesus enjoyed with his Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the heart of discipleship because it is an invitation to share in a personal, eternal relationship with the Father, through Jesus, in the Holy Spirit. We are invited to share in the very life of God through the grace of adoption we receive in baptism and strengthened by sharing the Holy Eucharist, which is our Communion with the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ.

To be one with God is the aim, mission and destiny of every believer. Our mission as disciples is to invite everyone to accept this invitation and to accompany them to deepen it each day.

Sadly, what I see in the life of the Church is growing acrimony, division and combativeness. Such tendencies do not lead to the unity that Christ invites us to enjoy. For how can we be united to Christ if we are dividing His Mystical Body, which is His Church? How can we have a relationship with the Lord whom we cannot see if we discard, fight against, refuse to dialogue or disrespect the members of His Body whom we can see?

So I believe that the time has come to work for greater unity in our Church through a recommitment of respect, an attitude of welcome, a stance of listening, a desire to accompany and a commitment to speak the truth with merciful love.

I invite you to make greater unity in our Church and throughout society the hallmark of our mission in the months ahead.

Since it is our Lord's desire, what else do we need to act?

Bishop Frank J Caggiano, Facebook post 12 January 2022

From Episcopal Collegiality to Ecclesial Collegiality

Webinar presented by Church historian and theologian Massimo Faggioli.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=31KMA5kZVD0>

Called to Discipleship

The Australasian **Called to Discipleship** Virtual Conference in November 2021 attracted nearly 700 participants. This conference focussed on Parish Renewal across Australia and New Zealand. The keynote video presentations are now available to watch. They offer great encouragement and simple ideas for outreach and re-invitation to Parish life.

The Opening Keynote by Fr James Mallon (Divine Renovation) provides some great points about Synodality in the process of renewal. Be encouraged and inspired by following the links below:

Session 1 (Divine Renovation & Leadership – Fr James Mallon)

<https://youtu.be/ZMBDFrU9xp4>

Session 2 (Panel Discussion)

<https://youtu.be/U3KN29QHRIk>

Session 3 (Evangelisation – Dr Ralph Martin)

<https://youtu.be/LbI0HYCWiqY>

Session 5 (The Holy Spirit – Deacon Peter Pellicaan)

<https://youtu.be/qA05madbl0w>