



Formation and Mission Newsletter

November/December 2021

Welcome to the November newsletter with information and opportunities for Formation and Mission in the Diocese and further afield.

Details of all events we arrange can be found on the calendar link on the Formation and Mission pages [here](#).



Synod Roundup

Maria Kenyon from the parishes of **St. Michael, Hathersage and Our Lady of Sorrows, Bamford** writes: *We have joined together and set out on the journey towards Synod 2023.*

The Parish representatives put together an "Invitation to a Journey" and personal copies were given to parishioners after Mass over the last 3 Sundays. Copies were emailed to people unable to attend.



The first meeting was held on Tuesday 30 November, attended by 12 parishioners, on a cold, wet and dismal day! By contrast, a very lively and productive meeting produced a wide variety of responses to these questions:

What is it about my Church that gives me joy, comfort, sense of purpose.....?

What is it about my Church that I am not happy about or indeed very unhappy about?

What changes, locally or universally, are needed?

What more can I do to contribute to my Church?

These responses have now been written up and will be emailed to all parishioners before the next meeting, planned for Wednesday 8 December. We'll then take stock and decide about the timing of the next meeting. At every stage we will keep parishioners informed.

We are also considering how best to include former parishioners and others we know to have an interest in the Church locally. We firmly believe that this is a rare opportunity to have our say - and we intend to make sure our voices are heard!

Chris Wood updates us with news from **St Mary's, Penistone**. *We started in early October with general publicity prior to the opening by Pope Francis on the 9/10/21 and then the opening on the 17/10/21 at the Cathedral in Sheffield with Bishop Ralph.*

Our first Church meeting followed on November 6th when fifteen lay people gathered on the Saturday

morning for an hour to pray, listen to scripture and then listen to each other in small groups in reflection on the scripture passage.

Time was also given to general comments and questions about Synod. We left with questions to ponder before our next meeting in early December.

We also held a short meeting following our monthly Taize Prayer on 16/11/21 This regular Prayer meeting is Ecumenical and on this occasion the group consisted of 2 members of our church, 4 members of our local Anglican Church and 3 members of our local Methodist Church. They were very interested in the questions being considered and were open to contributing to the process as fellow Christians in our community. In fact in the following week, at a Churches together meeting, the opening prayer to the meeting was the Synod Prayer. Follow up is planned at our next Taize Prayer on 21/12/21.

We are looking forward to the next steps on this journey.

Geraldine Hurst writes from **St Mary's Edlington**. *On the Feast of Christ the King - Youth Sunday some of the young people lit 50 plus votive candles from the Synod candle (all with sanitised hands) They were brought up to either side of the sanctuary at the offertory and remained there until we exited the Church. At the end of Mass I spoke briefly about the Synod and the new journey Pope Francis has invited us all to join with him. .*

Each family took a candle home and I asked them to ensure when the candle had nearly finished to light another to keep the flame alive. We are lighting up our Parish and beyond. I explained the themes of 'Communion - Participation - Mission' Asking them to think how they can aid our, parish and Diocese with these different headings via some actions.

Hopefully they will feed back to us soon with wonderful ideas and thoughts. They will be reminded each week when leaving the Mass to feedback or respond and there will be a box for their replies.

The Synod candle is alight at each Mass on the altar. It is to be announced after Advent that there will always be an opportunity after Mass to light your candle from it. The poster is on display with our names and signposting where to learn more about this incredible journey, to see where the Holy Spirit is leading us.

While reaching out to the fringes of our parish, we bring the Eucharist to the housebound and infirm, they have all received a candle, a shorter version of my explanation from Mass and an invitation to respond. These amazing people have a treasure trove of knowledge to pass on to the rest of us. Here is a chance that we can gain their inclusion and richness of faith.

Liz, Amanda and Helen write with this update from the **Corpus Christi Parish, Dearne Valley**. *After speaking at all 3 churches at the weekend the 3 representatives have begun the synod process, we have provided the parishioners with an introduction letter and signposted the synod information and resources on the parish website and the diocesan website too. We are using advent as a time to reflect and discuss the questions from Pope Francis using the synod leaflet as conversation starters. In the New Year we will be holding small group meetings to share our faith stories and gather our responses and later a Parish get together to prepare the documents for Bishop Ralph.*

Fr Des Sexton writes from the **Immaculate Conception and at St Gerard's, Rotherham**

Here we will focus on three separate weeks in December, January and February. The time in between will enable us to gather together the summaries of what has been shared and present to the parishes before passing on the summaries to the Diocesan working group. During the designated weeks we give as many opportunities possible for people to take part. Some groups, eg. the small community support groups in the Immaculate Conception, Soup Slurpers at St Gerard's, the Toddler

Group, the SVP group may also wish to take part in the synod. They would do so on the date of meeting either on the week selected or as near to it as possible. You might decide to form a group with friends, neighbours or members of other Christian Churches; these are also possible using the material we provide. The designated weeks are: Sunday 5th December to Sat 11th December, Sunday 16th January to Saturday 22nd January, Sunday 20th February to Saturday 26th February

On the Mondays of these weeks at the Immaculate Conception and on the Tuesdays at St Gerard's an opportunity for people to come together will take place at 12noon. On the Wednesday evenings a Zoom meeting will take place at 7-00pm. People might not be able to take part in all the three weeks delegated. This does not matter. Having an opportunity to be part of the process is what is important.

