

Hallam



News

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, pray for us

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Synod
2021
2023

For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

Hallam News

CONTACTS & DETAILS

Hallam News is a monthly newspaper for Catholics in the Diocese of Hallam
It is published by Bellcourt Ltd

AIMS

To build community in the Hallam Diocese by sharing stories relating to Catholic life around the Diocese.
To encourage readers to get more involved in - or start - projects and initiatives in the local area.
To provide thought-provoking articles to help readers deepen their Faith.

GET INVOLVED

We need your help!

Articles: We need your local articles - we can only include what we get. So if you have an article or just a photo with a short description - please send it in.
Ideas: We need your ideas for the paper and we need your ideas in the paper. If you have any thoughts on what we should include - or if you are thinking about starting a new initiative - get in touch - we'd love to support it!
Readers: If you can encourage other readers in your parish please do so.
Advertising: We rely on advertising - if you know of anyone that would benefit from promoting their business, event or anything else to parishioners throughout the Hallam Area, do let us know.

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DATES

Hallam News goes to parishes on the last full weekend of the month. It is printed around the middle of the month - so if you would like to advertise or send in editorial please do it as early as possible.

DEAR READER

An Invitation

Hallam News is YOUR newspaper. You are warmly invited to contribute your

1. stories and news
2. letters,
3. births marriages anniversaries
4. obituaries,
5. events and book reviews.
6. photos to share.

It's been very clear from the synodal process of listening that there are many

stories that could be shared more widely than the small listening groups or in the parish. It really is fascinating and interesting to hear about your faith journey, so we are introducing that as a regular feature for as long as people supply their stories. It seems like it might be particularly helpful for young people to hear the tales from their elders and Schools might like to include interviews and report writing into English, History, RE or other lessons?

Send your stories news and pictures to hallamnews.com or to Hallam Pastoral Centre, St Charles Street Sheffield S9 3WU

Next month: Hallam's Synodal Journey in words and pictures. Send in pictures of listening sessions in your parish (get consent from participants) and let's celebrate this historic happening!

Discernment on the synodal path

A report on Fr Paul Nicholson SJ talk

On 20 January 2022, Fr Paul Nicholson SJ gave an on-line presentation to Hallam Diocese parish synod representatives on Discernment in Common. It was an interactive and thought-provoking, perhaps challenging, session. Here is an account of what was presented. It is especially relevant for this last month before synod submissions to Bishop Ralph. There is time to reflect together and discern from all you have listened to and heard, what the Holy Spirit is moving you to communicate as the common fruits of your listening.

Part 1: Where discernment fits into the Synodal process

'What would a good outcome of the Synod process be after the 2023 meeting in Rome?' Fr Paul asked.

He recalled being part of a Justice and Peace Commission invited to write a pastoral letter. Participants were pleased to have the opportunity, but then it began to feel like it was everyone's one and only chance to get their pet concern to top of diocese's agenda. He questioned whether there is a danger of the Synod process seeming like that - 'hot issues' like women priests, Tridentine Mass, bring back young people...

He gave an important warning that if that's what people are hoping for, there will be inevitable disappointment and disillusionment and compared it to the National Pastoral Congress of 1980, which some people had cited as a large process which left people feeling disappointed? Fr Paul said that instead, Pope Francis is inviting us to consider very different way of being Church one in which everyone is listened to, and in turn listens, and thus

makes their contribution. If this works, will be truly revolutionary; but will also take decades to establish itself. It is an exercise in papal hope and trust, that this is way Holy Spirit wants to lead Church at this time. It is a process of becoming more aware of the leading of Spirit. This goes by technical term of "discernment". The process starts with question of where we are now. It is important to hear different viewpoints.

The question is, "How is the Church journeying together happening in your own local Christian community?" The process assumes that if we hear that correctly, we will become aware of Spirit calling us forward. Tools of discernment (learnt techniques, practices) link these two stages.

Fr Paul suggests that Hallam is conducting this initial listening very well and the key question now is how to process material gathered so far in order to hear the leading of Spirit more clearly.

What the Spirit brings is very different: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Galatian 5: 22-23

Presentation 2: Three-stage listening process

Fr Paul offered different ways of thinking about what it's like when we're in touch with Holy Spirit at work

- a) "The glory of God is a human being fully alive" Irenaeus
- b) Fruits of the Spirit - cf Galatians 5
- c) Images of life, and light, and energy - lightness of touch called by Ignatius "consolation" (even when challenging);

the opposite is desolation.

Discernment reflects upon a situation prayerfully, and asks where these signs are to be found.

This can be done individually, but is better done as a community - hence the Synod process in light of that suggests perhaps tentative steps forward, noticing whether consolation deepens. (The Examen is an habitual prayer-form that keeps one in touch with this).

Regular discernment in common is novel (even for Jesuits!) - and they are still learning techniques more established in personal terms eg in vocational discernment.

This 3-stage listening process has proved quite effective in meetings with limited time.

Round 1: Listening to everyone without judgement or comment - all have their say.

Round 2: Sharing what struck you in what you heard in round 1

Round 3: Tentative discussion of what God might be saying to group in this.

The whole can be attempted in about 2 hours, or as series of separate meetings for each stage.

Fr Paul wondered if the process in Hallam diocese is so far primarily at first stage of this process? If so, how can second and third rounds be adapted to diocese's situation?

His sense is that the point of Synodal process is to introduce Church to this way of working together for the future Church.

Fr Paul Nicholson is a Jesuit priest whose areas of ministry have included vocations, spirituality and retreats and social justice. He currently works in London to assist the Jesuit Provincial. We are grateful to him for his support for the Hallam synodal journey

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

- 1) **Think of the readers:** If you are writing about an event, think about the readers that don't know anything about it. Outline what happened, but focus on why people go, why it is important to them, or some teaching that was given. Make sure readers learn something from your

article - they don't just want to know who was there and what snacks were available!

2) **Keep it brief:** Make sure you make your point - but keep it brief and punchy.

3) **Pictures:** Send pictures as they are - even if they are very big to email. Don't reduce them in size or put them inside a Word document. They look fine on the screen but terrible in the paper!

LEGAL INFORMATION

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Around the Diocese

Celebration of Wedding Anniversaries



Noella and Augustine celebrated their 5th Wedding Anniversary



Sheeba and Tojo celebrated their 15th Wedding Anniversary

These long-standing parishioners of St Marie's were blest to have Fr Stephen celebrate the parish mass for them & to bestow a special blessing on their respective marriage from the lectionary .

Both families went on for a celebratory luncheon .

Events

1. Cooking with hope for Palestine via Zoom: event organised by Kairos Sheffield Friday 4 February 6-8pm
6-7pm Learn from Phoebe Rison and her mama Nadia, now living in the UK, how to make Palestinian snacks (ingredient list will be provided) while listening to their stories from their lives in Palestine. Visit their cooking blog - The Olive Tree Kitchen
7-8pm In July 2020 Palestinian Christians issued 'Cry for Hope: A Call to Decisive Action' urging fellow Christians around the world to take actions to end Israel's occupation. Rev John Howard, a Methodist Minister who has served as a Mission Partner in Bethlehem, will introduce a plea from Palestinian churches. Register at eventbrite, 'cooking with hope for Palestine'

SVP Coffee Mornings

Coffee Morning at Our Lady of Lourdes, Hackenthorpe.

