

The following is not a full text but reminder notes from a workshop held as part of the November 15th event held in mary Immaculate College

The workshop was one of six held to offer a reflection space after the keynote speech.

This workshop

- For Parish representatives or those based in parish
- To unpack some of the themes, ideas presented and give you a chance to respond ...
- Vision not action ... Letting these words settle into our hearts ...



The purpose of this workshop was not to add new material but to offer some reflection on Fr Pauls talk

It was also to remind delegates that their first task was to reflect on the vision expressed today. Like a pint settling, or tea drawing, we allow time to what is rich in order that it settles into our thoughts and our hearts – becoming more clear as we ponder.

If this Synod is to be about the re-founding of this diocese ...

- it will be rooted in the synod's success in **articulating** in down to earth language the lofty challenge of becoming a living sign or sacrament for the world.

- It will make the church's ageless tradition **contemporary** to current needs and culture.



Synod as Journeying
Together:
A Time to begin
Again

This sentence from Fr Pauls talk reminds us that our role is to hear these challenging and exciting words and to translate them for ourselves and the circumstances of our lives. Only then can we share this vision with others.

What will the synod mean for you?

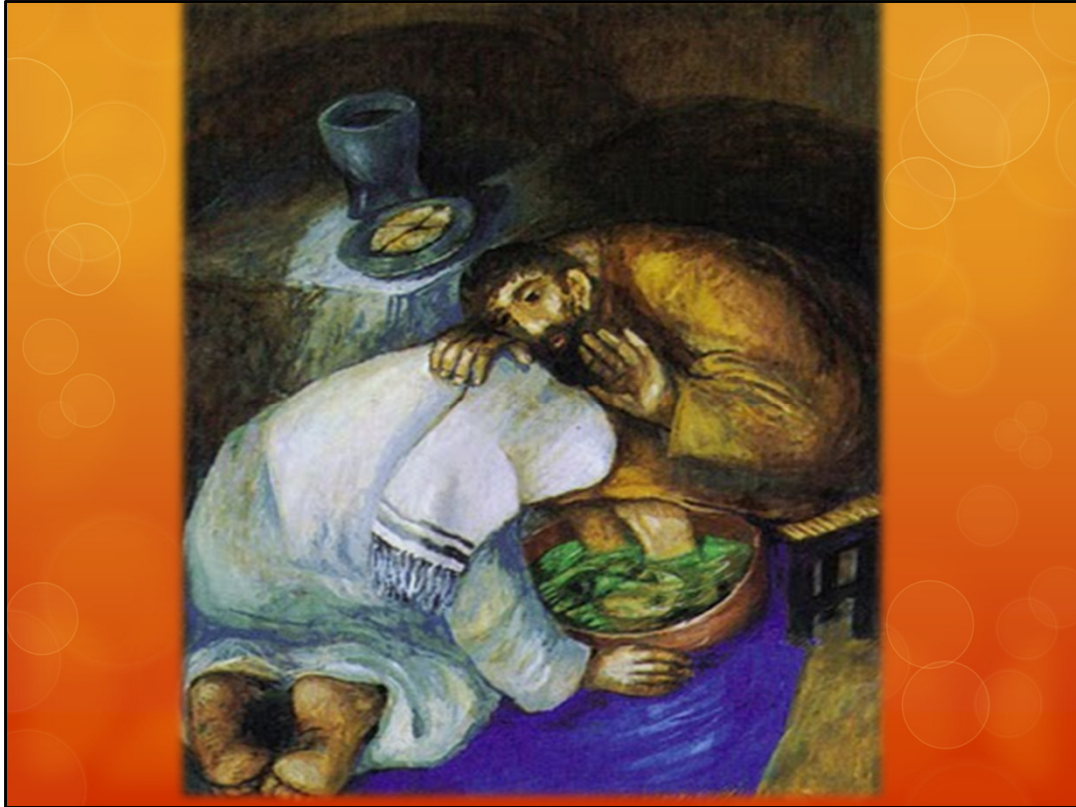
- ... it will mean a call to rediscover the holiness and apostolic challenge that is yours as a disciple of Jesus.
- It is an invitation to wake up in the Body of Christ



First point – a personal call to discipleship

Quote from Fr Pauls talk

The next slides will examining the idea of being disciples with a call to personal change.



Lets reflect a little on the call to personal holiness

This is an image from the German priest and artist Sieger Köder. It shows Jesus washing Peters feet. Notice Jesus in white, Peter both embracing and pushing away ... Not my toes Lord, I'm embarrassed ... If I can't touch your toes Peter, how can I change your life?

Matthew, Mark and Luke's accounts of the Gospel are call Syn-optic: one eye. Johns account of the gospel is for those who know the story, a meditation for believers. When John wishes to reflect deeply on the Last Supper, he moves beyond the table into the action of feet washing

Jesus breaking bread Is speaking of his broken body ... Do this in memory of me ... Do what?

Be broken for love, serve humbly, trust all of yourself to God,
Break bread – wash feet ... liturgy and life are one.

Eucharist is not a 40 minute experience ... it's a way of life.

As we break bread and hear the words 'Do this in memory of me', we say with Peter 'then Lord, not just my toes but all of me as well'.

Everything is holy and good when we let God touch it. Jesus wants us to live as his disciples not just on Sunday but on Monday too

... If you wish to understand the body of Christ,
listen to what the apostle says to the believers,
'You are the body of Christ and his members.'



If, therefore, you are the body of Christ and his members,
it is your own mystery that has been placed on the table of the
Lord. It is your own mystery that you receive.

