



Synod '17



Update No 2: 24 March 2017

From +John...

Dear Friends

We have moved into the phase of the Synod preparation which involves identifying the 350 people who will take part in the Synod weekend.

Parishes have been sent information about the number of participants they should select to attend the Synod. Guidelines for selecting the participants were included with the numbers. The demographic and socio-economic diversity of the parish and personal qualities of the people are the main factors to be taken into account.

The personal qualities of the participants are very important. The people chosen should be

- ◇ prayerful and discerning
- ◇ willing to let the Holy Spirit work through them
- ◇ willing to dialogue and listen to others
- ◇ able to take part in preparation for the synod

The Synod is not a place for pushing agendas, or re-litigating parish amalgamation issues. We need to understand that the Archdiocese is the local Church, and that each parish is part of the local Church not an entity unto itself.

The Synod will be a discernment process, listening to the Spirit and to one another as we seek to understand where God is leading us, which is why we need prayerful, listening participants. Imagination is also important, as it is a powerful way in which the Holy Spirit can introduce us to new ways of understanding and acting. There are many prayerful and discerning people in our parishes, and the process of choosing them is itself an exercise in prayerful discernment.

Other people will also receive letters of invitation to participate in the Synod because of their role in the Archdiocese. They too will need to understand the Synod as a discernment process, and reflect upon how best to prepare and contribute.

With prayerful best wishes

+John

Update . . .

The Synod Logo

"A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented." (Pope Benedict XVI *Deus Caritas Est* 14)

The chalice and host in the logo remind us that at the end of each Mass we are sent forth to take God's love to others. "Go, you are sent" is an integral part of the Eucharist. The unfurling koru symbolises new life and growth, as the frond unfurls and branches out in different directions. It is a reminder that the period of introspection as we restructured the parishes of the Archdiocese is over, and the time has come to open up and go out. As Church we are always called to go out and be of service to the world.

Key dates in Synod timeline

1 May: Parish representatives are to be selected by this date, and others who will be attending the Synod will be notified.

7 May: The diocesan-wide participation process for the Synod begins.

17-18 May: Clergy Assembly which will include section on the Synod

20 May: South Island Synod meeting with Cardinal John (1.30pm-4.30pm) venue tbc.

27 May: North Island Synod meeting with Cardinal John (1.30pm-4.30pm) venue tbc.

30 June: deadline for input on Synod consultation document (note date change from 23 June)

28 August: Synod information will be sent to Participants by this date

15-17 September: Synod weekend.

Synod topics

The topics for the diocese-wide participation process which begins in May are: leadership, the peripheries of society, relations with Māori, ethnic diversity, our own (Church) peripheries, refugees and migrants, care for creation, ecumenism, the young Church, marriage and family. A booklet to enable individuals and groups to reflect upon and provide input on these topics will be sent out in early May. It will also be available online. There will be a variety of ways in which respondents can submit their input.