



Synod Newsletter No. 4

Friday 14th January 2022



Thank you

Thank you to everyone who has participated so enthusiastically in our first online group sessions this week. More than 50 parishioners have been involved so far. Special thanks to Neil Whitmore, Jonathan Inns, John Mortimer & Pia Matthews for leading their groups so expertly.

You can still sign up for these groups if you would like to by emailing Chris Donovan (synod@st-josephs-epsom.org.uk). However, you will have missed the first session.

We hope other parishioners have been engaging with the Synodal questions, using the self-led guides available on the parish website. Children in our primary school have also been discussing the 'communion' questions this week.

In-person event

Our in-person event, planned for Saturday 29th January, will definitely be going ahead. It will start at 2pm and finish at 5pm, to allow people to attend the 5:30pm Mass if they wish.

We will use the large church hall, so participants will be well spaced out. We will also open windows to ensure good ventilation. All participants will need to wear a mask (unless unable to do so for a medical reason). In this way, we will keep the event as Covid-safe as possible.

There will not be as much time as the online groups have had, but we will follow a similar approach to cover the Synodal topics through group discussions.

Please email synod@st-josephs-epsom.org.uk if you would like to book a place at this event.

Participation

Next week, our online and school groups move on to the second theme of the Synod: 'participation'. How do we participate in the work of the Church

and what helps us to do so?

At the very end of St Matthew's Gospel, we read:

Jesus said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

This instruction is known as the Great Commission. It has been a guide for the work of the Church ever since the time of the first disciples. It applies to all of us today.

Church membership does not come with two tiers: passive and active. Through our baptism, we are all called to active participation in the life of the Church. Each of us should be playing our part in the Church's universal mission. However, the part we play depends on the unique gifts and talents that God has given us.

This is the central theme to be explored through the Synodal discussions on 'participation'.

The Synodal logo

Last week, we looked at the people journeying together in the logo. This week, we look at the shape towering above them, offering them protection and inspiration. Many ideas are packed into a deceptively simple design.

Firstly, it represents a large, majestic tree, full of wisdom and light, reaching for the sky. It also symbolises the cross of Christ. Its horizontal branches, opened like hands, carry the Eucharist, which shines like the sun.

Of central importance, its branches are also outspread like wings, symbolising the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit over the whole Synodal process. This reminds us that the Synod is all about discerning the will of the Holy Spirit.



Participation