

# Synod Webinar 2023



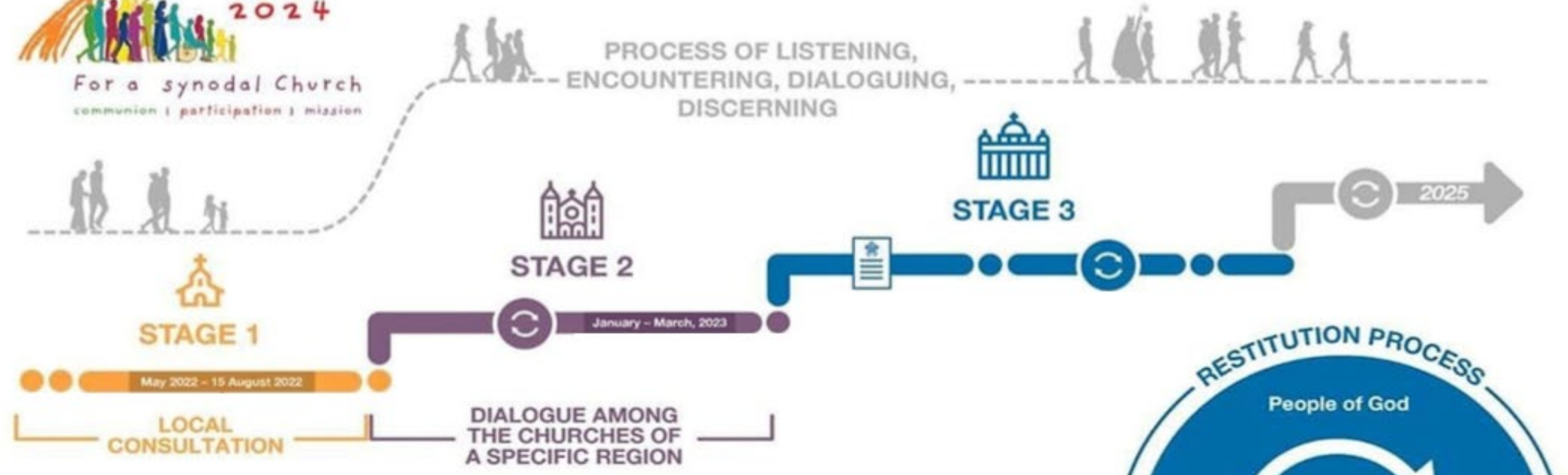
# Introductions and Welcome

- We are in Synod
- Synod is a way of being
- We are now in a new phase – Continental Phase
- 1<sup>st</sup> phase – Diocesan delegates invited to do a circular reading of the Continental document, Diocesan document and National document



# The Synodal Process

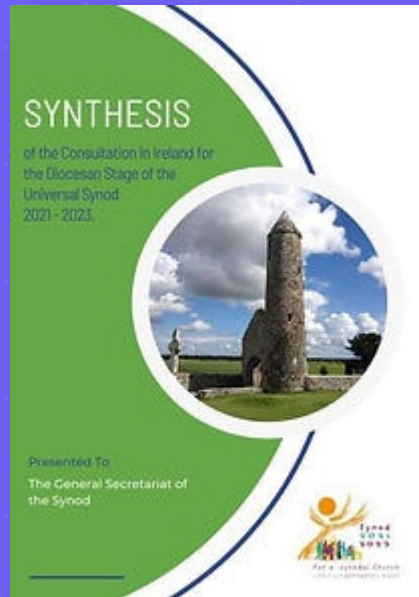
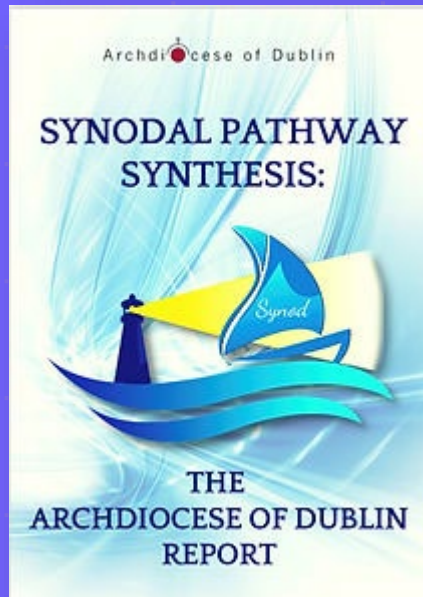
## 2021 - 2024



### ICON INDEX

-  Local churches
-  Bishops Conference
-  Universal Church
-  Document
-  Restitution Process

# Three Reports



Continental Phase reading by the Diocesan Steering Committee:

1. Experiences of the Churches
2. Challenges to address
3. Priorities and calls to action

# What we noticed

## EXPERIENCES OF THE CHURCH

- The abuse crisis in the Catholic Church was emphasised again and again, especially in the national synthesis (and somewhat less in the diocesan report)
- Continuity in the emerging themes is a great surprise. There is a fundamental consistency between the documents.
- There is a strong sense of the Spirit moving in this.
- People affirmed their sense that the Holy Spirit was in the experience and process, even at this early stage.
- Learning how to be co-responsible, two aspects to this based on our common Baptism:
  - 1) the need for a deeper theoretical / theological understanding of this and
  - 2) the need for an updating of Canon Law to permit / support it in practice.

