



OUR LADY OF THE CRAYS RC CHURCH, CRAY VALLEY

312 High Street
St Mary Cray
Kent BR5 4AR

31/10/2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As you have heard recently, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has invited all baptised Catholics to begin a journey of listening attentively to the Lord and to each other as part of a Synodal process. Pope Francis has been quite clear about the purpose of the Synod. It is an event in the life of the Church where the primary agent is the Holy Spirit. We are to be a listening Church, characterised by 'closeness, compassion and tender love'.

There are three key words for this Synodal process: communion, participation, and mission. Communion: What does it mean for us to belong to Christ and be in relationship with His Church? Participation: What does it mean for us to be engaged and involved with Christ in His Church? Mission: What does it mean for us to sent out, in proclamation and service, by Christ and His Church?

We are asked to consider the questions shown below, but it must be stressed that this is not a questionnaire. We are encouraged to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in our responses.

It is important that we hear from as many voices as possible as we put together the response from our Parish. This includes any baptised Catholics who are not practicing for any reason. If you know of anyone in this situation, please encourage them to take part in the Synodal process.

You can be involved in one of the following ways.

a) Come to a meeting in the Church on one of the following dates –

Wednesday 3rd November 8pm

Thursday 4th November 7pm

Sunday 7th November 12.15pm

Wednesday 10th November 8pm

b) Join our Zoom meeting on Sunday 7th November at 7pm. Please contact the Parish Office for joining details.

- c) Write down your response and either email them to crayvalley@rcaos.org.uk marked SYNOD or post them through the Presbytery door with the envelopes clearly marked SYNOD.
- d) Speak privately to Fr. Cyriacus or one of our Parish delegates, Jenny Smith and Dominica Winter.

Communion

- 1. What are the ways in which your parish most successfully brings people together?**
2. In which areas of parish life (liturgical, charitable, social etc.) does your parish feel and act as one?
3. In which areas of parish life (liturgical, charitable, social etc.) are you able to discern the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit?
4. How is the Holy Eucharist the main focal point for your parish?
5. Is the parish the sole focus for Communion in your area?
- 6. Christ is present as the head united to his body (Ephesians 1:22-23) in our parishes and communities. How is this reflected in your parish/community life? Are there other reasons that you gather together?**
7. In what ways can you help to build up communion effectively and authentically in the coming months and years?
8. How do you relate to members of the Church who have drifted away from practice?
9. How does your parish relate to other parishes nearby and the diocese as a whole?

Participation

- 1. Reflecting on the pandemic, how has participation in your parish been affected? Were these issues there before?**
2. How can participation be strengthened moving forward into the future?
3. What are the means by which different voices can be heard in your parish (particularly those on the periphery of parish life)?
4. Which groups and individuals are least included in your parish?
5. How can you broaden the way you include people whilst keeping always true to the Gospel and our core Christian identity?

6. How do you currently participate, personally, in the life of the Church? How much responsibility do you have as an individual?
- 7. How can we better enable full participation and co-responsibility in the life of the Church at the parish and diocesan levels?**
8. How does your parish effectively identify and use the gifts of its people?
9. How do families and young people effectively participate in the life of your parish? What do you do to support them?

Mission

1. Given what you see of the Church (words and actions), in the parish and beyond, what would you say is the Church's mission?
2. How might we find a shared understanding of mission in the different parishes and Catholic institutions in the Archdiocese of Southwark?
- 3. Are we looking in or are we looking out, as a parish community? Can we do both effectively?**
4. From a missionary perspective, how would you characterise both the local situation and local needs in your parish and community?
5. How is your parish set up for evangelisation? How does your parish reach out to the broader community with the Good News?
6. Where is the Holy Spirit calling you to mission and service today?
7. In what ways do you already intentionally and actively seek to share the Good News of Jesus Christ?
- 8. How does the life of the parish, in terms of the catechesis, adult formation, liturgy etc. aid in the formation of parishioners as missionary disciples?**
9. How can the call to holiness and the call to mission be reflected in different aspects of parish life?

We look forward to hearing from as many of our Parishioners as possible.

With kind regards,

Fr. Cyriacus