

Catholic Parishes of Garstang & Scorton

Synod at home



Synod
2021
2023

For a synodal Church

communion | participation | mission

Introduction

The Church of God is convoked in Synod.

**With this convocation, Pope Francis invites the whole Church to question itself on synodality:
a decisive theme for the life and mission of the Church.**



Hello everyone,

Pope Francis calls us all to take part in a great synod, a great gathering of all Catholics to discern the life and mission of the Church as a pilgrim people. The Synod is an invitation for every diocese to embark on a path of profound renewal as inspired by the grace of God's Spirit. With this convocation, Pope Francis invites the whole Church to question itself on how we “walk together” today in the Church? What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our “walking together”? How do we seek to accompany each other and all people of good-will in these times?

The *sensus fidei* (sense of faith) of the whole People of God is sought on this question. Since each diocese has a unique context, its path for seeking, promoting, and reaping the fruits of this *sensus fidei* will be unique. Overall, the Synod guidelines remind us that:

- *The goal is to ensure the participation of the greatest number possible, in order to listen to the living voice of the entire People of God.*
- *This is not possible unless we make special efforts to actively reach out to people where they're at, especially those who are often excluded or who are not involved in the life of the Church.*
- *There must be a clear focus on the participation of the poor, marginalised, vulnerable, and excluded, in order to listen to their voices and experiences.*
- *The Synodal Process must be simple, accessible, and welcoming for all.*

With this in mind, we have prepared this ‘Synod at home’ pack. In the present times, it is difficult and often unwise to gather together in a group to talk about the questions that the Pope has asked us to address. We have put together the readings and questions that flow from them to enable people to take part in the Synod at home, either alone or with family. You are invited to make a personal response to the questions using the link here: <http://www.lancasterdiocese.org.uk/useful-information/for-a-synodal-church-communion-participation-and-mission/> Alternatively, you can send in written responses using the sheets at the end of this booklet. Please return any written answers to Fr James Burns, St Mary of Furness, Victoria Road, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 0BY

Thank you for taking time to join the worldwide Church in this moment of reflection,
Yours,

Fr Geoffrey Steel

ADSUMUS PRAYER

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.



First Reflection

A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 24:13-35

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, 'What matters are you discussing as you walk along?' They stopped short, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 'What things?' he asked. 'All about Jesus of Nazareth' they answered 'who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

Then he said to them, 'You foolish people! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should

suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

*Reflect for a moment in silence
Let the words of Scripture speak to your heart.*

Contemplation

Questions for Reflection

Please take a few moments to reflect on these questions in the spirit of the Gospel passage you read. You may want to write down some answers at the back of the booklet.

I. Our Journeying Companions

Who are we on the journey with and what persons or groups are marginalised and why?

II. Listening

St Francis of Assisi tells us that we should seek first to understand others before we ask them to understand our point of view. How might our local Church community listen better?

How are you open to the voice of others? How can we do this better, people to people, clergy to clergy, bishops to bishops? How do we deepen our listening, making it a “a listening of the heart” and not just of the issues and subjects at hand? How do we ensure that the Church responds to the culture and needs of society? What part could you play in this?

III. Speaking Out

How can everybody be encouraged to communicate properly?

Consider who you communicate with in the parish and diocese. Reflect on your own part in reaching out to others. What is the communication like in our parish/diocese? Do we have the freedom to speak freely, openly, and respectfully? How are we living out our Christian lives as a group and what do you feel you can offer?

Take a moment to pause and consider the work of the Holy Spirit in your reflections.

Conclude with the Our Father



**Our Father, who art in
heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily
bread,
and forgive us our
trespasses,
as we forgive those who
trespass against us,
and lead us not into
temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
Amen.**



Second reflection

Before you read the scripture passage, invite the Holy Spirit to accompany your time of reflection by praying the Adsumus prayer.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles 2:1-8

When Pentecost day came round, the apostles had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.

Now there were devout people living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished. 'Surely' they said 'all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language?'

