

NOTES FROM THE SYNODAL ACTION GROUP MEETING ON FEBRUARY 24th 2024

As always, the meeting began with prayer and a Scripture reading (John 13:12-15)

The current stage of the Synod on Synodality.

Local churches have been invited to conduct consultations of the People of God focussing on co responsibility and the development of concrete signs of synodality in localities.

Parishioners in our parish will be asked two questions:

1. What gives you joy in the church and in what ways do you feel part of the Parish community?
2. Would you like to become more involved in the parish community and if so , in what way?

During our next meeting in March, we will formulate a response based on the replies and our experience of synodality locally, to be sent to the Diocese, the Bishops' Conference and the Rome Synod Office.

We then moved on to have a "Conversations in the Spirit"

Our focus question was," How do I understand co responsibility? How do I see co responsibility developing as we move forward as the Church?

Our aim: to discern what the Holy Spirit is saying to us.

We sat in a circle in an attitude of prayer and listening. An icon of the Trinity was our focal point.

The format of our "Conversation in the Spirit" was as follows:

1st round sharing: Each person gave their personal response to the question (3 minutes maximum)

Silent reflection and prayer.

2nd round sharing: Each person said what had touched them and what had challenged them in what they heard in the first round. (2 minutes maximum)

Silent reflection and prayer.

3rd round sharing: As a group we identified key points (in no particular order, silence after 3 or 4 comments, then continued sharing)

To what steps is the Holy Spirit calling us together?.

Examples of responses included:

As baptised members of the Church we are all called to use our talents for the flourishing of our parish communities.

If co responsibility is taken on board parishes will be enlivened, become more active.

Co responsibility would mean that priests are free to focus on administering the sacraments.

This is an opportunity to pool our talents.

The parish priest is the shepherd and we are the flock

Those with young families are pressurised and have little time. It is important that they feel part of the community.

The Church is "us" not just "me" and together as a community we discern.

With co responsibility we are open to others, open to being changed.

Others may see talents we have that we are not aware of.

People may need to be asked to become involved.

At the root of co responsibility is prayer.

A Retreat would help in the development of co responsibility.

Looking forwards:

Training for the laity in our deanery is necessary.

Initiatives that are started may grow in unforeseen ways eg the SVP initiative became the Parish Afternoon Tea

The method of having Conversations in the Spirit is an important development, especially when there are difficult topics that need to be addressed. The attitude of prayer and listening can be transformative. Conversations in the Spirit would help our parish and the deanery as the restructuring of parishes gets underway..

We concluded with prayers of intercession.

Our next meeting will be on 23rd March in Holy Redeemer Church hall 10.45 -12. All welcome.