



Archbishop of Wellington

PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

29 September 2021

Dear Parish Pastoral Councils and Parish Leadership Teams

For A Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission

Some of you have asked what Synodality is all about and why Pope Francis has called for a Synod with the above title. For eight years now, Francis has been calling for a more decentralized Church, a Church marked by collaboration and consultative decision making. He believes that this is the model of the Church that the Lord expects of us in this millennium.

If we are to learn from Pope Francis in the Church today, our learning can be summed up in the following images and phrases which he uses often. We are:

- Disciples journeying together
- Companions on a journey of mutual service
- People walking in history towards the fulfilment of the Kingdom
- Walking together with Christ in a new boldness of speech with humility of heart
- On a journey of dialogue, in which we learn how to recognise the presence of Christ walking beside us

The process leading up to this Synod is our chance to grasp the vision of the 2nd Vatican Council. The Synod could be a turning point in the life of the Church, bringing new life and energy for our mission.

On Sunday 10th October the Holy Father will open the Synod with a Mass in St Peters. Every diocese has been asked to celebrate their own opening Mass the following Sunday, 17th October. That day I will celebrate the Mass for the opening of the Synod at St Teresa's Pro Cathedral at 10am and then that evening at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Palmerston North. I invite you all on that day to pray for the success of the Synod at your own Masses. I will be sending you more liturgical information about the liturgy as soon as we receive it from Rome. But as a starter I enclose 10 very short Prayers of the Faithful which are based on the 10 Synod themes.

The opportunity we have to understand what Synodality is all about and the opportunity we have to invite people to participate in the consultation is too good for us to miss. Masses celebrated throughout the diocese on the 17th October will assist us to highlight the importance of the Synod and encourage people to participate in the Synod process. You will be receiving more information about this from our Church Mission Team. In the meantime, please start planning to include the Synod in your Mass on Sunday 17th October.

With thanks for all you are doing and with all good wishes and every blessing.

Yours sincerely in the Lord

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John A. Cardinal Dew'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first part being a stylized 'JD' and the second part clearly legible as 'Cardinal Dew'.

John A Cardinal Dew
Archbishop of Wellington