The next coffee morning will be on Sunday, 13th February in the Parish Hall at 10.30am straight after Sunday Mass. All Welcome

2022 Hallam Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes

will be led by Bishop Heskett: Friday 24 June to Thursday 30 June (6 nights)
Everyone participating in the 2022 pilgrimage must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19. For further details, see your parish newsletter.

Action

St Joseph's Dinnington and Blessed William Richardson Kiveton are working on their 'Live Simply' Campaign.
Living Simply in January suggestions are: Eat more Vegetarian & Vegan Food and Reduce your Consumption of Meat and Dairy Products.
Reducing your consumption of meat, especially red meat is one of the biggest things you can do to reduce Global Warming, CO2 emissions, Pollution and Deforestation.
Events will be arranged when the COVID situation improves and may include:

- Vegetarian / Vegan food parish shared table/ tasting event.
- Visit to a Vegetarian / Vegan Restaurant.
- Visit to Potteric Carr Nature Reserve Doncaster to see the Starling. Murmuration – A wonder of the natural world on our doorstep.

Help the Poor

- Donate to Charities eg. Dinnington Foodbank, CAFOD, Street People.
- Campaign for Climate Justice.
- Buy from companies who pay the living wage at home and abroad.
- Join the CAFOD campaign calling for the UK government to introduce a new Business, Human Rights and Environment Act to hold business to account when it fails to prevent human rights abuses and environmental harm. <https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Human-rights>

Help the Environment

- Feed the birds.
 - Provide clean fresh water for the birds.
 - Leave undisturbed wild areas in your garden, piles of leaves and brushwood provide shelter for animals to nest and hibernate in.
 - Wait until early spring to tidy and prune in the garden to provide shelter for insects.
 - Plan to plant some Bee, Bird and Insect friendly plants in your garden.
 - Donate to Wildlife and Environmental Charities.
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Plan to plant some Bee, Bird and Insect friendly plants in your garden.
Donate to Wildlife and Environmental Charities.

Live Simply

There is opportunity to share recipes and suggestions on the parish WhatsApp group and in church.
Other suggestions for this month are to swap cow's milk for vegan alternative, buy locally produced vegetables, share a vegetarian meal with friends.

St Mary's Penistone support Barnsley Refugees and Asylum Seekers; donated items can be left at the church and toiletries are being particularly requested at the moment.

St William of York, Sheffield have a foodbank trolley at the back of church, items particularly needed are: (Urgent) Plain white rice, Instant mashed potato, UHT milk, Bottles of squash, Shampoo, Cleaning sprays, Washing up liquid, Laundry tabs, (Regular) Tinned meat and fish, Tinned veg, Soup, Jars of pasta sauces, Tinned fruit and custard, Jam, Biscuits and snacks.

St Vincent's Parish, Sheffield is among the many parishes across the diocese where there are reminders of the needs of the world.

CAFOD: In Afghanistan, 8 million people are on the brink of famine because of drought, collapsing economy, food shortages, conflict, and COVID.
<https://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-Emergencies/Afghanistan-Crisis-Appeal>
"Let's not forget the war-torn people of Yemen, especially the children, where famine stalks the land."

St Peter in Chains, Doncaster have recently established a Parish Visiting Group. All members have a current D.B.S. certificate and have undergone safeguarding training related to adults. For further information, contact one of the priests.

Vacancies and volunteers

Membership Support Officer; Hallam Diocese - The St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) in the Hallam diocese is seeking a Membership Support Officer to work a flexible average of 15 hours per week. This would be home-based, but would require the ability to travel around the diocese, to engage with current conferences; meet with parish priests to arrange appeals; set up new groups and provide and offer support to the SVP membership across the diocese. For further information about this opportunity, please contact Lance Philpott, SVP Head of Membership at lancep@svp.org.uk

Volunteer for CAFOD

A vital aspect of church is people being willing to share their talents, experience, and energy. We have lots of different ways you can get involved such as:

- In the parish - where you will be highlighting CAFOD's work to support communities globally who are living with injustices and in poverty.
- In local schools - where you'll deliver assemblies and workshops about CAFOD's work. No experience necessary. Full support, resources and regular training provided.

If you'd like to know more, please get in touch with apowell@cafod.org.uk

Obituaries



Fr Frank Flynn RIP

It is with sadness that we announce the recent death of Fr Frank Flynn. Arrangements are currently being made as we go to print for his requiem mass at the Sacred Heart Parish, Quex Road, Kilburn and also for mass to be celebrated for the repose of his soul at Chesterfield. Fr Frank assisted at the Annunciation Parish and was parish priest at Holy Family Parish, both located in Chesterfield and now part of Our Lady Of Peace.

The Requiem Mass for Fr Frank Flynn will take place on Friday 11 Feb, 12 noon at the parish church of the Sacred Heart, Quex Road, Kilburn. The burial mass will be at the Oblates Church, Inchicore, Dublin on the 16th Feb.

He is fondly remembered by parishioners and sadly missed. An obituary for Fr Frank will be in the next edition of the Hallam News. May he rest in peace, Amen

Anne Giblin RIP

On 15th December 2021 Mrs. Anne Giblin 51 years, died tragically at the scene of a road accident. Previously, a UCM member in the Parish of the Immaculate Conception, Rotherham in the Hallam Diocese. She was the first Foundation President in that parish.

We offer our prayers for the repose of her soul and for her family members.

February Saints

- 1 February St Brigid of Ireland
- 3 February Saint Ansgar and St Blaise
- 5 February St Agatha
- 8 February St Jerome Emilian and St Josephine Bakhita
- 10 February St Scholastica
- 14 February St Cyril
- 21 February St Peter Damian
- 23 February St Polycarp

ALL HOLY MEN AND WOMEN,
PRAY FOR US

Update on the synodal process in Hallam January 2022

It is the church's teaching that the Holy Spirit is active in its ecumenical councils

Following the delightful liturgy at St Marie's on 17th October to launch "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission", parishes across the Diocese have been busy responding to the invitation from Pope Francis, to pray, talk, listen and discern about our journey together in the Church.

This is his question to us:

'How does this "journeying together" take place today on different levels (from the local to the universal one), allowing the church to proclaim the Gospel? And what steps is the Spirit inviting us to take in order to grow as a synodal Church?' Remembering that Jesus is the Way, and prayer, meditation and reflection are essential to the synodal listening process, we listen to each other and the Holy Spirit, allowing the Holy Spirit to take charge of the whole process.

