

## Why Should I bother?

Some people may be delighted at this opportunity to contribute to the “building” of the 2023 Synod. Others may be disappointed that issues they feel strongly about will not be covered. There may also be those who doubt that their views would be taken seriously.

Please remember that our Pope is behind this. Pope Francis is determined that parishioners’ views will be a foundation stone for the next Synod. He is depending on you, and the Holy Spirit is waiting to help you.

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### A PRAYER FOR THE SYNODAL WAY

The following is suggested as a means to preparing your thoughts and views:

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

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## THE JOURNEY TO THE 2023 SYNOD



On March 7, 2020, Pope Francis announced that he wanted to hold the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the theme: “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission.” Because of the Covid pandemic, the date has been pushed back to 2023.

### What’s a Synod?

“Synod” simply means “meeting” or “assembly”. The Church has held synods to advise the Pope throughout its history.

### Who goes to a Synod?

Each one is an Assembly of all the Bishops across the World, wherever the Church exists.

### What’s it to do with me and our parish?

When the Bishops meet in October 2023, they will work through themes that are important to the future of the Church. Pope Francis wants these themes to reflect the hopes and concerns of **everyone** in the Church, including you and me and all our parishioners.

### **That seems to be a big ask. Can it be done across the whole World?**

Yes. In every parish in every diocese in every country preparations are being made to consult with every parishioner in the search for information that will help to identify the themes that Synod 2023 will discuss, and the advice it will offer to Pope Francis.

### **What's going to happen here in Brandon & Mildenhall?**

In order to give everyone the opportunity of joining in, Bishop Alan has asked for your views on the Pope's three general themes:

Communion	coming together in worship as the children of God;
Participation	taking part in the life and activities of the parish and the wider Church;
Mission	being part of an evangelizing Church and what it means for each of us.

### **How will this happen?**

This period of consultation will be launched on November 28<sup>th</sup>, the First Sunday of Advent.

A list of Ten Questions will be made available to every parishioner, by either

- Access to a special diocesan website, on which you can give your views with the help of the framework formed by the Ten Questions;
- Or
- If you cannot access the Internet (or do not wish to use that route) you can ask for the Ten Questions in paper form, to fill in and return.

Full details about these alternatives, and the end-date by which your contribution must be submitted, will be circulated by November 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **For Further Information Contact:**

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### **THE TEN QUESTIONS**

- 1 How welcoming is our parish?
- 2 How good are we at listening?
- 3 How good are we at communicating?
- 4 How well does the Church's liturgy inspire a deeper encounter with the Risen Lord?
- 5 How well do I understand and participate in the mission of the Church?
- 6 How well do we engage with the wider world?
- 7 How good is our relationship with other Christian traditions?
- 8 How well do we work as a team in this parish?
- 9 How open are we to the will of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit?
- 10 How well do we hand on our faith?

Each of these has sub-questions to elaborate the meaning and scope of the main question.

- Your views and your privacy will be **respected** and dealt with **individually** – not shared with others outside those appointed to oversee the process and not submerged into a summary of all views.
- This is not an Exam!! The questions are designed to help you think about the issues they cover and to form **your own** views on the subject.
- This is a consultation to help the Synod advise the Pope about the future direction of the Church. It is **not**
  - A debate about policy; e.g. married priests;
  - a critical review of Liturgy