



Synod 2023

NEWSLETTER



Issue One: Sunday, October 1, 2023

From Archbishop Farrell: ‘This historic, month-long event gives me hope’

My dear Sisters and Brothers

On Wednesday next, lay women and men, members of religious orders, priests and bishops from around the world will gather in communion with Pope Francis to pray, reflect and discuss what a synodal Church looks like. A body has many parts and for the body to function well, to be energy filled, all the parts must play their part, and play in harmony (1 Cor 4:31). This historic month-long event gives me hope, because I am convinced that it can make a difference to our mission worldwide, and here in the Dublin Diocese.

I am writing to you to ask you to join with me in giving some time and space in your thoughts and prayer to the dialogue taking place in Rome throughout the coming month.

This Synod process is underpinned by the belief that Our God is not remote, but is involved in our affairs, has hopes and dreams for us as individuals, as parishes and as a diocese. God is pursuing His plan for the universe, but He desires and needs our cooperation – we are his eyes, ears, tongue, hands and feet. We must therefore constantly try to detect His voice, listen and pursue His will, as the Gospel Acclamation in today’s Liturgy reminds us: “The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice, says the Lord.” (John 10:27).

Traditionally, we have left the task of discerning what God wants to those in leadership roles. In our time, however, Pope Francis is reminding us that listening to the voice of God could be hugely enriched if all of God’s people, not just those in leadership, took



Archbishop
Dermot Farrell

A resource from the Dublin Diocesan Synodal Steering Committee

part. “The synod,” Pope Francis said on the day before its official opening, “offers us the opportunity to become a listening church, to break out of our routine and pause from our pastoral concerns in order to stop and listen” (October 9, 2021). Those who struggle with co-responsibility of the entire People of God in the mission of the Church should remember the words with which St John Henry Newman responded to those who questioned him about the role of the laity: “The Church would seem foolish without them.”

Synodality has existed since the time of the early church, but which fell into disuse; it was revived by Pope Saint Paul VI as a way of gathering together a variety of voices from across the church. Later, the model was promoted by Pope Saint John Paul II, who convened many synods during his pontificate. Synodality is an attempt to harness the energy of all the members of God’s people, to involve them in discerning what God’s wants from us and in contributing to the enactment of what He desires.

Your response when invited to participate in the Synod process last year was most encouraging. I hope we can build on that involvement; a first step is to engage with what is about to happen, namely this Synod as an important instrument for listening to the People of God.

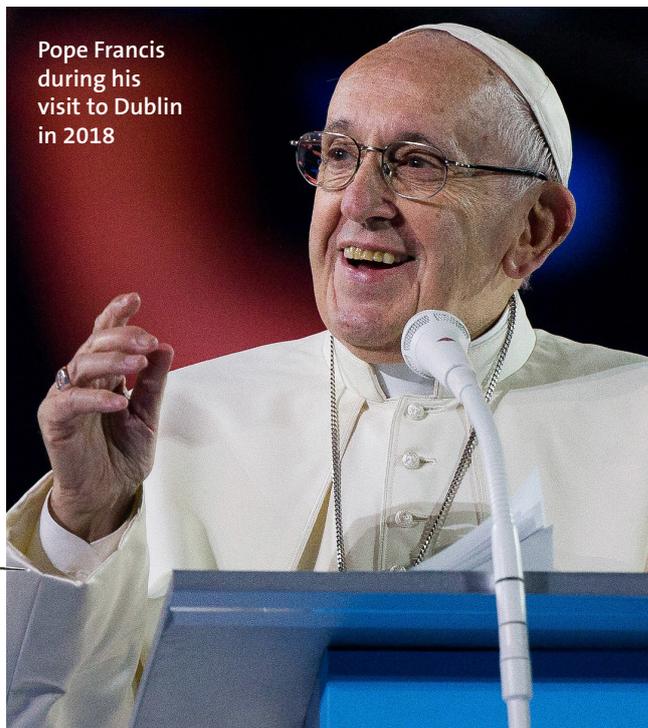
This can be done, by praying daily for the success of the process, by informing ourselves about what is happening in the process and by embracing its fruits as they emerge. In the words of Pope Francis, “we ask the Holy Spirit first of all for the gift of listening: to listen to God, that with him we may hear the cry of the people; to listen to the people until breathing in the will to which God calls us”.

To keep abreast with the Synod, your parish will offer a newsletter every Sunday highlighting the main issues. This newsletter will also give several links to other sources of useful information.

I look forward to your support for the *Synod on Synodality: Communion, Participation, and Mission*.



Dermot Farrell
Archbishop of Dublin



Pope Francis
during his
visit to Dublin
in 2018