To this which you are ,you respond 'Amen' and in responding,
you accept it.

What you hear is 'the Body of Christ' and to this you respond
'Amen'. So, be a member of Christ's body, that your Amen
may be true.

... Be what you see and accept what you are.



From St Augustine, a Bishop, speaking to new converts about the Eucharist.

Jesus Christ is present in the Body and Blood of Christ, in the Word of God, in the priest
and in the people of God

You, this faith community, is called, consecrated and named as the Body of Christ in this
place and time

So be Christ's hands and feet that your Amen has meaning and purpose.

When you receive the Body of Christ, recognise that you are called to be part of the
Body of Christ ... you are called to be Christ's hands and heart in this local community,
today.

What will the synod

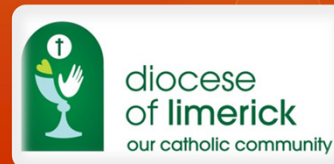
- ... it will mean a call to rediscover the holiness and apostolic challenge that is yours as a disciple of Jesus.
- It is an invitation to wake up in the Body of Christ

The Synod will have to mark a real step forward, indicating a realistic pathway of genuine renewal for all of us who feel faith is important (+BL)

No one should feel a stranger to the Synod process
Gospel, Love, Jesus



Put on your own oxygen mask before helping those around you.



Looking at the statement from Fr Paul again - can you see the personal call to recognise yourself as a disciple – one who loves Jesus and wants to live your life according to his teaching?

Can you see that without this personal conversion – conviction – it would be impossible to invite others to wake up and engage!?

Can you see that you have to 'put on your own oxygen mask first' ... that these months are an invitation to drink deep the words of Bishop Leahys invitation and Fr Pauls speech?

Prepare the way – across Advent, into 2015. Journal as you go – the Acts of the Apostles of Limerick will be written from unlikely sources!

Carries our history



Everybody knows what a parish is. Whether everybody knows what it is meant to be is another matter. Everybody would know a parish if you pointed it out to them, but do we know what a parish is in its essential purpose?

Donal Harrington, The welcoming parish, Chpt 1

People
SC
Place
Sunday Mass

SUPPORT

Builds our future




Second Point: What is a parish – what is it for?

Parish is people and place, but who are the people who make up a parish? How do you know someone is a member?

Parish – start with the people!

Parish means everyone belongs

(Idea from Martin Kennedys writings originally.) Consider who are the people who make up a parish ... they are more varied than you think!!

10% at the centre – the engine of parish. These are the people who become Synod delegates ;-), who support talks, joins rotas and committees. Vital, but can define church membership by committee membership – by those ‘like us’.

40-50% - the backbone of the parish. Mass-goers, candle lighters, the faithful who will rarely be seen in leadership roles but who are committed and consistent members. Take care not to make this group ‘wrong’ for not being the same as the 10%, for the challenge is not to make them like us, but to make sure we are representing and listening well to out fellow parishioners. How do we respect and include those who are Mass going but not members of a committee? Those who light candles but who don’t want to join a rota? Can we ‘be where people are’, recognising their full membership of the parish.

40% - parishioners who occasionally attend. Some parishioners are on the edge, they are with us but only attend sometimes. We meet them at Christmas or at a Baptism perhaps. It is tempting to view these as ‘not really part of us’, but these are also full members of the Body of Christ. Their experience, their gifts and needs, are also vital to this parish. Those at the edge can often offer great wisdom about the experience of trying to stay involved.

Listen to all your brothers and sisters in Christ. All are full members by Baptism. All are part of the Body of Christ

Letting go in order to discover anew ...

- The biggest "emptying out" we have to do will be in recalibrating our understanding of what the church is and what our role within it must be.
- We must look beyond what we have long taken for granted.



Fr Pauls talk again – what assumptions must we let go of (who makes up the parish? The role and purpose of parish? The role of a synod?)
What does that letting go, make room for?!

A series of questions

... that will shape not only the ministry of the diocese, but the life and witness of its people.

- Do you want to be *clients* ... Do you want to be *observers* ... Do you want to continue to be *part-time Christians* ...
- OR Active members of a mutually ministering community ... *agents* ... *full time Christians* ?



The invitation from Fr Paul:

Do you want to be an active member of a *mutually-ministering community* that has the world and its culture in view?

Do you want to be *agents* of a Eucharistic community that together with its priests is constructing a credible sign of Christ-alive?

Do you want to be *full-time Christians* who "preach" at home and at work, in sickness and in health, in duty and in pleasure, always and everywhere?

Risks and rewards ...

- If you do risk for the sake of the gospel, there is every chance that you will taste the delight of shared purpose in a new way; experience the energy and solidarity of faith and love with people you've always known, but never known as committed disciples of Jesus.



The Synod invitation to you...

- ...an invitation to enter a new age of hope, of discovery, a new age of joy and investment, leading to new challenges but also to deeper peace.
- It is a chance for a spiritual freedom that will allow you to rediscover the call of your Lord and Savior and respond from the depths of your own heart with generosity and creativity.



“What will the synod mean for me?”

- The answer of course will be different in each case.
- But for all of us it will mean taking responsibility for the gifts that we have been given and bringing them to life.
- It will mean becoming Christian in the world for the sake of the world.





Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:
May your journey be exciting,
may your goal be always in view,
may your companions on the way bless you
and be blessed by you;
and may the Lord guide your feet and cheer
your heart until the end.



WHAT IS SETTLING IN YOUR HEART?

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