| **Parish** | **Ss John fisher & Thomas More, Burley-in-Wharfedale** |
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| **Parish Priest** | **Fr Michael Mahady** |
| **Facilitators** | **Marian Emley, Ryan Wilkinson, Amanda Labbett** |
| **Date of Meeting** | **Thursday 2nd December** |
| **Number** | **22** |
| **Approx Age Range** | **50-70** |
| **I. The journeying companions** As we journey together let us look around. Who are you on the journey with and what persons or groups are marginalised and why?  |
| **Companions:**fellow Christians x3, priests/holy orders/laity x4, schools , Other faiths x6, parish family x4, friends and partners x2**Marginalised:**People in care - hospitals/nursing homes. divorced x6, LGBTQ+ x5, people of colour x5, women? x2, victims of abuse within the church x5, members of other faiths x2, teenagers x4, the housebound x2, sensory deprived e.g. deaf/blind, homeless x2, drug users x2, painful lives, people with mental health x2, people not brought up to know God/find hard to make a step towards faith/make a community outside church, young people after they receive sacraments x2, new parishioners, special needs |
| **II. Listening**How might our local Church better listen to lay people (and especially young people and women) and minorities and those who are not respected? |
| Embrace social media - but know how to use and manage it x3Value everyone’s opinions x4Listen with open ears and open minds x3A forum (safe centres, billboard messages)Ask parishioners to identify the subjects that are important to them x2Recognise differences in each parish - a one size fits all approach won’t work x3Identify roles for lay people (especially the youth) x3Share best practice (what works) with other churchesx3?Who is not respected?How do we identify those who are not respected? Are you asking the wrong people? be mindful of ‘othering’ people!We need to move into the 21st centuryOur church has virtually no 20-30-40 year oldsFaith gets you through - it helps you make sense of the world - helps you not accept everything the media presentsDesire to listenBe careful what you sayInvolve women more. The Church can be too male orientated and self-opinionated at times x2Involve women in all aspects of church lifeIdentify those who feel they are not respected and action plan a solutionThe Church is the lay people as well as the clergy. Do we not respect people? |
| **III. Speaking out**How can everybody be encouraged to communicate appropriately what is important to them? |
| Regular facilitated parish events x3On-line facilities - ask young people - must be a safe inclusive environment x2Widen channels of communication - bishop to priests x2Empower others x2Use expertise + skills of communicators throughout diocese x2After Year 6 Sacramental Preparation & Learning & Understanding stops - what ways & opportunities can we give the youth to continue to participate in the church community x4We encourage by “listening” x2Open honest dialogue in risk free safe space - it’s great but hard to do - requires skillGet feedback from ideasSome may prefer to write than speak or to be anonymous x2Tolerance in all aspects of communication x2Have “church elders” with designated groups/prayer/ Bible study groups |
|  **IV. Celebrating**How might I be better able to participate in Mass and other liturgies? |
| I feel Mass is a celebration, peaceful, able to let go of everything x2How can we make the Mass relevant to families & young people in the parishes?How do we make the Mass attractive to teenages? - Use of 21st century social media and music x4 Most music is C19th x2Music should be eclectic (modern + traditional) x2Listen to the traditionPrepare x2Bring today’s questions along with meMore reading of what the liturgy means - ie. Bible studiesPutting liturgy in contextExplanation of the context of the readingsWhy is attendance an obligation? we have to nurture and foster our faith as adults rather than by rules to “make” us participateWe should televise/broadcast the Mass - other churches have done this + have been joined by participants across the world. Better use of technology x2Incorporate technology in children’s liturgyA good deal of liturgies to be developed for young peopleDevelop church for tomorrowAllow choice of music to families/young people each week |
| **V. Co-responsible in the mission**How can each Baptised person become a “missionary disciple”, revealing Christ to others through their words and deeds? |
| PRAY - grow in love: for God, for all people, for myself x2Recognise we are all different, with different needs x3By example (this is the most important) and way of life - good thoughts, good words, good deedsx2acts of kindnessBeing openThis is difficult in practice especially for ‘reserved’ English people but acts speak louder than words and if examples of “missionary” tasks can be suggested we may be encouraged out of our shells x2Having faith & belief is our strength in informing our Christian lives.Be living examples. be on guard against one’s own hypocrisyBe concerned and knowledgeable about the wider world (e.g. migrant crisis & welfare, impact of climate change on sub-Saharan Africa, vaccine povertyWords are easy, actions harder. Nothing worth doing was ever easy!Taking and making time to understand the needs of othersEach Baptised person must be able to be fully involved in the church - this means women priests + Deacons, married priest - if this is not allowed then where will the Church be in 5 or 10 years time - church closures, ageing priest population MOST URGENT TASKS TO RESOLVE x 4 |
| **VI. Dialogue in Church and society**How might we improve our conversations within our diocesan family and also outside of it, (for example with people of different faiths, those who have no faith and those who have particular roles and duties in society)? |
