

ARCHBISHOP *of* CARDIFF  
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BISHOP *of* MENEVIA  
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**How can we be a synodal Church in mission?  
Diocesan Synodal Submission, March 2024  
Archdiocese of Cardiff and Diocese of Menevia**

In the providence of God, this period between the two Sessions of the Synodal Assembly coincides with a Listening Process that we are conducting in the Archdiocese of Cardiff and Diocese of Menevia on the question of whether the two Dioceses should be united. Our call to mission is central to this discussion. Indeed, the question ‘How can we be a synodal Church in mission?’ is one on which we are reflecting during this Process. Between February and June of this year, 25 Listening Meetings are being held, with Clergy, Religious, Trustees and Parish Representatives, as well as meetings open to everyone, of which, at the time of writing, nine have taken place. Each meeting begins with a period of Eucharistic Adoration, thus rooting the process in prayer, and providing a grounding for “Conversation in the Spirit”. This is the primary way in which we are taking forward the Synodal Pathway in the two Dioceses at present.

In addition, there have been submissions from individuals and groups in direct response to the Synthesis Report. From the discussions at the Listening Meetings, and from the submissions received, the overwhelmingly prominent concern is how we can reach out to, and provide for, the Youth of our Dioceses. It is felt that young people have an important place in the mission of the Church, and yet are presently not being given the opportunities to engage with her life. More formational opportunities for the youth, improving links between parishes and schools, and finding new ways of articulating the Mysteries of our Faith were suggested as possible means to facilitate this.

There has, furthermore, been a great concern for the need for parishes to be places of welcome for those who do not know Christ. In particular, life events, such as funerals and baptisms, when people come to our churches who normally would not, were seen as opportunities for evangelisation through experiences of such welcome. It has been acknowledged that, at times, a more effective way of communicating the beauty of our Faith is needed to a world that, often, does not see it as relevant.

A third focus of the synodal discussion in the Dioceses has been the need for greater collaboration with and involvement of the Laity in Church life and structures. As the Synthesis Report states, there is a need for all the Faithful to recognise their baptismal dignity and vocation in serving the mission of the Church through the different gifts and

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charisms that each has been given, to have a voice in the Church, and to be given opportunities to utilise these gifts and charisms.

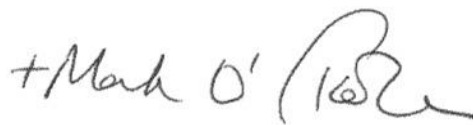
Other elements highlighted in the Process included a hunger for formation in the Faith, as well as a need for more effective communication, both within the Dioceses and within parishes, and with the wider community, which would both streamline Diocesan and parish processes, and enable a more effective outreach to those who do not know Christ.

There are various initiatives that we are taking forward as the two Dioceses, certain of which have come as a result of this Listening Process. For example, in an effort to expand ministry to the Youth, we have set up a “Youth Council”, comprising Clergy, Lay People and Young People, using the Flame and World Youth Day events last year as springboards for this. To date, two Youth Retreat Days have taken place, with a good response to each, and further events and trips are being planned for the next couple of years. The Council continue to discern how ministry to Youth can be developed.

In addition, we are in the process of establishing Diocesan and Deanery Pastoral Councils, formed from the Parish Representatives who were recommended by their Parish Priests to attend particular Listening Meetings. These will have mission at the forefront of their vision.

An attempt to improve communication channels, both within the Dioceses and in reaching out to the wider society, has led to the appointment of a Communications Manager, and the establishment of a quarterly newsletter. At a local parish level, many parishes are trying to enhance their presence and outreach on social media.

As the Dioceses of Cardiff and Menevia, we continue on this synodal journey, listening to the guidance of the Spirit, as well as to each other, and discerning accordingly how we can be a more missionary Church.



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