



SYNOD '17



Archdiocese of Wellington

SYNOD 2017

PARTICIPATION BOOKLET



SYNOD '17

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The Archdiocese of Wellington



THE ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

The boundaries of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington are:

Firstly, all that area of the North Island more or less bounded by a line commencing on the western most point of the southern boundary of the Palmerston North Diocese, thence following that boundary generally to the mean high water mark on the east sea coast and following that mean high water mark south westerly to Cape Palliser, generally north westerly to Cape Terawhiti, and north easterly to the point of commencement and including all adjacent habitable land.

Secondly, all that area of the South Island more or less bounded by a line commencing at a point on the middle line of the Conway River in line with the high water mark of the sea coast and proceeding generally north westerly up the middle of the Conway River following the north boundary of the Cheviot County as described in Gazette 1930 page 2014 to and along the north eastern boundary of the Amuri County as described in Gazette 1960 page 989; thence generally westerly along this boundary to the middle of the mouth of the Punakaiki River, thence to and along the mean high water mark of the sea coast following inlets, bays harbours and peninsulas around the northern portion of the South Island to the point of commencement and including all habitable adjacent islands. Total area 35,800sq km.

CERTIFIED 11 FEBRUARY 1981 UNDER THE ROMAN CATHOLIC LANDS ACT 1876

1 May 2017

**To: Clergy, Religious and People
of the Archdiocese of Wellington**



Dear Friends

An important part of a Diocesan Synod is the consultation in the months preceding the Synod weekend. This is the stage where everyone has the opportunity to contribute, as an individual or as part of a group (or both). The responses to this consultation will determine what will be considered during the Synod weekend.

Because Pope Francis has so clearly pointed us in certain directions, there is a very practical element to our reflection for this Synod. What do we need to do, here in the Archdiocese of Wellington, to move in these directions?

You will see in the section “Using this Document” that the process for reflecting on the topics is discernment. It is not a discussion. Discernment requires listening to one another, and being open to the movement of the Holy Spirit. It is my hope that we will all learn more about discernment as a means of making decisions, and will be able to use the process in other contexts after the Synod. Pope Francis consistently highlights the practice of discernment, and encourages its use in all sorts of individual and group situations.

There are some things we cannot do in a diocesan synod, for example, changing Church teaching on married priests or same-sex marriage. Discussion on matters such as these will waste precious time and energy when there is so much we *can* do as the local Church.

There are many groups in parishes (Pastoral Councils, liturgy and Finance Committees, St Vincent de Paul, Catholic Women’s League, youth groups, prayer and reflection groups etc) and I encourage each of these groups to devote some time to reflecting on one or more of the topics. The Pastoral Council should take the lead in promoting the consultation among groups in the parish, and encourage them to provide a response. Groups of interested people can also be convened in a parish specifically to consider the Synod topics. Individual contributions are also very welcome.

There are some groups in the Archdiocese which I expect to provide a response because of their role in the community - Pastoral Councils and finance committees, the staff of our schools, Boards of Trustees, diocesan agencies and advisory boards, and chaplaincies. Their responses will be valuable and essential, but it does not mean that their responses will have more weight than those of other groups or individuals. The Holy Spirit can lead us through the words of any individual or group. A prophetic voice can come from anywhere and anyone in the archdiocese.

We have embarked on an exciting and challenging journey together, which requires above all else that we pray “without ceasing” for the Synod and for the Archdiocese in the coming months.

With every blessing

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "John A. Cardinal Dew". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

✠ John A Cardinal Dew
Archbishop of Wellington

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Decree convoking a Synod for the Archdiocese of Wellington in 2017

Pope Francis has given the Church inspirational documents to take us into the future. He personally inspires us and is admired by Catholics, other Christians and many people of other faiths. His leadership challenges us to think about how we can be a Church which goes out of itself and is of service to the world around us.

In the light of the challenges Pope Francis is placing before us, I have decided to convoke a Synod for the Archdiocese of Wellington in 2017. I have consulted the Council of Priests and the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, and they have agreed that this is the right time for a Synod to take place.

The meaning of the word “Synod” is “journeying together”. It is a long established practice in the Church to use this term for decisive meetings at significant times, when members of the Church come together to review issues and to make decisions. It is ten years since the 2006 Archdiocesan Synod and fifty years since the Second Vatican Council. There are multiple challenges and opportunities facing us, and we are at a significant point in the Archdiocese’s history. It is our duty to discern carefully together what the Spirit is saying to the Church in Wellington, and agree on common directions and actions for the future.

