



## **PERSONAL ORDINARIATE OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM**

### **INTRODUCTION TO SYNODAL PATH MEETINGS**

#### **SYNOD PRAYER**

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path

nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life

and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time,

in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever.

Amen.



## **PREAMBLE**

*“As you know – it’s not a novelty – a synodal process is about to begin, a journey in which the whole Church is engaged around the theme: for a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission three pillars... It’s not about gathering opinions, no. This is not a survey, but about listening to the Holy Spirit...”*

Pope Francis, Address to the Faithful of Rome, 18th September 2021.

## **JOURNEYING TOGETHER...**

The basis of this lived synodality, which the Holy Father envisages, is that of the Church as the pilgrim People of God journeying together. The image of the people of Israel in their Exodus is the foundational basis of this image (see *Lumen Gentium*, 9)

The synodal process is not about an end goal in 2023 with a gathering of bishops in Rome, but about a new way of acting, of being the Church at every level where mutual listening is the cornerstone. It is not about endless debating about changing what cannot be changed, but is about the Church gathering together people and their pastors for a common journey. It is about approaching with confidence other Christians and those of other faiths, and those of no faith. Above all, it is to be a spiritual action of the Church.

The synod process can only be authentic if it is rooted in **prayer**, in the revelation of the **Scriptures** and in the **liturgical life** of the Church. This vision is rooted in The Ordinary’s Preface to the 2019 vision document - *Our Calling & Our Mission*: “Through baptism we are all called to share in the mission of the Church, especially in the proclamation of the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, while underpinning all our endeavours with prayer”. Much of what is implied in this Synodal process is evident in our Anglican Patrimony, and the pastoral and liturgical relationship between clergy and lay people. This is highlighted in the agreed Mission

Statement in OC&OM: *“the liturgical, spiritual, and pastoral traditions of the Anglican tradition now within the full communion of the Catholic Church”*.

To make this process more fruitful and effective for the POOLW, it would be beneficial to read the document *Our Calling & Our Mission* prior to setting up meeting in Groups, or considering the questions below on your own. The link to the online version is as follows:

[https://www.ordinariate.org.uk/resources/docs/our\\_calling.pdf](https://www.ordinariate.org.uk/resources/docs/our_calling.pdf)



## PROCESS

It is helpful to frame the synodal discussions in **THREE PHASES** which allows for the influence of the Spirit to enlighten the discussions. The three phases can be thought of as:

### 1. Recall our experiences...

Where do we find ourselves now? The world has come through a profound period with the covid-19 pandemic. The experiences of isolation, of sickness and death, of not being able to grieve as one would have contributed to the anxiety of life. On the other hand, there has been an outpouring of a generosity of spirit, of gratitude and care, of innovation and creativity. What strengths and weaknesses have emerged during this period in your lives and in your communities? What has been the experience of the touch of God in these times? What challenges and vulnerabilities have been exposed in our lives, both individually and as a Church, which need to be addressed?

## **2. Re-read those experiences in greater depth open to the inspiration of the Spirit...**

Look at these experiences in greater depth relating them to the Synod themes of communion, participation and mission.

## **3. Gather the fruits to share...**

The third part of the process will be to gather the fruits of the discussion considering what needs to change to make the Church more missionary going forward. What has the last two years taught us about journeying together as the Church?

*These initial considerations need not be focused on the effects of Covid-19, but instead on how we find ourselves situated in our own missionary and pastoral context. How might the questions below expose and inform how we move forward into 2022 and beyond?*

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## **INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS...**

### **Communion**

*“The Church, then, is not simply the clergy, but all the marginal. We have a common call and mission; a common responsibility – for each other, for prayer, for reverent worship, for acts of loving service, for witness, for contributing to the community of faith”. (OC&OM, Our Common Life, p6)*

- How is the Church’s unity expressed in our Group, parish, deanery, and beyond?
- How is it expressed between those of other ecclesial bodies (denominations)?
- How is Communion expressed between the Ordinary, clergy, and laity: is there sufficient communication via the Governing and Pastoral Councils; the local Deans and Coordinating Pastors?
- How good are we at listening? Our world is full of noise and opinion; full of people making their voices heard, and those who feel that they go unnoticed. Are we good at listening to different voices, especially those of the marginalized?

## **Participation**

*"We are all musicians, each contributing our own unique talents to the symphony of holiness. Despite having different gifts, by remaining faithful to the "score" written by the "composer," together we can produce a beautiful symphony". (OC&OM, Our Common Life, p6)*

- How do I focus spiritually in my personal prayers, and in my experience of the mass?  
Do I pray regularly for the help of the Holy Spirit?
- The life of the baptized is, *"a call not just to do something, but to live the life God desires for us – a life oriented toward the happiness of heaven."* (OC&OM, Vocations & Formation, p7)  
Do I give sufficient time and take opportunities to prepare for divine worship?
- *"We can help our communities to grow and develop by ensuring we have good administration and communication and also use a range of different and appropriate media to communicate our message effectively"* (OC&OM, Evangelisation, p8). Do I have gifts and talents that could be used in helping our group/parish grow and prosper?
- How much responsibility do you have as an individual within the life of your Group?  
How do you currently participate in the life of your Group / Parish

## **Mission**

*"Missionary activity, then, is not just for priests and religious. Each and every one of us is called to make a wholehearted commitment to the Lord and, by His grace, to grow not only in holiness but in confidence and knowledge of our faith, so that we can become more effective in carrying out His work in the world". (OC&OM, Vocations & Formation, p7)*

- How welcoming do people find us when they encounter our groups/parishes? What might we do to address the particular needs of the local community and deanery?
- How do we move from the mentality of 'Maintenance to Mission'?
- How do we live and speak for our faith to our families, workplaces, schools, places of recreation and socialization?
- *"Effective proclamation of the gospel proceeds from a life of faith, hope, and charity; from a personal relationship with God in His Church"* (OC&OM, Evangelisation, p8). What

formation do we need to give us confidence and courage to answer for our faith in discussion with others?

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O God, who willest that all men should be saved,  
and come to the knowledge of the truth:  
send forth, we beseech thee, labourers into the harvest,  
and enable them to speak the Word with all boldness;  
that thy Word may run and be glorified,  
and that all nations may know thee,  
the one true God, and him whom thou hast sent,  
even Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord.

*(Divine Worship: Collect for the Propagation of the Faith)*

A full introduction to the Synodal Pathway, can be found at:

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2021/10/Approaches-to-Synodal-Pathway-041021.pdf>