

The Synod of Bishops 2023

A consultation

Pope Francis has invited us to help prepare for this upcoming synod. As we journey together through life, finding ways to live and communicate the Gospel of the Lord, we discover we are not alone in our Christian Faith. The word *Synodal* means “*journeying together*” and the question Pope Francis has asked us to pray, listen and to discern is:

“How does this “journeying together” take place today on different levels (from the local to the universal one), allowing the Church to proclaim the Gospel?”

He has asked the bishops of the world to ask you and then tell him and Bishop Heskett will collect our thoughts and take them to a meeting of the bishops of England and Wales. Later, some of our bishops will go to Rome for the Synod in 2023. Following this Pope Francis will write to the whole Church reflecting what has been discerned from this process.

Questions

Pope Francis has asked us to consider these questions:

- What are your experiences of ‘journeying together’ in your diocese, your parish, for you personally?
- What joys or difficulties have you encountered?
- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you in your experiences?
- What steps is the Spirit inviting you to take in order for the Church to grow as a Synodal Church?

Given the current circumstances and the advisability therefore of avoiding meeting in a large group I ask you to consider these questions personally as individuals, families or small groups. You can respond with as much or as little detail as you wish. Simply place your comments in an envelope and mark them as ‘Synod’ and drop them off in church or the presbytery letterbox. You do not need to put your name on your response. Alternatively, you can e-mail ssjosephandcharles@gmail.com and put ‘Synod’ in the subject heading should you wish. Your comments should be submitted by Sunday, 6 February. Thank you.