



For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

Selection of Parish Delegates

Introduction

The process of consultation for the 2023 Synod of Bishops begins in October 2021 with a diocesan phase. This is an important opportunity for the people of the diocese (lay and ordained, male and female, young and old) to share what it means when we speak about Communion, Participation and Mission. While this phase will feed into national and international discussions, what is shared at a parish level and via the online and postal submissions will be invaluable in seeing how we might ‘journey together’ as a diocese as we continue to ‘Dare to Dream’ for the future.

The Role of the Parish Delegate

To encourage all parishes to participate in the synodal process Bishop Declan invites every parish to nominate delegates. Depending on the size of the parish the number of delegates will differ.

Up to 100 parishioners: 2-3 people
Up to 200 parishioners: 3-4 people
Up to 400 parishioners: 4-5 people
Over 400 parishioners: 6-8 people

These chosen delegates will be tasked with facilitating parish listening and discernment consultations and participating in further diocesan listening meetings.



Selecting a Parish Delegate

We recognise that potential candidates may not be obvious. No candidate is perfect. To help you prayerfully discern suitable delegates from your parish, we encourage you to consider the following attributes:

1. Prayerful, committed and engaged in the sacramental life of the church.
2. Available and committed, able to initiate and invitational.
3. Open and approachable with a positive and joyful demeanour.
4. Humble, open to learning, able to listen and generous of heart

The key aspect is one of willingness and docility to the Holy Spirit. We listen first to the Holy Spirit and then we listen to each other. The experience of synodality should not focus first and foremost on structures, but on the experience of journeying together to discerning the path forward, inspired by the Holy Spirit (Vademecum, p.21).

The Vademecum document (p.49) also highlights eight qualities of parish delegate which should prove useful to you:

- A spiritually mature person with a living faith.
- A natural collaborator.
- An effective communicator.
- The ability to synthesise a variety of information.
- The ability to interact well with people of diverse cultural, generational, and ecclesial backgrounds.
- Familiarity with diocesan structures and processes.
- Humility in working with a co-leader and/or team, graciously open to the insights and gifts of others as well as trying new ways of proceeding.

There will be a day of formation and guidance for all delegates on Saturday 20th November at St. Michael's Centre, Stoke Gifford, Bristol. This day will be led by Fr. Jan Nowotnik who is the New National Ecumenical Officer and Secretary for Evangelisation and Discipleship.

<https://www.stmichaelsvenuehire.co.uk/location>

PRAYER FOR THE SYNOD

Adsumus Sancte Spiritus

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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