

# Synod 2021-2024

‘The Lord will guide us and help us to be a more synodal and missionary Church, a Church that adores God and serves the women and men of our time, going forth to bring everyone the consoling joy of the Gospel.

**Parish Meeting: 7.15pm – 9pm. Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024 – Ealing Abbey Parish Hall**

**Attendees:** Father Ambrose  
Father Tim  
Abbot Dominic  
Sister Mary  
Sister Vivianne  
Elizabeth  
Stephen  
Jim  
Anthia  
Laura  
Chelle – Pastoral Coordinator  
Mary

## **Gathering 1 - Co-Responsibility**

Each Christian has a mission, we all share the churches mission, we need to reorganize ourselves, we are called with the strength of the Beatitudes. Meeting will be held in “Conversation with the spirit” – this meeting style was used in the month-long synod meeting held in Rome. “Conversing in the spirit”, is to see the Holy Spirit.

Sister Catherine reads “Gathering” – (Gospel of John 20; 19-22)

Group reads Adsumus Prayer

### **Discussion:**

Q1: How do we witness as a Parish and proclaim our own faith to:

- Those who have never heard of Christ
- Those who have ceased walking with Christ
- Those with whom we worship with Christ, (Go to Church)

Q2: How should we organise ourselves to do this more effectively?

Sister Catherine emphasizes Pope Francis says that everyone has a mission. These words could change individuals’ way of looking at themselves, a change of mentality.



## Synod 2021-2024

*“We are a mission”* – This is a co responsibility of the Parish.

Sister Viviane mentions those who have ceased walking with the Parish – she describes a local group held for older people, and few of them believe in God, but never the less are very interested in what she has to say, this group is held in the Methodist Church which has now ceased worship, however the building is now used by the Romanian church who have decorated this beautifully.

Stephen says this question is missing the “Christ Curious” – Stephen says he gets asked lots of questions about his faith and the truth. He says the Parish needs to give its blessing for us to go out into the secular as “We are the person in Christ to those we meet.” Stephen thinks that to organise ourselves more effectively, we should do more of what we already do, charging up, (our parishioners), to enable them to have the fire to go and complete the mission.

Sister Elizabeth says regarding the reading - (John 20: 19-22) – Jesus breathed on the disciples, and so we are united in The Spirit. Elizabeth feels a sense of belonging at the Abbey, noting that people come from all over, (London & the World). She suggests we need to look at how to make new people feel they belong to this Parish?

Jim says we need to make mass a sense of fellowship, he feels Ealing Abbey has positives in that the Church is open all day. We also are joined with other local churches, we are involved in the Walk of Churches, Ealing. Jim wonders for those that cease walking with Christ, we have to ask why. Jim says we need catechists to educate the adults of the Parish to grow knowledge of our own faith. He says we need to be a missionary to our friends, e.g. remind others of the liturgical calendar, keep them thinking about the Church.

Abbot Dominic says our Parish is very transient, we don't have a lot of people who say stay here for e.g. 20 years, it's not a stable community, he has recently noticed many East Asians coming to the Parish. Abbot Dominic says we need to create a sense of fellowship, to welcome people from outside of the existing church community, noting the Abbey social media and the mass live stream which Daniel, (Parish Catechetical Co-Ordinator), has set up. Also noting our Directory of Parish Activities as very useful.

Anthia mentions that it is easier to think on an individual level, we are part of Churches Together (Local Ealing Churches, of other faiths that come together). Anthia suggests we look at how other local churches are doing things, to build belonging in our (Ealing Abbey), community. Anthia says we need to be open to other people.

Father Timothy says people are drawn to other people they know, so we, the individual, can be the person they know, to draw them to the Parish, we need to create that sense of identity, we are maybe that person to draw them, (newcomers).