There have been various ways chosen in different parishes to enable people to have a voice. Parish newsletters have given out regular bulletins, parish councils have made and executed plans

for listening meetings, regular groups in parishes have included time for the synodal conversations in their ordinary meetings. The best sort of encounter is a physical face to face meeting and listening to each other, but for some people that isn't possible or desirable; for those people, there is an opportunity to join in and have their say through various survey-type questionnaires, distributed within individual parishes or from the Diocese, available at the back of Church, from the Pastoral Centre or from the Hallam Diocesan website.

There is still time to get involved; if you want to know more about it, there are links to plenty of resources from around the diocese and around the world on the Hallam website. There is the synod prayer, the preparatory document from the Vatican, the Vademecum (handbook) from the Vatican, a simple explanatory leaflet to hand out to get people interested, a poster for your church or school or hall noticeboard, some suggestions for the key themes and prompts for conversations which you

might use, some different methods of running the groups and some response sheets for when you have held the meeting and are feeding back to the Diocese about what has been said. Some of the leaflets and suggestions are from other Dioceses: Westminster, Northampton, Motherwell, Canada. It is exciting to share with Catholics across the world who are engaged in the same process. There have been many on-line talks and discussions to help us to understand the concept, the process, the theology, the practicalities. Where possible, links to these are on the diocesan website.

Some early themes from the listening encounters.

It is too early to know what will be the 10 page story from this Diocese which will be conveyed to Bishop Ralph for him to share with the other Bishops in the next phase of the synodal process. However, here are 4 themes that have already emerged:

1. Young people. Why are the young people not interested in Church? People are expressing great sadness and concern about the absence of young people at Church. Some wonder where we have gone wrong, that we haven't been able to convey the good news of the Kingdom of God to them, and they have walked away from Church. Some wonder if the failings and clerical abuses of the past are the reasons. Some wonder if the liturgy is not sufficiently engaging but also that there are no opportunities for youth in the parish, no youth clubs, retreats, social events, pilgrimages. Others identify the difference between the Church attitudes and values and those of the world in which the young people live; young people perceiving the Church as hypocritical for preaching love and justice and discriminating against women, LGBTQA+, divorced people etc. There is opportunity for young people themselves to answer the question of why they have walked away from the Church. Some people have had conversations about it with their own young adult children, young people are being directed to the on-line survey, and there are some school events scheduled to happen in the next month.

2. Pastoral care and welcome

People are tremendously appreciative of the pastoral care offered by their priests, how hard they work, and have worked through COVID, to adapt and keep a parish offering available, to provide spiritual and practical care for a range of demands. People expressed great confidence that they knew they could turn to the Church if

they are in need and many spoke warmly and with great fondness of their parish priest. People were also very appreciative of many in their communities who have offered support; the working together in response to the pandemic has brought people together. There were other perspectives, too, from people talking of negative pastoral experiences with priests; what was notable was that many of the incidents reported were from some time before, but the experience had had a profound impact sometimes with lasting consequences for the relationship with the Church. Anger at negative experiences, and about the scandal and broken trust of clergy sexual abuse were underlying threads, which it is important to remember are deep wounds that have yet to be healed.

3. Equality, inclusion, justice

Equality for women in the Church was seen as a way of resolving all sorts of problems, including the shortage of priests, clerical mental health, charges of Church hypocrisy, diluting the possibility of clericalism, righting an injustice, making the Church more relevant and allowing the contribution of women's skills and perspectives. The need for inclusion for LGBTQA+ was voiced repeatedly as grandparents and parents see the impact of the lack of welcome on their own families.

4. Opportunities for Sacraments and opportunities for faith development, were appreciated where they were available and more requested. Great love of the Church was expressed, and gratitude for all that it has given to enrich people's lives.

This is only a brief snapshot of some of the rich and interesting, often moving, responses that are coming in from individuals and groups.

The closing date for synod responses is 7 March 2022. **Make sure you have your say.**

There are four open meetings (one in Doncaster, Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley) for anyone who would like to join in a group to have the conversations: 5 February All Saints School Sheffield 10.00 - 12.30; 19 February St Peter's Doncaster 10.00-12.30. See the website for details of how to register, or contact the Pastoral Centre. All are welcome.

Mass will be offered weekly for the journey of the synod, at St Marie's Cathedral. Please add your prayers.

*Fionnuala Frances and
Kevan Grady*



**Diocese of
Hallam**

Communication and Social Media Officer

£22,000 - £25,000 (pro-rata) dependent on experience

20 hours a week, permanent

Monday to Friday with occasional hours at the weekend

To commence as soon as possible

The Diocese of Hallam comprises of 54 parishes and 47 schools in South Yorkshire and parts of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

The Diocese are seeking to recruit an enthusiastic, energetic and forward thinking Communications and Social Media Officer to join the Formation and Mission team. The team is responsible for promoting and providing access for adult faith formation and promoting effective communication within the Diocese of Hallam.

Your role will involve developing and implementing the Communications Strategy for the Diocese of Hallam and providing a professional administrative service to the Formation and Mission Team.

You will be based at the Hallam Pastoral Centre in Sheffield and home working will be available.

This post carries a Genuine Occupational Requirement for the postholder to be a practising Catholic in full communion with the Church (in accordance with the Equality Act 2010). The successful candidate will be required to apply for an Enhanced DBS check prior to taking up their post.

**An application pack can be obtained from Mrs Jessica Moylan –
jmoylan@hallam-diocese.com**

Closing date: Noon on 4 February 2022

Synodality: From Acts to Vatican II to Hallam today

Introduction

Pope Francis has convoked a synod on synodality. That means that he is calling on all the People of God (i.e. everyone) to convey to him how the process of synodality is working in their experience, and where the Holy Spirit is directing the Church. The hope is that this process of consultation will model the concept of synodality, by wide consultation (participation), prayer, listening and discernment (communion), to gather up responses in each diocese to go to the Bishops, to take to Rome, but also to lay down ways for the church to develop into the 21st Century (mission).

What are the roots of the concept of “synodality” and what does Pope Francis have in mind in initiating this process?

Let's say synodality means 'journeying together'. Is this as vague a term as it seems? In practice, it is actually very understandable to people. Who hasn't made a journey with someone? In the context of Pope Francis' question, can we narrow it down to thinking about journeying together with the Holy Spirit as an additional companion, consciously or unconsciously? It begins to become more difficult to share an understanding. Is this question about 'journeying together' just for baptised Christians, who understand something of the idea of the Holy Spirit? Or is it, as Pope Francis seems to suggest, for everyone. St Paul says: "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God" Romans 8:14. But some Catholics strongly object to the idea of consulting with non-Catholics and non-Christians about the apparent workings of the Holy Spirit. The roots of this synod on synodality can be traced through Christian Scripture and tradition, from Acts of the Apostles to Vatican II.

Early Jesus followers

Before the name Christian was widely used, after Jesus death, resurrection and appearance to his followers, small groups of Jesus-followers began to gather to pray and share life in common, to build the Kingdom. The historical evidence of these early groups has gathered over the years (and continues to accumulate), with archeological, anthropological, historical and theological scholarship.