# What we noticed

## EXPERIENCES OF THE CHURCH

- The reports all highlight the need for formation, for both laity and clergy, as well as the need to become synodal in all that we undertake.
- Synodality is named more explicitly as a new way of being Church in the Continental phase less so in the Diocesan phase
- The Isaiah text (*Continental document*) reflects a generous Spirit and openness to all, the image of the tent is very accessible
- The word 'siblinghood' is inclusive and the choice of this word is saying we are trying to put inclusivity into practice
- Convergence
- Clericalism is loudly named as a key issue with regard to growing in synodality

# What we noticed

## CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS

- Abuse is mentioned across all reports but not just in regard to sexual abuse but abusive practices
- Inclusion is called for at all levels, expanding our horizons about who is in the tent and how we can reach out to all
- Young people's voices are often not heard, their gifts not affirmed, a key challenge is to reach out to them.
- The equality of the Baptised and the role of women in the Church are deeply felt and critical in all reports
- Priests participating in the process, some clergy do not see themselves as part of this, there is a real challenge to enable priests to see their role alongside others in this.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 15:4

“Enlarge the space of your tent,  
spread out your tent cloths unsparingly,  
lengthen your ropes  
and make firm your pegs”





# Enlarge

- The image of a tent reminds us of presence and protection
- A tent is a place of gathering and meeting
- A place protecting us from harsh weather
- A place where we can feel safe

*How can we create a bigger space for others to take part in the synodal journey?*

# Spread

- In the desert still today tents are extended by opening the sides and adding more cloth
- The cloths stretch out like curtains creating more space

*Who is feeling included and who is wanting to get in now that the journey has begun?*

# Lengthen

- When the ropes of the tent are lengthened they are held in a strong tension
- This balances the tent and keeps it stable

*What tensions are we now aware of and how can we hold these in balance?*

# Firm up

- When the pegs of the tent are firmed they anchor it firmly
- This holds it all together
- The pegs can always be moved when the tent needs to go to a new area

*How do we value the fundamentals of our faith while being open to new horizons?*

# Enlarging the Tent

Enlarging the tent requires welcoming others into it,  
making room for their diversity.

It entails a willingness to die to self out of love,  
finding oneself again

in and through relationship

with Christ and one's neighbour.

# A call to each of us

“Amen, amen, I say to you,  
unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies,  
it remains just a grain of wheat;  
but if it dies, it produces much fruit”  
(Jn. 12:24).

# Letting go

- What cherished ideas or values might I need to leave behind as we move forward in this synodal journey?
- How am I continuing to allow myself to be changed by this synodal process?
- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit...

# Two threads in Dublin in 2020 -2022

## One Way Ahead



### **Synodal Parish Gatherings 2022**

Connected directly to  
Sharing our experience of Church

### **Building Hope 2021/22**

Connected directly to  
Challenges to address



# What we noticed

## Priorities and calls to action emerging

### At all levels

- Formation about Baptism for all
- Making a commitment to think with the Church on synodality

# What we noticed

## Priorities and calls to action emerging

### CHURCH UNIVERSAL

- The call to update of Canon Law in encouraging and supporting synodality.
- Theological Formation about Baptism
- Many people and groups feel excluded; we need to develop new approaches to include all
- There is an urgent need to develop and promote meaningful roles and ministries for women in the Church; both pastoral roles and decision-making roles with authority and responsibility.

# What we noticed

## Priorities and calls to action emerging

### CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND

- Bishops Conference to act in a synodal way and develop synodal practices
- Formation in leadership
- Accountability at every level
- Women to participate in the formation process for clergy.
- Seek ways to introduce and adopt inclusive language in liturgies and all church documents (eg. early adoption of new lectionary).

# What we noticed

## Priorities and calls to action emerging

### ARCHDIOCESE OF DUBLIN

- Energy around continuing the conversations that are synodal
- Enrich the diocesan pastoral renewal project Building Hope by using and promoting synodal practices
- Bring the mentality that is captured in the Tent image into every parish in the Diocese
- Keep the momentum of synodality going
- Develop Council structures and understanding of being Conciliar, for example Diocesan Pastoral Council

# Priorities and call to action



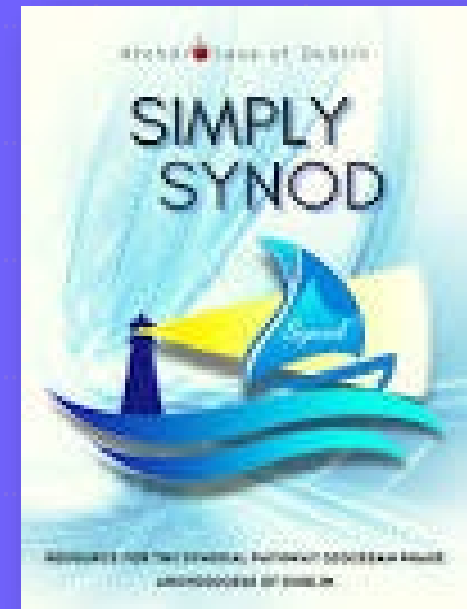
- Keeping in mind the circular reading of the three reports
- Exploring what can be pastorally actioned at parish level
- Aware that we are already in the pastoral phase of Building Hope

# Keep in mind Synodal Principles



## Synodal reading of Building Hope strategic plan

- Read in a group
- Listen to understand
- Notice where God is calling, in an atmosphere of prayer
- Share on what is practically emerging for you
- Name some practical steps that can be actioned at local level and who can do this
- See Simply Synod Booklet Pages 11, 14 – 16,



# PARISH TASK



- In light of Building Hope and our Synodal pathway, what priorities in parish are emerging for us?
- What realistic pastoral actions can we name?