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

*Reflect for a moment in silence
Let the words of Scripture speak to your heart*



Contemplation

Please take a few moments to reflect on these questions in the spirit of the Gospel passage you read. You may want to write down some answers at the back of the booklet

IV. Celebrating

How might Mass or other forms of prayer help us participate at a deeper level?

For you, do celebrations in church inspire a deeper encounter with the risen Lord? How does prayer – both your own and as part of the community – enable deeper participation in the mission of the Church? Do you feel that the Eucharist is at the centre of your life? Is the Eucharist at the heart of our community's life? What do you see as flowing from the Sunday (or daily) Eucharist, from our communities into the world? What do we give thanks to God for in prayer?

V. Taking Responsibility Together

How well do we collaborate with the priests and others in the Church?

How is each Baptised person called to be missionary? In what ways do you see this mission in your own life? How does the Church community support its members committed to service in society (for example, in the promotion of social justice, in the protection of human rights, and in caring for the earth etc.)? How are mission-related choices made, and who participates in them? How do we collaborate with our priest?

VI. Dialogue in Church and Society

How might we improve our conversations within our faith community and also outside of it?

How do we understand dialogue (respectful conversation) between Church and the wider Society? How do you see The Church's role in dialoging with the world? How do we address the challenges that dialogue brings about? How do we begin to dialogue with those who are not part of our community?

VII. Other Christian Denominations

How might we improve our relationships with our non-Catholic Christian brothers and sisters? What is your part in this? What is our relationship with other Christian communities? Do we listen to each other as we journey on our pilgrim way? What enriches us from other traditions? What do we offer them from ours?

Take a moment to pause and consider the work of the Holy Spirit in your reflections.

Conclude with the Our Father

Third reflection

Before you read the scripture passage, invite the Holy Spirit to accompany your time of reflection by praying the Adsumus prayer.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

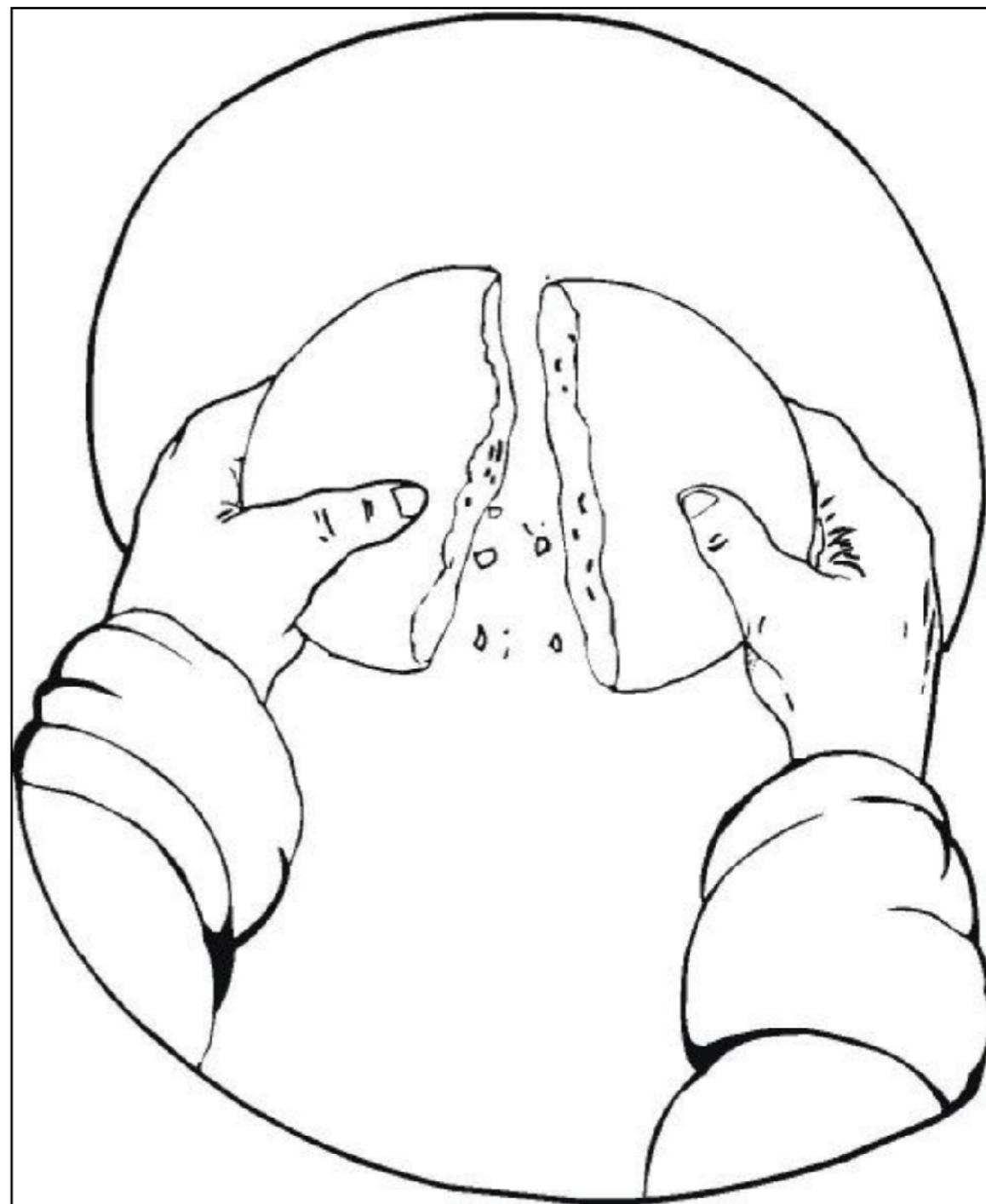
The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone.