Scriptural accounts of synods can be seen in stories from Acts of the Apostles, put into writing perhaps 200 years after the death of Jesus; these are a major source of our understanding of the early communities. In the Greek political sphere, coming together to debate and make decisions was how the community lived. Unlike in the political sphere, however, the communities of Jesus followers were open to all (not just free men), based their gatherings on prayer, and their decisions on communal discernment led by the Holy Spirit. There were a variety of organisational structures



in the early church communities, reflecting different theological outlooks and contexts for example from Matthew, Paul and John, but greater uniformity did develop as the Church grew and spread geographically. There needed to be some way of establishing authority and resolving differences and disputes, and the calling of the Council of Jerusalem provides an example of how this was emerging. The big issue in question at the time was the mission to and identity of the Gentiles (see Gal 2:11). It is interesting to note the echoes of these questions about who should be included around the present synodal process. Interesting also to notice, in the context of Pope Francis' ongoing identification of 'clericalism' as a major source of sin within the Church, that the Roman Emperor Constantine's convocation of the First Council of Nicaea in A.D.325 (which produced the statement of Christian belief, the Nicene Creed) and subsequent identification of Church and state could be seen as the beginnings of that clericalism. It certainly contributes to much of the early Roman civil service attire still seen today when a priest is saying mass. Despite this growing institutionalisation, a synodal, collegial culture flourished at local, regional and universal levels as the growing early Church adapted to cultures and structures to enable the pursuance of its mission.

Second Vatican Council

There have been at least 20 ecumenical councils, of varying sizes and importance but each contributing to the dynamic development of the matters of the Church. What is clear is that the "Tradition" of the church is a live and growing entity and changes are the norm. Also what is

apparent from looking at the history is that movement forward has always been a source of sometimes extreme contentious debate (and worse). This can still be seen today in the fruits of the living out of the documents of Vatican II. Sixteen documents emerged immediately from the discussions at Vatican II. There were struggles and tensions in the presentation and debates of different viewpoints. Nevertheless, the degree of consensus which led to the final documents being agreed was as startling to some participants then as it seems to us today. Then, as now, the bishops were surprised by the interest and excitement generated by the council, not just within Catholic circles but worldwide. Sixty years on, there is a resurgence of discussion about the teachings of Vatican II, and interest in how theology and praxis has developed.

Three particular documents have pressing relevance to the understanding of the synod on synodality; Lumen Gentium, (the light of nations) the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church ; Dei Verbum (the Word of God), on divine revelation, and Gaudium et Spes (Joy and hope) on the Church in the modern world. All the documents of Vatican II are available on the the Vatican website to download for free.

Join the discussion

Greg Ryan, from Durham University, will give a study morning on Vatican II and developments leading to the synod on synodality on 5 March at 9.30-12.30 for those of you who are interested in reminding yourselves of the fruits of the second Vatican Council and thinking about the implications for a synodal church. The event is free and you can join

on zoom, though there may also be opportunity for a hybrid zoom/live meeting. See the Hallam diocesan website for details on how to register, or contact synod@hallam-diocese.com.

Further Reading:

- "What Happened at Vatican II"
by John W. O'Malley
- "A Council that will Never End: Lumen Gentium and the Church Today"
by Paul Lakeland
- "101 Questions & Answers on Vatican II"
by Maureen Sullivan

Formation and Mission Calendar

Saturday, 5 February - 10:00am
Diocesan Synod Open Meeting Sheffield
Thursday, 10 February - 7:00pm
Synod Working Group Meeting
Saturday, 19 February - 10:00am
Diocesan Synod Open Meeting - Doncaster
Saturday, 26 March - 10:30am
Hallam Pre-Synod Meeting
Saturday, 30 April- 9.00am
CCRS Year 1 (Christology) CCRS Year 2 (Liturgy)
Saturday, 7 May- 9.00am
CCRS Year 1 (Christology) CCRS Year 2 (Liturgy)
Saturday, 14 May- 9.00am
CCRS Year 1 (Christology) CCRS Year 2 (Liturgy)

How Vatican II changed the face of St Marie's Cathedral

The start of the Second Vatican Council, sixty years ago, heralded major changes for the church at large and St Marie's in Sheffield.

Significant changes to the liturgy celebrated in St Marie's had been completed by 1969 and work was about to begin on physical changes to the building to reflect the reforms.

The biggest - and most controversial - change was the removal of the Rood Screen, designed and donated by Henry Taylor Bulmer, the Catholic artist who, on March 25 1847, carried the mallet, chisel and trowel when he accompanied St Marie's architect, Matthew Ellison Hadfield at the ceremonial laying of the first stone of the church.



The Rood Screen

How St Marie's Sanctuary would look today, if the Rood Screen had not been removed as part of the post-Vatican II re-ordering.



St Marie's Rood Screen and Cross before the Rood Screen was removed as part of the post-Vatican II re-ordering.

Bulmer is best known for the original interior decorations of the Immaculate Conception in Farm Street, the Jesuits' flagship city centre London church and one of the major Catholic buildings of the Gothic Revival.

Bulmer was among the subscribers towards the construction of St Marie's, donating £80 (£11,050 now) and also contributed towards the funeral monument to Fr Pratt, the priest who spearheaded the construction of St Marie's.

The memorial, including an iron canopy, cost a total of £70 (£9,670 now). The effigy itself cost £36 (£4,970 now) and was modelled and partly made by Thomas Earp, a well-known ecclesiastical sculptor, who was born in Nottingham and is best known for carving the 1863 Eleanor Cross which stands outside London's Charing Cross Station.

In addition to the rood screen and cross, Bulmer is believed to have designed the Sanctuary's painted and gilded arch braced hammer beam roof and angels.

Bulmer donated the stained glass window which stands above the Cathedral's North Door in memory of his mother, Sarah, and himself. The window shows the Virgin Mary and King Henry, who became the Holy Roman Emperor in 1002.

The Cathedral's large Sacristy is also home to Bulmer's reliquary, which was given to the church by his sister, who married into the Frith family, who donated the window showing St Edward and St Hilda to the right of the Cathedral's South Door.

The Rood Screen, Cross and Angels were carved by Arthur Hayball, whose father, Thomas, was the contractor for all the carpentry in St Marie's, for which he received just under £1,870 in total (nearly £260,000 today), while Bulmer received £100 for the roof (around £13,800 today).

The changes also led to the removal of St Marie's pulpit, which had stood against the first column on the right at the top of the Nave and was designed by Arthur Hayball and completed by his youngest daughter, Clara, a skilled carver who married the Sheffield landscape artist, William Keeling.



The Pulpit that became an Ambo
St Marie's ornate pulpit was taken down in 1970 and some of the panels were used to make an Ambo.

The pulpit and its canopy were highly decorated with a carved figure of the Good Shepherd, behind the preacher instead of the more usual crucifix, and panels on the front depicting Christ preaching to the disciples and St. Augustine preaching to the pagan king Ethelbert of Kent in 597.



A panel from St Marie's pulpit, showing St. Augustine preaching to the pagan king Ethelbert, now on display in Cathedral House after serving as a frontal for an Ambo for more than 40 years.

