

Reporting back

Once the conversations have happened, it is important that they are written up and submitted through our online portal: <https://northhamptondiocese.org/synodresponses/>. This document gives you an idea of what form the writing-up should take, how to put it together, and what will happen to it once it is submitted.

What form should the feedback take?

The online portal uses the same questions that were offered in the Synod pack with an additional one about the process used. Therefore it would be helpful if your feedback could be grouped according to the questions (eg, “what does it mean to you to be a Catholic?”). Alternatively you can put your whole parish submission into the last question box on the online form. There is no word limit.

What should be included?

The Handbook for the Synod gives this guidance for the diocesan submission:

The diocesan synthesis should reflect the diversity of views and opinions expressed, and pay particular attention to the lived experiences of participants, both positive and negative. The synthesis should be faithful to the people’s voices and to whatever emerged from their discernment and dialogue, rather than a series of generalized or doctrinally correct statements. Points of view that are contrary to one another need not be omitted but can be acknowledged and stated as such. Views should not be excluded simply because they were expressed by a small minority of participants. Indeed, sometimes the perspective of what we could call the “minority report” can be a prophetic witness to what God wants to say to the Church.

Appendix C

This makes it clear that what we are reporting is not minutes and actions, or generalised outlines, but the range of conversations, and making sure that perspectives aren’t lost. It would be helpful to preserve some of the voices and stories told, if appropriate. For example, during our training sessions, one participant said “Our parish is friendly but we aren’t friends”. It might also be helpful to reflect on the 10 Synod themes (see appendix). It’s unlikely that your conversations will have covered all these areas, but they might be helpful codes or headings to organise your report.

Preparing the Submission

Listeners should write up their sessions within a few days using the feedback sheets in the pack. These, together with any individual or group responses passed on from the diocesan portal form the basis of the parish submission.

Ideally the submission should be prepared by a small group including 2-3 listeners, clergy and 1 or 2 others from the parish.

Bring together the feedback sheets and read through them reflectively in advance. Then, at the meeting, the spiritual conversation method can be used again:

- Opening prayer
- A time of silent reflection
- Each person speaks, sharing what they see as the key themes/stories/voices
- Another period of silence, in which we notice how what has been said has impacted us
- A second sharing, moving into conversation once everyone has spoken
- Brief silence
- Agreement on the key themes to be included

It will probably be easier for one person to write up the outcome of the preparation meeting. Once the report has been uploaded, it should be shared locally (eg on the parish website, and with copies available at Mass).

Where does the data go?

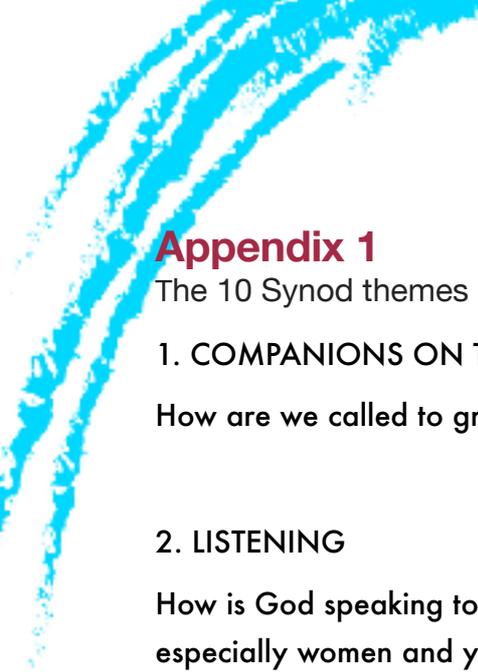
1. All the submissions to the diocesan portal are collected into a database and passed on to the Synod leads, Fr Francis Higgins and Avril Baigent. They will then be read by the Synod team and Bishop David, unless marked confidential. Any safeguarding concerns will be passed to our diocesan Safeguarding Officer.
2. Parish submissions should be submitted through the portal, and published locally.
3. Parish submissions should also go to the Pastoral Area Councils for discussion as part of the Pastoral Area phase.
4. Individuals and groups entering their response directly onto the diocesan portal can choose whether their submission is passed to their parish, or forms part of the wider diocesan data.
5. Only parish, pastoral area and the diocesan submissions will be published.
6. Submissions can also be uploaded directly onto the Vatican website.

What will happen to the diocesan report?

This will go to the Bishops' Conference to form part of the submission from England and Wales. There will be a regional phase for Europe, and finally a global Synod meeting in Rome in October 2023. We can expect a final report from the Synod meeting in Rome, and then a response from the Pope (an "Apostolic Exhortation") in 2024.

However, the diocesan report (like those from the parishes and pastoral areas) will also be used for planning in our diocese and will shape ministry into the future.

If you have any further questions about any of this process, please contact synod@northamptondiocese.org.



Appendix 1

The 10 Synod themes :

1. COMPANIONS ON THE JOURNEY

How are we called to grow as companions? What groups or individuals are left on the margins?

2. LISTENING

How is God speaking to us through voices we sometimes ignore? How are the laity listened to, especially women and young people? What facilitates or inhibits our listening? How well do we listen to those on the peripheries?

3. SPEAKING OUT

What enables or hinders speaking up courageously, candidly, and responsibly in our local Church and in society? When and how do we manage to say what is important to us?

4. CELEBRATION

How do prayer and liturgical celebrations actually inspire and guide our common life and mission in our community? How do they inspire the most important decisions?

5. SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR COMMON MISSION

Since we are all missionary disciples, how is every baptised person called to participate in the mission of the Church? What hinders the baptised from being active in mission? What areas of mission are we neglecting?

6. DIALOGUE IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

What are the places and means of dialogue within our local Church? How do we promote collaboration with neighbouring dioceses, religious communities in the area, lay associations and movements, etc.? How are divergences of vision, or conflicts and difficulties addressed? What particular issues in the Church and society do we need to pay more attention to?

7. ECUMENISM

What relationships does our Church community have with members of other Christian traditions and denominations? What do we share and how do we journey together?

8. AUTHORITY AND PARTICIPATION

How is authority or governance exercised within our local Church? How are teamwork and co-responsibility put into practice? How are evaluations conducted and by whom? How are lay ministries and the responsibility of lay people promoted?

9. DISCERNING AND DECIDING

What methods and processes do we use in decision-making? How can they be improved? How do we promote participation in decision-making within hierarchical structures? Do our decision-making methods help us to listen to the whole People of God?

10. FORMING OURSELVES IN SYNODALITY

How does our church community form people to be more capable of “walking together,” listening to one another, participating in mission, and engaging in dialogue?

(These are taken from the Synod Handbook, section 5.3)

