**Parish of St Columba and St Theresa, Chester**

**Synod 2021-2023 - Reflecting on “Journeying Together”**

Pope Francis has invited us all to ‘**journey together’**:

* to pray and reflect and to be inspired to dream about the Church we are called to be in this millennium.
* to imagine a different future for the Church in keeping with the Mission she has received
* to listen to the Holy Spirit

“*The Church, the People of God, is a* ***communion*** *when all her members journey together and* ***take*** *an active* ***part*** *in her evangelizing* ***mission”****.*

**These are the three inter-related themes of the Synod.**

**Communion**

Through our Baptism each of us is in Communion with Christ and through him the Father and the Holy Spirit. We are thereby all in communion - united with – each other.

*Reflecting on what our experiences are:*

* Pope Francis writes that ‘no human being is unworthy in the eyes of God’. Does what the Church does, what we as individuals do, live up to that statement?
* To whom does the Church need to listen?
* How are the laity, especially young people and women, listened to?
* How do prayer and liturgical celebrations inspire and direct our ‘journeying together’?
* A main objective of the Synod is to ‘*regenerate relationships among members of the Christian communities and believers of other religions’*. How could we do that?

**Participation**

We are all called to serve one another through the gifts we have received from the Holy Spirit. All are able to serve and be served.

*Reflecting on how we have lived these experiences:*

* Are your gifts known about and used in our church in Chester?
* Could they be better used in the service of the Church – the People of God – not just in Chester but in the wider world?
* How could this be done?
* What space is there in the Church for the voice of minorities, those excluded from church or wider society? Should we? How can we?
* Could we identify prejudices and stereotypes that hinder our listening?

**Mission**

The Church exists to share the Gospel with the world and witness to the love of God. All are worthy of and can offer witness.

*Reflecting on where we feel that the Holy Spirit is leading the Church:*

* We are invited to ‘imagine a different future for the Church’. What could /should be different in the church in future?
* What can we do to bring that about?
* Can you think of any groups of people who may feel excluded from the Church?
* What could the Church do to welcome those people?
* What experiences of dialogue and shared mission do we have with other Christian denominations, believers of other religions and non – believers?

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**What are your thoughts and reflections? Please share them in the space below.**