This latter panel was re-used as the front of the Ambo and, following the most recent restoration of the Cathedral, is now displayed in Cathedral House.

The 1970 re-ordering also involved the removal of the carved funeral monument to Fr Pratt from the Sanctuary to the Mortuary Chapel, where it was placed under the Altar - a process necessitating the removal of one of the angels at Fr Pratt's head.



The memorial to Cathedral founder Fr Charles Pratt was removed from its place in the Sanctuary during the Vatican II-inspired re-ordering of St Marie's

The relocation of the monument, in turn, resulted in the removal of a series of medieval alabaster panels - depicting scenes from the Nativity, Passion and the Annunciation and Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin - which had previously been displayed under the Altar.

Continued from page 5

The alabasters had been discovered in the neighbourhood of Exeter Cathedral, where they had presumably been hidden during the Reformation. They were acquired by an unnamed person who presented them to the church in Sheffield in 1847, the year St Marie's foundation stone was laid.



A selection of St Marie's alabaster panels showing the Flagellation and Crucifixion of Christ and the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin.

The church planned to sell the alabasters to part fund the 1970 re-ordering, but they failed to reach the reserve price at auction at Sotheby's in London and laid hidden in boxes at St Marie's until they were rediscovered in 2012, restored and put on display.



Memorial to Cathedral founder Fr Charles Pratt, restored to its original place in the Sanctuary, with the Altar of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel behind

Fr Pratt's memorial, meanwhile, has been restored to its original place over his tomb in the Sanctuary and a new angel added to replace the one that had been removed.



Parts of the choir stalls were turned into a Cathedra for the new Bishop of Hallam, following the creation of the Diocese.

The physical changes resulting from Vatican II also led to the dismantling of the choir stalls which had previously been in the Sanctuary.



Finial showing a pelican feeding its young, which has been restored to the choir stalls, having been part of the first Bishop's Cathedra.

Ten years later, when the Diocese of Hallam was founded, parts of the old choir stalls were used to construct a Cathedra, or ceremonial chair, for the new Bishop,



The restored choir stalls in St Marie's Sanctuary

The creation of a stone Cathedra as part of the 2012 Cathedral restoration allowed the choir stalls to be restored to their former glory and place in the Sanctuary. This article are based on Bob Rae's as yet unpublished 'Donors, Designers and Artists' guide to the people behind the beatification of St Marie's and also draws on Deacon Bill Burleigh's 'History of St Marie's Cathedral and Parish' and 'Guide to the Medieval Alabasters of St Marie's Cathedral.'

Copies of Deacon Bill's latest work, 'The Saints of St Marie's' are available from the Cathedral, price £6.

Prayer Group on St Marie's synodal path

St Marie's PPC responded to parishioners needs by engaging with us with a wide ranging survey last september .

After a period of deliberation , St Marie's PPC in consultation with the dean, reintroduced the prayer group which had met pre-covid.

Finding the right time has always been a issue due to the largely elderly congregation as well as a large student and working group notably working shifts.

In due course it was announced in October that an "Advent Prayer Group " would commence on the first tuesday of Advent at 7 pm.

Led jointly by Fr Hannigan and Christian who was on placement from the northern seminary at Oscott.

Attendance of the Prayer Group has been encouraging considering the autumnal weather

It was spiritually uplifting aided by a period of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & reflection by Christian .

Christian's reflection dwelt on the 4 Advent themes .

Hope, Joy, Love and Peace

Hope - that the promises that Christ who has come will come again

Joy - The Incarnation and Resurrection is the source of our Joy as is the assurance of eternal life

Peace - This is achieved by allowing the Lord to rule & also through our humble forgiving of others .

Love - It is the reality that God so loved the world that he gave His only Son to become man. Love is accomplished when one goes out from himself to help others .

This period of prayer included intercessions scripture

Reading quiet reflection and ending in the Eucharistic blessing .

Numbers attending noticeably grew with each successive Tuesday.

The final Prayer Group concluded on 21 December with a touch of sadness for its demise.

It is hoped that with the advent of a new year that there may be a Lent Prayer Group scheduled for 2022

The Road Pilgrim

Part Two - Pedestrians



Children and ice cream:

The Highway Code teaches that 'children are more interested in ice cream than traffic and may run into the road unexpectedly'.² In life, adults act like children when grasping after things to the exclusion of a balanced and considered view of life and their place in it. Blind

pursuit of possessions, power, status, and relationships robs people of inner harmony—they lose love. Is there any ice cream grabbing in your life? Is your pursuit for something or someone making you unloving to others, to yourself, to God?

In his spiritual exercises (#23), Ignatius of Loyola spoke of indifference, meaning choosing only that which leads to love of God and neighbour, and abandoning all that does not. It means focussing on being the person God has made you to be and living in harmony with His will. One thus becomes indifferent to both the favourable and unfavourable circumstances of life. By letting go of childish ice creams, we gain everything, we gain Love.

foot on the ground) and the future (other foot on the ground). Gravity ensures the float phase is brief, yet we might still describe it as 'Flying Without Wings' (thanks Westlife).³ This Westlife song speaks of becoming complete by finding our special thing in the strangest of places. Amazingly, life's truly special 'thing'—God—can be found in every present moment.

The present moment is a glimpse of eternity, a transcendence of time. In the present moment, past and future do not exist—they never have and never will. The past used to exist as a previous present, the future may exist as a future present, but only the present moment exists now. Although the present only makes sense within the context of that which has gone before and that which lies ahead, 'past' and 'future' can distract us from living in the now.

God's eternal presence is both outside time and present within. Maybe this is why the present moment, our float phase, seems to offer a glimpse of eternity. Westlife's song also speaks of saying 'I love you, anytime, anywhere. By learning to live and love the present moment, we say 'I Love you' to life's special thing, the God of Love, anytime, anywhere.

2 Highway Code, rule 206.

3 'Flying Without Wings' is a song title of the pop band Westlife.

Dog lovers

My beloved Jack Russell Terrier is a lead puller. His pace is not my pace; his ways are not my ways. Tug, tug, and more tugs. Joe teaches me something of how God deals with us. For the protection and benefit of the impatient soul, I can imagine God using an invisible extendable lead. We thus learn to walk at God's pace and go in His direction. God will prompt us, encourage us, yet we remain free to tug, go elsewhere and chase the latest smell that catches our attention if we so wish.

Freedom from sin requires sensitivity to the master's promptings. If we pull too hard, God will respect our free will and let go of the lead. Then what? Simon Peter uttered, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the message of eternal life'. (Jn. 6: 68) Being truly free is, perhaps, a bit like being an unleashed dog spontaneously running in the joy of the present moment while attentive to his master's voice.