| By being ourselves and speaking about our religion/beliefs when asked of if the opportunity arises x4Treat all with respect x2Break mythsOpen + honest dialogue. listening regardless of background, and taking on other people’s viewsMore prayer for mutual understandingMore dialogue + encouraging greater involvement from othersWitness in all walks of life and encourage listening rather than judgement x2Enabling families to get involved x2Be mindful of our language and actions and how it shapes others’ view of us and how it affects other peopleAccept our responsibilities to participateEngage church family in a project: creates involvement;sense of community;pride + lasting attachment to church; can be replicatedIs social media too difficult at the moment?Imagine a Facebook page for the Youth managed by our Diocesan Youth Leaders at Hinsley HallWhy have I never been in a mosque despite living so close to Bradford? or a synagogue? or Quaker meeting room?More eventsVisit and invite other churchesLearn what “joins us” not what holds us apartx2Move with the times! x4Discover the good initiatives in many parish families in our Diocese - visit their websites - so much that is good is taking place - celebrate what is good |
| **VII. With the other Christian denominations**Are our relations with our Christian brothers and sisters good? How might they be improved? |
| Yes they are - Churches Together/ecumenical services x3Vome to the meeting of Churches TogetherWe could do more as a parish familyMore of same and encourage more people to be involved i.e. month of Christian Unity x3More joint working with other faiths in local communities x3They are not as good as they could possibly be x3More joint services/projects - e.g. Tereli?-swapping ministers for talks/swapping churches.chapels x3Catholics need to see participation inecumenical activity as a central part of their faith x4There is still a perception amongst other Chhristian faiths that Catholics think they are right and everyone else is wrong - exclusiveAccept we are no better or worse than any others x2Training in evangelisation techniquesAsk other churches/Christian faiths what they are doing that works wellCatholics don't meet often to talk about religionBreak myth that Catholic religion is only about attending church on Sunday x2There should be no such term as non-Catholic |
| **VIII. Authority and participation**How might we develop teamwork and a sense of co-responsibility in our local Church? |
| We don’t know, but there is a problem x4The best teams are usually about 10 people and if they have a defined job to do it gives them a sense of purpose. doing the tree of life in our parish has brought people together x4“Strong” personalities should not be allowed to dominate the agenda. all voices need to be taken into account x6Structure of team leams and volunteers to work together - e.g. the success of Tree of Life Projectfirst Friday Friends - Dementia friendlyYoung people need to be involved in any teamwork but need expertise to draw out sense of teamwork x2 - young people do understand teamwork through schoolsPersonalised approach to youngsters x3Give young people a voice x3How do we get non-retired (older) people and women involved?We need leadership from parish priestsBe clear about accountabilityHow do we as a parish share what we are good at?Restrict new projects to new volunteers (exclude the usual suspects!)Seek out gifts and talents within the parish |
| **IX. Discerning and deciding**How might we improve the process of decision-making in our local Church, so that we truly listen and recognise that the Holy Spirit can speak through each one of us? |
| Could we strike a balance between the authoritarian style of decision-making while listening to the aspirations and beliefs of the people? I do not favour a “voting” democracy x2For all in the Church to come to understand through the Holy Spirit that diversity of thought, experience and background is a strength, not a threat or weakness (homogeneous culture/groups struggle to survive and thrive) x2Prayer groups x2Support teams x2Open up the decision-making in the Church - but tends to be the same people who volunteermore lay people/young people involved in decisionsUse professional experience which exists across the diocese (e.g. Laudato Si) x2The Holy Spirit “speaks” to each of us in different ways x3Speak in the language of the day - in a tongue all can understand at first reading x2Latin alienates many, but not alwaysSupport the Synodx2Support the Diocesan SynodBelieve that things can happen x4Be honest x2Be well informed x2Speak to other people - be obedient to God’s will - take time out to be still and listen to what the Holy Spirit wants us to do |
| **X. Forming ourselves in synodality**What formation is necessary within the local Church if we are to become better at listening to one another and sharing our insights with one another? |
| What is formation?Being more visible x2Practical outreach in the community x3Projects x2Youth want to engage in projects x2Greater engagement with other faiths including non-Christian x3Engagement with Youth x4Social media x2Asking the right questionsEveryone to be approachable by allChoose best person for the job (rethink leadership)More parish community actions - chance for social conversations especially listening to others e.g. parish walks, family events? x3Acknowledge our own vulnerability and the need for God’s loveWe have a group in Burley village who train volunteers to learn listening skillsHave more social events where we can meet other we may not know due to attending different mass times (from habit and convenience) x2A more permanent forum at grass roots level to facilitate listening and sharing our insights with each other and leaders |