

# Walking Together

## Synodal Update for the Diocese of Plymouth



### Welcome to the June 2022 'Walking Together' Update

On 1 June, Bishops and Diocesan co-contacts met in London to review the draft national synodal synthesis. Many of the issues raised in our local synodal journey were reflected in the draft which will now be revised in the light of comments and reflections made at the meeting. Cardinal Nichols said that the document offered a window into the life of the Church in England and Wales and resonated with a speech by Pope Francis on 18 October 2014 when he talked about the temptations and pitfalls of a synodal journey, the consolations of the process and the role of Popes and Bishops; *'the temptations must not frighten or disconcert us, or even discourage us, because no disciple is greater than his master; so if Jesus Himself was tempted – and even called Beelzebul (cf. Mt 12:24) – His disciples should not expect better treatment.'*

Canon John Deeny and Deborah Fisher, Diocesan co-contacts.

#### What next?

The Diocesan syntheses, the 'local' part of the Synodal process, were submitted to the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales on the Friday before Holy Week as part of the two-year process requested by Pope Francis for the Catholic Church. A National Synthesis Team has started work discerning and drafting the national synthesis for England and Wales that will be sent to the Synod Office in Rome by 15 August 2022.

#### Timeline

The National Synthesis Team prepared an 'initial findings' report given to the Plenary Assembly of the Bishops' Conference that meets in Cardiff from 2 – 6 May. On 1 June a national synod gathering of bishops and lay people met to consider the first draft of the national synthesis.

The National Synthesis Team will now continue its work and present a second draft of the national synthesis to an additional Plenary Assembly of the Bishops' Conference for their consideration. Following this meeting, to be held on 28 June in Westminster, a final draft will be presented to the Bishops for their assent for submission to Rome by the 15 August deadline.

We will circulate the final synthesis when it is published.

#### Prayer to St Joseph protector of the Church

St. Joseph protector of the Holy Family from the time Mary's conception your discernment and obedience to the will of God gave us the Saviour of the world.

Help us in a Christian relationship and fellowship in our journey of synod of synodality in humility with your guidance and prayer.

Help each person to dream and discern the will of God to build the church and to proclaim the gospel to the whole world.

We seek your intercession for the unity in human race as one holy family. Amen

JOHN PHILIPOSE  
Jesus Youth Movement UAE



the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.

## ***The national synthesis***

On 1 June, Diocesan Co-Contacts and Bishops from across England and Wales attended a gathering in London to review the draft national synthesis. Fr John, Deborah and Bishop Mark attended for the Diocese of Plymouth. Sr Bernadette Reis fsp was the facilitator. We were all pleased the national draft reflected most of the themes raised during our local synodal journey and that the gathering allowed everyone to reflect and contribute to the national synthesis. A big portion of the day was spent in prayer. Between each presentation we sang Veni Sancte Spiritus, that the Synodal journey be rooted in prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit.

The event was attended by Cardinal Vincent Nichols who said that the Synodal journey offered a unique window into the life of the Church in England and Wales. 'We are learning the art of listening which doesn't come naturally and requires self control and humility'. Cardinal Nichols said that there were now three areas of continuing work:

- finalising the national synthesis which will contribute to the global journey
- continuing the work of Synodality in our dioceses – arguably the most important part of this work
- widening participation in this process

The Bishop's Conference will be contributing to the national synthesis with a reflection before the document is submitted as our contribution to the Universal Church in mid-August. We are now at a point when we can be moving from discernment to action and in our last newsletter shared some points for action. We will be sharing some further materials for parish reflections in the early Autumn. Any questions please email [synodfeedback@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:synodfeedback@prcdtr.org.uk).

## ***Where can I find resources for the ongoing synodal journey?***

Biblical Resources for the Synodal Journey

<https://www.synod.va/content/dam/synod/common/spirituality/Biblical-Resouces-for-Synodality-A4-EN.pdf>

The Vatican has regular newsletters and updates that you can subscribe to [https://mailchi.mp/synod/newsletter132022\\_en](https://mailchi.mp/synod/newsletter132022_en)

You can also find the latest updates on twitter [@Synod\\_va](https://twitter.com/Synod_va) / [Twitter](#)

New prayers are regularly added to the Synodal webpage <https://www.prayforthesynod.va/en>/<https://www.synodresources.org/>

Resources shared from across the world <https://www.synodresources.org/>

Our Diocesan website <https://www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/synod/>

