



Kia tau te rangimārie ki a koutou

Last December Pope Francis published a book called *“Let us Dream – The Path to a Better Future”*. It was written in conjunction with the author Austen Ivereigh. It is a wonderful book and well worth reading. Francis has now encouraged us in another way to think about *“The Path to a Better Future”*

I believe that the invitation of Pope Francis to all of us to participate in preparing for the next Synod in Rome is a step on that path to a better future. We have all been invited to have a say in imagining the Church we want in the future, so don't miss this opportunity. Some people have become confused about Synods and have thought they are about changing what we believe as Catholics. When Synods take place, whether they are International Synods in Rome, or like our own Archdiocesan Synods in recent years (four of them), the traditional truths of Christianity are not under discussion. Synods are concerned about how our teaching can be lived and applied in the changing contexts of our times. That is clearly important for us. How we live the Gospel daily amidst the many challenges and changes of the world we live in needs to be thought about often.

Last Saturday we took the first steps in becoming involved in this journey to be a Synodal Church. Because of COVID Level 2, the usual Archdiocesan Pastoral Council meeting was much shorter and held by a Zoom call. I have had a lot of Zoom calls over recent months and some of them are very tiring, but last Saturday's was excellent. It was excellent because we did one of the Synod discernment/listening processes. We were able to break into two groups on Zoom, everybody spoke, everyone was listened to respectfully. I know that this can be multiplied and experienced around the Archdiocese over the next few weeks. The invitation is there for all to participate, to have your say. This means listening to others with respect, being ready to listen, not having our own answers already prepared, but being open to listening to the person who speaks and to listening to the Holy Spirit.

In his book Francis wrote *“What characterizes a Synodal path is the role of the Holy Spirit. We listen, we discuss in groups, but above all we pay attention to what the Spirit has to say to us. That is why I ask everyone to speak frankly and to listen carefully to others because, there, too, the Spirit is speaking.”*

Nāku noa,

John

Time belongs to the Lord. Trusting in Him, we move forward with courage, building unity through discernment, to discover and implement God's dream for us, and the paths of action ahead.

Pope Francis



NOTICES

- Please keep in your prayers all our clergy. The frail and those who are experiencing ill health at present are Frs Colin Durning, Frank Mcguire, Peter O'Connell and Mons John Carde.
- Please also pray for Alfred Tong who is being ordained a Deacon this coming Saturday 2nd October at St Mary's Pro Cathedral in Christchurch.
- Sunday 3rd October is the date set aside to celebrate Venerable Suzanne Aubert. Though we cannot gather together to celebrate Suzanne's life we remember Suzanne and the all the good work she did.
- On Saturday 9th October I will be in Richmond ordaining Hayden Powick to the Society of Mary. Please keep Hayden in your prayers at this time also.
- The Catholic Church in Australia has been preparing for some time now for a **Plenary Council** (like a National Synod). Because of Covid19 the dates have had to be changed but it is now due to go ahead. The Opening Mass for the Plenary Council will be celebrated at St Mary's Cathedral in Perth on Sunday 3rd October, then for the next week there will be sessions online until the closing Mass on Sunday 10th October. Please remember the Church of Australia in prayer at this important time for them.
- As the opening of the 2023 Synod preparatory process draws near (Sunday 17 Oct), parish pastoral councils are being asked to take the lead in ensuring local parishioners have a chance to have their say. Explanatory materials are being made available to everyone via the [Synod page on the ADW website here](#). These begin with a user-friendly booklet on the recommended discernment process and will be added to as we identify gaps. If help is needed identifying local facilitators or if we can be of help in any other way, contact the Church Mission team - Chris Walkerdine (c.walkerdine@wn.catholic.org.nz).
- A decision will be made regarding resuming weekday and Sunday Masses once we have information after the Government announcement on Monday 4 October.
- **Opening Mass for Synod** - on Sunday 17 October at 10am Mass we will hopefully be able to gather at St Teresa's Pro-Cathedral to celebrate the opening of the Synod on "Towards a Synodal Church, Communion, Participation, Mission." All parishes that day will mark this occasion and pray for the success of the Synod. All parishes will mark this day at Masses.

Wherever we may be, and whatever we are doing, as long as we have a heart to love and a will to direct our intention, we can, and we should be apostles.

Venerable Suzanne Aubert