Runners:

When walking, one foot is always on the ground. With running (including jogging), there are brief moments when both feet are off the ground. This float phase symbolizes the fleeting present moment, the only existential reality there is, sandwiched as it is between the past (one

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*This article is an extract from Dr Paul Dixon's forthcoming book, **The Road Pilgrim**. Over the coming months we shall be publishing extracts. For more details, email: info@theroadpilgrim.com*

Things to think about when undertaking an on-line retreat

It will soon be lent and perhaps you are thinking about how you will spend some more time in prayer during lent. Perhaps you usually go on retreat at this time and are wondering what might be possible during this time of Covid. Various places are offering on-line retreats, individually guided retreats or group retreats which often have the structure of a video presentation you can watch in your own time, an offer of a meeting with a spiritual director, a group liturgy and a group meeting. Advantages are that there is no travel, you can stay at home, you can choose how much interaction with others you engage in, you can revisit the prayers, reflections, input and conduct the whole retreat in your own time. Below is an article from the website of Manresa Jesuit Centre of Spirituality, Dublin. Courses and retreats have been held at Manresa for many years. As has happened elsewhere, the retreat team at Manresa adapted to the pandemic by offering some online retreats. Here are some suggestions about things to think about when undertaking an on-line retreat.

Using Videos on Retreat

If you are using video as part of your retreat, it is helpful to do so with some particular preparation.

We are used to using video passively, watching for entertainment or for information. The video content presented on a retreat is in a different context and for a different purpose: you take some time of retreat so that you can carefully and deliberately pay attention to the present seduction of God's Spirit. Before you watch or retreat video, take some time to prepare the setting and yourself.

Preparing Your Setting



It is often helpful, when on retreat, to pay attention to the surroundings chosen for prayer or reflection. Putting away of distractions, moving to a separate place, lighting a candle, turning off communications devices or putting them on airplane mode are among the ways we

prepare ourselves to pay attention to what is really important. A retreat time best begins with an invitation to the Holy Spirit to be present to us, to help us to notice what God is doing.

For it is not so much knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul, but rather the intimate feeling and relishing of things.

Ignatius of Loyola

Using Video on Your Retreat



Using a video as part of a retreat has all of the evident advantages but may require alertness and discipline not to be distracted by the other things your device can do for you. This following checklist may be helpful:

Notes

You will benefit by being prepared to take notes of what strikes you in the presentation; it may be something the presenter says or something of which you are reminded becomes the material for your reflection during your retreat. Your journal may compile your later reflections but your notes "as you go" may record helpful points for later attention.

Pause

Be ready to pause the video to allow yourself to consider what you have just heard or to pay attention to what has been prompted in you. If you find that you slip out of "retreat mode" and take issue with something the presenter might have said, a moment's pause will help you to see what is going on in you and what really deserves attention.

Repeat

Take advantage of the opportunity that the video allows to go back and hear something again. Revisiting material that

you have already used may help you to clarify something already understood, bring a new insight or prompt a new response in you. For Ignatius, repetition is an opportunity to pay attention to where you might have "felt has greater consolation or desolation or greater spiritual relish...attention always being given to any more important places where one has experienced new insight, consolation or desolation." (Spiritual Exercises 62, 118)

Wait

Although we are used to spending much time with video content, your retreat will be helped if you limit yourself to what is offered for that day. A good retreat is unlikely to involve moving ahead to get through more material or to find something more satisfactory.

Reflect

Many of the retreat videos propose questions for reflection. You can be ready to choose from these to find one that seems helpful to you. They may be offered at the end of each section in a video or at the end and may be found in the notes accompanying the video

Pray

Just as going away to nice retreat house does not make a retreat, watching a video is not what it's about either! We hope that the content offered in our video presentations, and the resources and scripture references indicated will serve to bring you to the heart of your retreat – your meeting with God.

Meet

Some of our online retreats offer the option of meeting with others either during the time of retreat – if undertaken simultaneously – or occasional online meetings for others who have completed the same retreat. These meetings are often helpful by allowing you to hear how the spirit has moved in others which may reinforce or encourage you to pay attention to what has happened in you. Conversation with a spiritual director or friend may help you to unpack and receive the message that your retreat has offered.

A video can help your retreat at home

For more information about the work of Manresa and the courses and retreats on offer there, go to manresa.ie
You will be very welcome.

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Job Opportunity:
Warden at St Scholastica's Retreat, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire

Following the retirement of our Warden of the past 15 years, the Trustees of St Scholastica's Retreat are looking for an enthusiastic, energetic, caring and experienced person to deliver a range of services to the residents and Board of Management of St Scholastica's Retreat, an almshouse charity providing 36 self-contained residential units for Roman Catholics in financial need who are over the age of 60 years. We are located in the town of Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire. As Warden, you will play a key role in the day-to-day management of the charity as it plans to expand over the next few years. Day-to-day duties will include assisting the Trustees in fulfilling the charitable and spiritual aims of the Trust: in particular, 'to support elderly Catholics to live independently within the community of St Scholastica's Retreat'. To this end, to act as manager and administrator of St Scholastica's Retreat.

As Clerk to the Trustees, to assist the Trustees in strategic planning for the Trust and for St Scholastica's Retreat. Previous experience of working in the charity sector would be an advantage. The role offers a competitive salary, pension, holiday entitlement and accommodation on-site in a three bedroom house.

For further information about the role of Warden and details of how to apply see <https://www.stscholasticas.co.uk/warden-clerk-vacancy>

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Root and Branch: the lay-led Bristol synod

by Clare Gardner, R&B Representative, Hallam

Root & Branch (R&B) is a lay-led movement for reform in the Catholic Church. It began in January 2020, just before the pandemic, when its three founders responded to journalist Joanna Moorhead's challenge in The Tablet that the Catholic Church needed 'a synod that starts with women' rather than tagging them on the end or ignoring them altogether. Very soon, as the name suggests, the founders understood that we needed to look at all areas of reform in the Church. Women may have started R&B, but it would not end there.

The pandemic lockdown, and the rise in online forums, allowed R&B to embark, in October 2020, on an on-line Journey of Discernment towards an inclusive, lay-led synod. For a year, participants listened to speakers from all over the world. Both on-line, and quietly in correspondence, it has

been open to – has actively sought out – opinion from all sections of the Church. This has been accompanied by prayer and a deep belief in the guiding inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Thinking has matured and deepened and R&B has become more inclusive at the same time as learning to be more bravely challenging.

The culmination of that journey of prayer and discernment was a week long Bristol Synod, held in September 2021. This included presentations by international panels of thinkers including Mary McAleese, Helena Kennedy, James Carroll and Fr James Alison, and a number of parishioners from Hallam attended either in person or on-line. At the end of the Bristol Synod, following prayer and discernment, R&B published the Bristol Text, a document that embodies some of the discoveries made

during the process of discernment and the Bristol Synod. It also offers practical, and often challenging, visions for the Church, calling it to be Christ-like in its structures, its thinking and its practice. It is intended to give ordinary Catholics the reassurance that there are changes we can make in our practice that are in keeping with the best of Catholic tradition and have the endorsement of deep, pastorally sensitive and well-informed thinkers and theologians, including many who are clergy. It is also offered as a contribution to the Bishops' Synodal Process and to Catholics around the world as part of our common preparation for Rome in 2023.

