

St Francis of Assisi, Llay

PARISH NEWS

Mid - April 2024



The content in this Parish News is in addition to that in the Parish Bulletin, the Parish Website and the Diocesan newsletter, The Wrexham Clarion. If you have news or opinions that you'd like to share here, would you please let our parish secretary know of them.

WHAT IS SYNODALITY?

Parishioner Steve Williamson reflects on Synodality:

I clearly remember the excitement engendered by Vatican II, the feeling of fresh air and light. Looking back, I can see that great strides have been made (yes, really), not enough, not fast enough for some, but progress, nonetheless. Alas, the excitement and hope were imperceptibly dissipated over the years and I can't be alone in hoping that a reinvigorated approach would occur. Then came Pope Francis.

We have heard much in recent years about Synodality, but I have never really understood what that meant or how one would go about it. Yet it is clearly close to the heart of Pope Francis, and indeed, the Final Document of the Synod on Synodality enjoins us all to adopt its precepts. Fortunately, there was an article in The Tablet by Austen Ivereigh recently which explained its meaning with exemplary clarity, and gave help and advice on getting started. This is what I've learnt:

Do you remember those round tables and small groups of about 10 people in the photographs of the Synodal meetings? So there is a clue. There is no "head of the table", no leader, only a facilitator to start proceedings. The Final Documents describes this as "gathering together to dialogue, discern, and decide." The meetings are not about what we believe, but about what we do in this community.

In essence, after an initial prayer to the Holy Spirit, the process first asks for listening - not listening to judge, just listening and attempting to understand what is being said. This part requires each speaker to say where they find themselves in relation to the point under review. Others in the group have their say in turn, and are listened to in the same way. There is no discussion or argument at this stage. This is the "Dialogue". "Discern" follows where the participants attempt to find a common ground. It is not a matter of right and wrong, or majority voting, but a genuine attempt to find some commonality of the views expressed. Should no common ground be discerned, then the "dialogue" begins again. But it won't be just a repetition of the first part, as people's views will have changed in the light of previous listening. Once "discern" is accomplished the group move forward to "Deciding", (synodally!), where to go from here.

So, Synodality asks us all to learn a new way of doing things. It might be a slow process, but how much more firm and more generally supported would be the foundation for future action. Austen Ivereigh recommends a terrific new book, "The future of Synodality" by Jos Moons and Kristin Colbergh, published by Liturgical Press. It's not a difficult read, and very informative.

This concept doesn't look to be easy, especially that listening part, but I'd like to try it. So if anyone is interested, young or old, please send me an email to steve@williamsonfineart.co.uk. I understand that children and young adults find this way of working easier than most adults do! I would love to be part of such a group, and look forward meeting you. Perhaps we could begin by discerning how we view our parish, or where our parish stands at the moment.

WREXHAM WALKS

Walkabout Wrexham was set up to encourage people to get outdoors and enjoy the local countryside. Walks are graded and led by trained volunteer walk leaders. There is no need to book and there is no charge. Walks are held throughout the week at various locations.

There's a Monday walk, meeting by the weir in Rossett at 10.45 for an 11.00am start. This is a gentle walk of up to 2.5 miles, lasting about an hour, going across fields or through the village, depending on conditions.

The Thursday walk meets up in the Llay Miners' Welfare Institute at 10.15 for a 10.30 start. This is also gentle, of up to 2.5 miles, for about 75 minutes, led by Don, usually through Alyn Waters Country Park but if it's very muddy we go through the village instead. This walk ends with tea and biscuits in the Institute.

The walks are a good way to enjoy gentle exercise in the fresh air in friendly company. If you want to know more about these local walks, speak to Eileen Evans. Information about other walks in the area, including the June Walking Festival, is available at <http://www.walksinwrexham.com>

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sacrament of Reconciliation at School

As part of our Lenten journey, we were blessed to welcome Fr. Nicholas and Fr. Zbigniew to school, where they offered the Sacrament of Reconciliation to both staff and children. It was a meaningful opportunity for us all to reflect, seek God's mercy, and prepare our hearts for Easter. We are grateful for their presence and guidance during this sacred season.

Year 5 and 6 visit to Parliament- March 25th 2025

Our Year 5 and 6 pupils had an exciting and educational visit to the Houses of Parliament. They learned about the workings of government, explored historic chambers, and even took part in a workshop on democracy and had the opportunity to meet and question our local MP Andrew Ranger. A fantastic day that brought their learning to life! To top it off, our friendly bus driver gave us a fantastic mini tour of London's famous landmarks along the way — a real highlight for the children and staff alike.



St Mary's Staff and Children taking part in Cafod Big Lent Walk

As part of our Lenten commitment to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, the children have been taking part in the CAFOD Big Lent Walk with great enthusiasm, walking together around Belle Vue Park to raise awareness and support for global communities in need.

In addition, our dedicated staff took on their own challenge, completing a 10-mile walk on Sunday 6th April as part of the Staff CAFOD Big Lent Walk. It was a wonderful event for all involved, and an opportunity to show solidarity, faith, and a shared spirit of giving this Lent. Please contact us by e-mail for the link if you would like to sponsor us.

mailbox@stmarys-wxm-pri.wrexham.sch.uk



ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC AND ANGLICAN HIGH SCHOOL

St Joseph's Feast Day Celebration

As the whole school gathered in the sports' hall to celebrate an Anglican Eucharist service marking the Feast of our beloved patron St Joseph, we were reminded of what a privilege and joy it is to be able to worship God together.

The school choir, made up of pupils from all year groups, sang 'The UK Blessing' for us as a reflection after communion. We can all remember when we had to live in lockdown and normal life ground to a halt; during that time a group of 65 churches from all over the UK came together to sing 'The UK Blessing', a song which reminded us that even though the buildings were closed, the Church was 'very much alive!'

In our lives we will experience times of darkness; as we listened to the words sung so beautifully by the choir, we were reminded of the quiet faithfulness of St Joseph, who always points us to his Son, Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life.

The UK Blessing is available to listen to on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6t2VqJHx_DY

These are the words:

The Lord bless you and keep you
Make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you
The Lord turn His face toward you
And give you peace Amen,

May His favour be upon you
And a thousand generations
And your family and your children
And their children, and their children

May His presence go before you
And behind you, and beside you
All around you, and within you
He is with you, he is with you

In the morning, in the evening
In your coming, and your going
In your weeping, and rejoicing
He is for you, he is for you
He is, He is. Amen, amen, amen.