

For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission

Key themes and prompt questions

This is a summary of the questions that are being asked as part of the Diocesan phase of the synod. They are presented along with material for prayer and reflection in the diocesan booklet, which will be used in the Wednesday evening groups.

You can make an individual response under the following headings by

- *Completing the online form at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PTZKV3L>*
- *Emailing synod@abdiocese.org.uk or*
- *Writing to Synod, Bishop's House, The Upper Drive, Hove. BN3 6NB*

The deadline for responses is 4th February 2022

Section 1 – Communion

Journeying companions

Think of those who form our parish community as we journey together. Which people or groups are on the edges of our community? Whom do we know who no longer walks with us, those who used to and now we don't see? How do we engage with those for whom the experience of Covid has prompted thoughts about faith? How do we welcome people?

Listening

Do we listen to each other? How do we best do this – 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?

Speaking Out

What is the communication like in our group/parish/diocese? Do we have the freedom to speak freely, openly, and respectfully? How am I living out my Christian life?

Section 2 – Participation

Celebrating

Do our celebrations in Church inspire a deeper encounter with the risen Lord? How does my prayer – both individually and in my community – enable my participation in the mission of the Church? Is the Eucharist the centre of mine, and my community's life? What flows from the Sunday (or daily) Eucharist, from our communities into the world? What do I give thanks to God for in prayer? What do I seek from him?

Co-responsibility in the Mission

Do I understand the mission of the Church - in my own life, in the local church, and the universal church? How do our lives relate to the Great Commission of Jesus (Matt 28:18- 20)? What formation do I need to be more committed to the mission of the Church? What impact is our local community making in the area – do we make a difference?

Dialogue in Church and Society

How do we understand dialogue (respectful conversation) between Church and the wider Society? Do we see dialogue as a unique contribution that the Church can make to the world? How do we address the challenges that dialogue brings about? How do we begin to dialogue with others?

Other Christian Denominations

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?

Section 3 – Mission

Authority and Participation

How is authority exercised in our communities? How do we preach the Gospel? How does our parish community bring people closer to Christ? What groups or courses are available, what initiatives are in place? What are the fruits of this collaboration, and what are the obstacles and challenges?

Discerning and Deciding

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

Forming ourselves in Synodality

What additional formation do I need to be a missionary disciple? 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?

For more details visit <https://ww3w.abdiocese.org.uk/synod>