More information about Root & Branch can be found at rootandbranchsynod.org. A Hallam R&B group has also been formed. More information from root&branchhallam@hotmail.com



"But, now, look to that glorious garden which love planted, and gather to yourself every virtue in true humility and simplicity of heart. And although you find yourself among people of various states of mind, learn how patient divine goodness has been to us all..." Hildegard to the Monk Guibert (letter 106r, AD1176)

- St Hildegard of Bingen, 1098-1179, Abbess and Visionary

The Bristol Text

The Bristol Text is offered as a contribution to the Bishops' Synodal Process and to Catholics around the world as part of our common preparation for Rome in 2023.

It is also intended to give confidence to individual Catholics, to form our own thinking, learning, decision-making, conscience and practice.

Redefining and reclaiming liturgical ministry

1. Every baptised person is clothed in Christ Galatians 3:27

'There is, therefore, in Christ and in the Church no inequality on the basis of race or nationality, social condition or sex, because 'there is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Lumen Gentium 32, Vatican II). We should nowadays add, 'people of all abilities and genders.'

We must learn to be open to all, and especially the destabilising influence of people 'not like us.' 'Whoever wants to be first must be the last of all.' (Mark 9:35)

2. The Church is the community of God

'For when two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.' (Matthew 18:20) It is not an individual, but the community of saints, living and dead, who celebrate the act of thanksgiving to God, which is the Eucharist.

Jesus has made it easy to celebrate his presence with us, since the ritual of simple eating and drinking together is inscribed within us as human beings. It does not require a separate priesthood. St Peter states clearly of all the baptised, 'you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood.' (1 Peter: 9)

3. The Holy Spirit's call to ministry may be heard by all people

We need a clearer understanding of vocations. All the baptised are eligible to answer God's call to every ministry. That call is discerned within and by community of God, which is in companionship of empowerment.

Current research makes it clear that in the earliest Christian gatherings, women and

men, single and married, led communities in worship, exercising their baptismal calling.

Embracing diversity

1. Hierarchy distorts the beauty of diversity
Affirming diversity is imperative for attending the dignity and sanctity of every form of life, valuing the uniqueness and contribution of each person.

This calls for a radical re-imagining of the way of being Church, as it has become predominantly a hierarchical institution on all-male leadership.

2. Engage with the complexity of sex/gender

Church teaching on sex/gender is confused and contradictory. There is, in effect, no public policy.

Male-female binaries are institutionalised through the historical understandings of 'family life' and 'natural law.' Transgender individuals challenge sex/gender binary norms, but scientifically we know that sex/gender is complex and that we also establish our identities through the stories we tell.

The Church needs a pastoral response to diverse family forms. It needs to think more deeply about its gender ideology.

3. Redefining 'we'

For many Catholics evangelisation implies being truth tellers in one sphere and liars, making available an 'objective' Gospel that does not touch who we are. Our bodies and our spirits long for truthfulness, and come alive when we allow them to bear witness to it.

That means the construction of the new Catholic 'we' depends on all of us learning to preach the Gospel in the first person, singular and plural. We learn to see ourselves in our differently-aged, differently-abled, differently-gendered, differently-bodied, differently-sexually-orientated, differently-coloured, differently-tongued neighbour. Our similarity, not our difference is what counts.

4. Accountability and apology

Accountability means taking responsibility

for the ways in which our beliefs, theology and practices have contributed to the dehumanisation and persecution of many people who are seen as 'other'.

'What have you done? Listen. Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground' (Genesis 4:10) The words spoken to Cain after killing his brother Abel point to the critical need for accountability, restitution and transformation as we seek to restore the dignity and rights of all persons as equal.

Then the harm done can be acknowledged in ways that include the participation of those harmed, creating affirming, equality-expressing theologies where no one is excluded and all are equal.

Moral Theology

1. Historical consciousness

The Gospel speaks of a seed which, once sown, grows by itself. 'The Church has to accept this unruly freedom of the word.' (Evangelii Gaudium 22). Appeals to unchanging laws and unchallengeable authorities stifle this creative freedom.

This calls for faith that continually evolves to meet the challenges of different context and cultures.

2. Continuous formation in dialogue

We propose that, rather than asserting authoritative moral rules to be obeyed, church teaching should be concerned with ways of thinking, helping us to see our lives as a process of continuous Christian formation along the path 'of wisdom, self-fulfilment and enrichment' (Evangelii Gaudium 168)

This moral vision is therefore not defined by lists of sins to avoid but by the endeavour to live as faithful disciples in a complex world, witnessing to God's love for all creation. The Good News is 'marked by joy, encouragement, liveliness ... readiness for dialogue, patience, warmth and welcome which is non-judgmental.' (Evangelii Gaudium 165)

3. A holistic vision

We call for a holistic vision of the good life that is not dominated by issues of sexuality,

but seeks the flourishing and dignity of the entire person.

This means rejecting all forms of exploitation, abuse and violence, and encouraging each individual to discover their personal vocation to holiness. It is our living response to the prophetic vocation to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God. (Micah 6:8)

Church authority

1. Equality and justice for all

Jesus preached the Good News of the historical advent of the Kingdom of God, which brings justice and peace to all human beings, and liberation to the oppressed.

For the Catholic Church to cooperate with God's Kingdom, it needs to model its organisational structure, and its Canon Law, on those principles of quality and justice for all.

2. Agreed by all

'What touches all must be discussed and approved by all.' By virtue of their common baptism, all adult Catholics have the Fundamental right to participate and vote in all decisions on matters of doctrine, value, action, and any other issue concerning the common good of their community.

At every level representative democratic councils should serve as the principal decision-making bodies, with the inalienable right to determine what falls within their competence. Discernment belongs to all. It cannot be confined to the few.

3. Elected by all

'The one who is to preside over all should be elected by all.' Legitimate authorities in the church must be based on the consent of the people. The church community has the right to evaluate, approve, and commission all those putting themselves forward for a ministry.

Every adult Catholic has the right to vote for, and to be eligible as, a candidate for any church ministry. All Catholics also the right to have their leaders render an account to them.

Letters to the Editor

All correspondence, including email, must give a full postal address and contact telephone number although this will not be printed.
Letters may be edited for style, length and content.

Hallam News to Cease Publication

I heard by a chance conversation that Hallam News is to cease publication this spring. This comes as a shock as Hallam News had only recommenced in October 2021 in a much vaulted format.

Hallam News is a vital resource for our diocese whose value cannot be underestimated. Acting as a diocesan newsletter & keeping all sectors of the diocese updated with news and events. It would be a huge loss to lose Hallam News should it pack up as it is so much part of church life .

Joseph Durham, St Marie's Cathedral

Sorry to say the rumours are true, the Trustees of the diocese think the Hallam News isn't value for money and our last edition is May 2022. What do you think? Ed.

Hallam News

I gather that there is some possibility of the Hallam News ending. This would be a great pity. I have several times written

articles for the publication and believe it is an excellent means of communication within the diocese.