What of those people who cannot afford the time to take part in groups? The answer is to introduce a mini experience at the mass they attend during those weeks. Each person attending will have access to a card with an invitation to comment on the question of that week. After the scripture readings people would be invited to enter a moment of prayerful silence and then write their response on the card. The cards will be collected and later a summary of what was shared will be made available for people to read. So instead of share and listen, this method is write and read.

Synod Working Group

On 2 December we were joined on Zoom by members of the Synod Working Group together with Diocesan Synod Leads from around the country to listen to Matthew Flinders professor of politics at the University of Sheffield. The session was to help us to see what we might learn from the secular world about how, what, what outcomes to expect, what pitfalls need to be navigated during the synodal process. His talk was followed by an informal discussion, about the 'gaps, traps and potential pitfalls' of engagement processes. process might reach out to embrace a very wide community in a positive way.

Upcoming Synod Day of Reflection- Zoom

11 December 2021



A time of Advent reflection for all those involved in the synodal journey in the Diocese of Hallam.

Pope Francis says, "This is a moment to dream big, to rethink our priorities- what we value, what we want, what we seek- and to commit to act in our daily life on what we have dreamed of. What I hear at this moment is similar to what Isaiah hears God saying through him: Come let us talk this over. Let us Dare to dream."

Book on Eventbrite [here](#).

Synod Timeline

- 12 November Synod Working Group Zoom 7:00 pm
- 27 November Training session- Hallam Pastoral Centre
- 18 November 2021 Zoom Drop in Sessions Thursdays
- 2 December 2021 Innovations in Engagement - Implications for the Church' with Matthew Flinders
- 10 December Synod Working Group Zoom 7:00 pm
- 11 December 2021 Retreat day Dreams about the Church

22 January 2022 Diocesan Synod meeting Rotherham
Venue TBC 10:00-12:30

5 February 2022 Diocesan Synod meeting Sheffield
Venue TBC 10:00-12:30

5 March 2022 Hallam Pre Synod Meeting St Peter's
Doncaster 10:30-2:00

7 March 2022 Deadline for returns in Diocese

10 April 2022 Deadline for Returns to Bishop's
Conference



CCRS News

Students who have started the course this year are currently doing an Introduction to the New Testament with Fr John Ryan and second year students are studying Morality with Kevan Grady. They will continue with Christology and Liturgy in the New Year. After the long delay of Covid we hope to hold a presentation event on 27 January 2022 at 7:00 pm at the Pastoral Centre for those who have completed the course in the last year.

Loyola Certificate in Pastoral Ministry

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO | **150** Kevan met up over Zoom with the current cohort of Loyola students facilitated by Petra Klompenhouwer. Christine Battley and Annette Dews. Students spoke highly of their experiences of the course and how it is helping them to think of their Baptismal Calling and talked about some of the ministries that they have become involved in in their communities. Corrie Percival, Allison Bluet and Anne Marie Carroll are looking forward to their graduation ceremony at Ushaw College in Durham in January.

Catechesis

Courses and seminars for anyone acting as a catechist in their parish.



From Courses to Conversions: Rethinking Sacramental Preparation

Part 1: First Communion - Tuesday 25th January, 7-8pm

Do you find you're pouring resources into sacramental preparation that sees young people slip away at the end? Are you frustrated at the fruitlessness of families jumping through hoops, never to be seen again? You are not alone in your discontent! In this webinar, we share 'from the trenches' experience of parishes doing it differently. Could now be the time when you decide to leave behind courses and instead prioritise conversions?

Join us for our two-part series: Part 1 on First Communion and Part 2 on Confirmation. Join Georgia Clarke (St Elizabeth's Richmond), Maria Quinn (Blessed Sacrament Exeter), Kurt Klement (Leadership Coach) and Hannah Vaughan-Spruce (Divine Renovation UK) for Part 1 on First Communion on Tuesday 25th January 2022 at 7pm.

Register here: <https://divinerenovation.tfaforms.net/f/Sacramental-Prep-1>

Part 2: Confirmation - Tuesday 22nd March, 7-8pm

Join us for the second in our two-part series. Join Georgia Clarke (St Elizabeth's Richmond), Matt Regitz (Leadership Coach) and Hannah Vaughan-Spruce (Divine Renovation UK) for Part 2 on First Communion on Tuesday 22nd March 2022 at 7pm.