In convoking a Synod I am mindful of Pope Francis’ desire that we advance along the path of “a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are”. He explains what he means by “pastoral and missionary conversion” when he writes: “Pastoral ministry in a missionary key seeks to abandon the complacent action which says ‘We have always done it this way’”. It means being bold and creative in rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization and service to the world in our Archdiocese with its diverse communities. In particular, it means taking on board his message to “go out” to the wider world.

As we set out towards the Synod, we entrust our journey to Mary on this Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the patronal feast of the Archdiocese. She is the mother and first disciple of Jesus, and her journey of faith is a model for all Christians. She reminds us to be attentive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. She knows better than any of us where, in God’s grace and mercy, our journey is ultimately heading.

In accord with Canons 460-468 of the Code of Canon Law and the *Instruction on Diocesan Synods* (1997), I hereby decree the convocation of the fifth Synod for the Archdiocese of Wellington, to be held from 15–17 September 2017, on the theme “Go, you are sent”.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads 'John A. Cardinal Dew'.

✠ John A Cardinal Dew
Archbishop of Wellington
8 December 2016

Pastoral letter

“Go, you are sent”

7 May 2017

To: Clergy, Religious and People of
the Archdiocese of Wellington

Dear Friends

Last December I convoked a Synod for the Archdiocese, the second in my nearly twelve years as Archbishop. It will be held this year, in Wellington, from 15-17 September, and will explore the theme “*Go, you are sent*”.

Our theme arises directly from the commission Jesus gave his disciples, as recorded at the end of the Gospel of Matthew: *All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age* (Matt 28: 18-20) This commission has particular relevance for today’s world, increasingly deaf to the joyful news of Jesus Christ.

My desire for our 2017 Synod is that we each come away with a renewed conviction of having been sent. The material we will study, reflect on and pray with, will remind us **why** we are sent and **who** we are sent to. I invite ALL of you to engage in the process of preparation because, baptized in Jesus, we are ALL his members. **We** are the Church. While roles and responsibilities are varied and diverse, each of us is a “living stone” in God’s house [see 1 Peter 2:5], and as such has a significant part to play.

We live in a privileged time with the leadership of Pope Francis, who four years ago told us that he wants “*a poor Church for the poor*.” This is, of course, a vision that comes from the early times of Christianity. Pope Francis has also said that he wants the Church to reach out to the peripheries, the margins. He invites us “to be bold and creative in rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in (our) respective communities.” (*Evangelii Gaudium* 33)

Let us take his invitation into our Synod, exploring how we might boldly and creatively reach out to the marginalized, refugees, the wider Christian community, youth and families. The Church has a mission to serve the community beyond itself. We must never confine ourselves to self-service or self-preservation.



What does God want from us? The answer relates to TRUST: to trust God and to trust one another. People who have learned to trust are not anxious; rather, by trusting, they have the strength to get involved, to take a stand when someone says something disparaging, evil or destructive. Most importantly, they have the heart to say “*yes*” when they are needed. In this family of the Church, God wants us to know that he is on our side. God strengthens us. Not one of us can do some great work, whether reaching out to the poor or the homeless, standing alongside a stranger or someone marginalized, or leading a community, and say that we are doing that on our own. If we don’t acknowledge that we are receiving supernatural support, divine strength, grace, then arrogance takes over and we act as though it is all our own work.

God wants us to trust in his help and his power. Remember, the commission Jesus has given us carries the promise, *I am with you always*. We must hold fast to this assurance and trust that, with him, we can influence the society of which we are a part, especially the suffering and injustice that engulfs much of it, transforming it to reflect the purpose for which it was made: a home to truth and life, holiness and grace, justice, love and peace. (*Preface: Christ the King*)

We are called to be co-workers. That is our mission, the purpose of our *being sent*. Our responsibility is global as well as local. Being Catholic is not just about going to Mass and saying some prayers; it is about applying the Gospel to the transformation of society. That, in turn, means helping one another to be formed and sent to build a better world. It means supporting one another as we take a fresh look at the call to serve and where it might take us, “lace up our shoes” and joyfully respond to the commission, **Go, you are sent!**

This document will enable everyone to participate in the Synod process, individually or in groups. Your responses to this material will determine what the 350 people who attend the Synod will consider, so we need everyone’s participation and input.

Please pray that our September Synod might create the groundswell needed for our local Church to respond with eagerness, generosity and joyful trust to God’s call to us, here in this place at this time.

I look forward to serving alongside you as we journey and pray, acknowledging the words of Jesus, *apart from me you can do nothing*. (John 15:5)

With every blessing

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Cardinal Dew". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

✠ John A Cardinal Dew
Archbishop of Wellington