Without it there would be no source of news. Not everyone has access to the internet and those who have not are increasingly marginalised.

Papers such as Hallam News are a vital source of communication for the Church.

Francesca

Synodal Journey

I read the article you pointed out to me about the Synodal Journey and your relationship with it. I have to confess I am one of the people who rarely picks up a copy of Hallam News. As I read the article it became clear to me that I should spend more time praying to Mary the Mother of the Church for guidance and encouragement in how I should be engaging with this journey. I will visit the icon or 'Our Lady of the Synod' when I am next in Church.

Mike

A parishioner speaks out strongly about the words used in prayers.

At Mass on the 12th January our parish priest advised us that after the Eucharist the Prayer for the Synodal Church would be replaced by the Prayer for Vocations. I was disappointed by this as were others.

Neither of the prayers trip off the tongue and many members of the congregation are unhappy with the wording of the prayers.

In the context of the Prayer for Vocations the emphasis leads to a view from the last sentence; "Choose from our homes those who are needed for your mission." that the mission of the church is fulfilled only by those who have taken a vocation as priest, deacon or religious.

This seems to me to be far from the truth. The laity see the face of Christ in the goodness and kind actions of the wider public and show God's love to the people they meet.

Although the prayer after communion charges us to work for God's kingdom, in my opinion it is diminished in effect by the prior prayer for vocations.

The Prayer for the Synodal Church contains the sentences "We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path."

This wording is insulting to all who come to church in peace and humility. It is insulting to the laity and indicates that the writers and those who endorsed it had a flawed understanding of the Beatitudes and humility in particular. God doesn't want us to think less of ourselves, he wants us to think of ourselves less.

Both of these prayers belittle the humanity of the laity and should be reworded.

John Wood
What's your view?





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You can use both sets of clues to solve the puzzle: the solutions are the same.

CRYPTIC Across

- 1 Carbon, ie a chemical which does not need oxygen (9)
- 6 Nuke half of Mexican revolutionary forces away (3)
- 8 Polished, quiet type (5)
- 9 Knight is honourable, meeting bridge opponents beforehand (7)
- 10 Girls out east make good tumblers (7)
- 11 Skim over ice, finding fish (5)
- 12 Curious to-ing and fro-ing around North Dakota with a large number seeing giants (3,3,5)
- 17 Acquire a service (5)
- 19 Chemical required to address speed of head infestation (7)
- 21 One thousand and one, plus the gallery's copy (7)
- 22 Sound the hooter around one (5)
- 23 12 book to leave German port for Riviera beauty spot (3)
- 24 A Beatle composition's absorbing or marked by complexity (9)

CRYPTIC Down

- 1 Nominate Grant? (6)
- 2 Officer commanding these days is into flipped eggs and fruit (7)
- 3 Swims with river fish (5)
- 4 Agedness label tortured this penitent (7,6)
- 5 Rummy type of American a starring part's made for (7)
- 6 Crossing borders of zone needing some support (5)
- 7 Unknown number doing a flit from here default (6)
- 13 Moderate as you get older, so to speak, being a fool earlier (7)

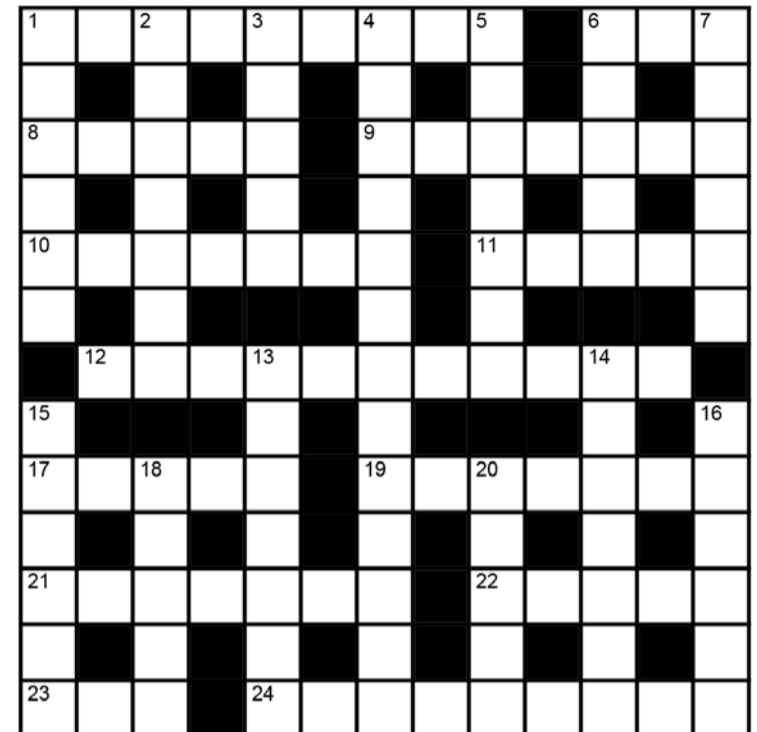
- 14 Award, which Sondheim initially ignored, in a musical piece (7)
- 15 Want notoriety without being fashionable (6)
- 16 Retire always around the end of the year to do return (6)
- 18 Correspondent to go with article headline (5)
- 20 Dance beat has energy (5)

QUICK Across

- 1 Living or active in the absence of free oxygen (9)
- 6 Cook or heat in a microwave oven; shoot (3)
- 8 Emitted light; stood out (5) 9 Configure honour upon (7)
- 10 Tumblers; spectacles (7)
- 11 Travel on ice; flat fish (5)
- 12 Nations under the dominion of Satan [Rev] (3,3,5)
- 17 Compile; collect (5)
- 19 Natural potassium or sodium fertilizer (7)
- 21 Ape; mimic (7)
- 22 Din; interference (5)
- 23 Riviera cliff-top resort near Monaco (3)
- 24 Explain further; complex (9)

QUICK Down

- 1 Attribute; transfer (6)
- 2 Shade of green tinged with yellow; tropical fruit (7)
- 3 Winders for film or thread; energetic dances (5)
- 4 Penitent (1248-1309) of Foligno, near Assisi (7,6)
- 5 Card game (7) 6 Black-and-white striped African



- equine (5)
- 7 Predetermined; default (6)
- 13 Cause to be more favourably inclined; gain the good will of (7) 14 Egg-shaped terracotta wind instrument (7)
- 15 Acute insufficiency; dearth (6)
- 16 Move away; retire (6)
- 18 Similar; equally (5)
- 20 Ballroom dance of Latin-American origin (5)

SOLUTION

Across: 1 Anaerobic, 6 Zap, 8 Shone, 9 Enoble, 10 Glasses, 11 Skate, 12 Gog and Magog, 17 Amass, 19 Nitrate, 21 Imitate, 22 Noise, 23 Eze, 24 Elaborate. Down: 1 Assign, 2 Avocado, 3 Reels, 4 Blessed Angela, 5 Canasta, 6 Zebra, 7 Preset, 13 Assuage, 14 Ocarina, 15 Famine, 16 Recede, 18 Alike, 20 Tango.

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