Mary has been to 13 different churches – Mary wonders regarding, “witnessing” – how do we find the right words to say. Adult faith is important, but with diminishing numbers of clergy, we as individuals need to be ready to talk to others about God, Mary says this

# Synod 2021-2024

is what she does. She notes there are many groups at Ealing Abbey, but they need to cross fertilize as they don't mix much.

Laura mentions that working with Koreans she has also noticed many new East Asians coming to the Parish, and for the people she works with, every day starts with a Mission, Laura has noticed where she works that Church seems to be centre of everything, of which outflows, the job, the friends, everything else. Laura mentions, we need to be more social as a Parish, doing events such as the Ceilidh and the Parish Golf day which were a great success at bringing people who worship together every week and that we need to come together outside of praying and actually do things together, so that when new people come to our church, the church can be the centre of their lives too.

## **Summary of Gathering Pt1:**

- Father Ambrose reflects on "I am a Mission". He says that sometimes the environment can be hostile and what does it mean to be a Christian, to be a Catholic.
- Father Ambrose mentions Isaiah Chp. 66: God is a mother
- Father Ambrose mentions the RCIA programme has improved socialising.
- Daniel is running a coffee meet for "curious" new parishioners.
- The youth group is doing well, and now has 20 leaders/volunteers. We still need to get more people involved though.

## **Gathering 2: Topic - Formation**

Mary reads 1 Corinthians 12 4-7. The same god works in all of us. This is followed by the Adsumus prayer, prayed together.

Pope Francis writes about evangelisation; he is clear we need formation at every stage of our lives.

Q3. What concrete steps can we make to proclaim our faith?

Q4. What structures may need to change?

## **Discussion:**

Chelle mentioned an enquiry had come in via our website asking if we have any Biblical studies course and suggested from her own experience and attending one during Lent last year at Ealing Abbey this would be useful for others within the Parish to receive the right adult education around scripture and religion. She prays to the Holy spirit to answer questions she receives from non-Catholics, to know how to answer questions correctly but felt education around teachings and discussions in order to learn the right things to say to Christ curious people would be beneficial and also help us proclaim our faith better.

# Synod 2021-2024

Father Ambrose mentions that it is key to engage parents as well as the children. One idea would be to get a podcast professionally done.

Father Ambrose has noted that Daniel has managed to incorporate items into the Holy Communion programme to also get parents involved.

Daniel has also started the Sycamore group in motion for people new to the faith, then as people grow in faith, there are faith groups to join.

Sister Vivianne says that this week there were 2 events held at the Abbey that a lot of effort went into, Thursday there was the Jesus event, but only around 9 people attended. Sister Vivianne worries that the Parish organises events, but no one comes.

Jim says we need educators, we need to be more systematic of what the average parent/parishioner should know.

Jim says there is a “Catholic Certificate in Catholic Studies” now for serving Catholic teachers, should we do this for parents?

Stephen talks about the start of the Synod, 18 months ago, that’s when the social, (committee), was started.

Stephen says there is a need for ongoing catechetical so that we can do our mission. We need to be properly taught. We need to enable people to have the permission and the confidence to go out.

Father Timothy notes that the family experience of faith is very important. Father Tim also notes that people want to know what interests them.

Chelle notes that we aren’t really seeing the family of faith like we used to, and what do we do to encourage families to come together in faith?

Anthia says that we have to tell people we need more volunteers/helpers, and that people don’t volunteer, so we have to ask them to help.

Jim mentioned it would be beneficial for the priests in mass to remind people of this at each mass.

Jim suggests that Daniel needs more helpers to do his good works.

## **Summary of Pt2**

- We come together with events in the Abbey such as the Jesus event and Wild Goose but it’s the same people that turn up.
- The social gatherings are a good sense of community and positive on the Parish
- The importance of the need for ongoing catechetical studies and teachings
- Family experience of faith is very important and a need for family of faith to be encouraged for more families and younger generations to come together in faith
- We need more volunteers & helpers and need to be more forward in asking for volunteers.

-End with *silent time to reflect*-

-*Meeting Closes* -