

# All together sharing the Good News

*Called through Baptism into the Family of God*

## Synod Session Day One

It was with a sense of excitement and anticipation that the first session began on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Delegates from every corner of the diocese and from every parish and many lay organisations gathered. Some knew each other but many did not. In ten weeks time, it will be quite different. There was already a sense of building a Diocesan community *of the same mind, having the same love, and being in full accord.*

## Our Call

Monsignor Dennis Carlin in his opening address spoke of his call as a priest and our call as laity. He compared our call to the call of God to Moses. Our role is to be hearers of the Word. Quoting Karl Rahner, he said *“As baptised Christians our role is to hear the voice of God and to discern God’s will in every day events”*

*“What is the answer to the modern challenges? This Synod will address these challenges. Our Synod is like the people of Israel coming into the Promised Land. Am I faithful to my baptismal call? My response has to be ‘Here I am Lord I come to do your will’”.*

## Group Work

The session then split into small groups to discuss the various opportunities for apostolic activity in different places such as the church, communities, the family, youth, workplace, social circle and national and international circles. The conversations continued over lunch and on into the feedback and afternoon session.

## Positive

The overall impression of the day was one of being a very positive experience promising great hope and life for the future of our diocese and our church in Scotland.

## Session themes

The themes are:

1. Called through Baptism into the Family of God
2. Discipleship and Formation
3. Christian Community and Communion
4. Mission and Evangelisation

The fifth session will bring together all the outputs from the previous four sessions and put forward Propositions for delegates to vote on and then to be disseminated throughout the diocese.

## Opening Mass

In a packed Cathedral, on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April, with more than 30 priests and deacons concelebrating, Bishop John opened the Paisley Synod. He welcomed all and thanked everyone who had contributed in some way to the organisation and promotion of the Synod before outlining the aim of the Synod in his homily.

*“Convening a diocesan synod is a way of spiritually re-founding a diocese, and opening up a new and hopeful chapter in our life and history. But before it is about changing things, it is about changing ourselves. Above all, any diocesan synod aims to help us rediscover our identity as God’s people. So my first hope for our Synod is that every one of us – clergy, religious and laity – will recognise in our Paisley Synod, an invitation from the Holy Spirit to begin anew, this time as an even more wonderful re-creation of the mercy of God.”*



## Bishop John addresses the Synod

### At a safe distance?

The disciples were walking away from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They could tell the mysterious stranger everything that had happened in the life and death of Jesus. But they wanted to participate from a distance so to speak, 'a day's journey' from the Holy city. They were so confused and upset by what had happened, to them - it had been scandalous. We also have been confused by the scandals rocking the church. But Jesus tells the disciples that the church had to undergo this upheaval and purification in order to bring about New Life.

### Real responsibility

We will work to agree a list of Propositions which will form the basis of the Synod Exhortation. The laity together with the priests and religious are being given responsibility, perhaps for the first time, to move this work forward in the diocese.

### A Pentecost Synod

It is providential that our Synod will take place during Pentecost. Together in prayer with the blessed mother, like the first disciples, scared, frightened and clueless – they didn't know what to do! Then the Holy Spirit came and gave them *courage* to go out and proclaim the Good News. But not only did they get courage but also *community*, where everyone shared what they had in common. So they had the joy of *living* the good news with one another in common witness and the joy of *proclaiming* the good news.

### The intercession of Mary

Finally the month of May, of Mary, who in Paisley we have a special devotion to. She gave birth to the Saviour and will, through her intercession, give re birth to the diocese of Paisley.

### How can I get involved?

The key documents handed to delegates are all available on the Paisley Diocesan website:

<http://rcdop.org.uk/diocesan-synod>

Please have a look and discuss with your friends and family. Contact the parish diocesan delegate and share your ideas.

### Next Synod Meeting

Next Synod Day Session on 7<sup>th</sup> May is on the theme of **Discipleship and Formation**.

Please continue to pray the success of the Synod.