The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

*Reflect for a moment in silence
Let the words of Scripture speak to your heart.*



Contemplation

Please take a few moments to reflect on these questions in the spirit of the Gospel passage you read. You may want to write down some answers at the back of the booklet

VIII. Authority and Participation

How might we develop teamwork and a sense of co-responsibility in our local Church?

How do we preach the Gospel with our lives and within our communities? How does our parish community bring people closer to Christ? How can you reach out to others? Who do you feel has authority in our communities? Do they use it wisely? What part do you play in supporting participation in our parish community? What formation could help you in this? Would you like the opportunity for courses, training or reading recommendations?

IX. Discerning and Deciding

How might we improve the process of decision-making in our local Church, so that we truly listen and recognise that the Holy Spirit can speak through each one of us?

How do we discern together the direction in which the Holy Spirit is leading us? Is there freedom to exercise our particular gifts in the Church, and participate in this common work of discernment and decision making? Is our parish community accountable and transparent in decision making? What can help improve this? Do we support the Bishops and the Priests in arriving at their decisions?

X. Staying together on the same path

What training, habits and awareness are necessary with the local Church if we are to become better at listening to one another and sharing our insights with one another?

What additional formation do we need to be missionary disciples? Is the local community effective in catechising and passing on the faith? What tools are necessary for the Church to be truly synodal, listening and journeying together? How do we continue the listening and dialogue beyond this process so that the Church has a “lived synodality” as the Holy Father asks?

Take a moment to pause and consider the work of the Holy Spirit in your reflections.

Conclude with the Our Father

Next steps

You are invited to make a personal response to the questions using the link here: <http://www.lancasterdiocese.org.uk/useful-information/for-a-synodal-church-communion-participation-and-mission/>

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II. Listening: How might our local Church community listen better?

III. Speaking Out: How can everybody be encouraged to communicate properly?

IV. Celebrating: How might Mass or other forms of prayer help us participate at a deeper level?

V. Taking Responsibility Together: How well do we collaborate with the priests and others in the Church?

VI. Dialogue in Church and Society: How might we improve our conversations within our faith community and also outside of it?

VII. Other Christian Denominations: How might we improve our relationships with our non-Catholic Christian brothers and sisters?

VIII. Authority and Participation: How might we develop teamwork and a sense of co-responsibility in our local Church?

IX. Discerning and Deciding How might we improve the process of decision-making in our local Church, so that we truly listen and recognise that the Holy Spirit can speak through each one of us?

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Thank you for taking time to join the synodal path way.