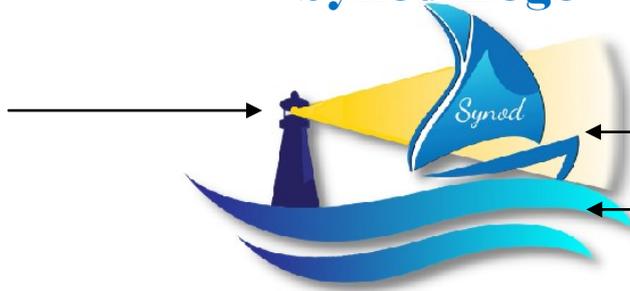


Synod Logo

The guiding Light
of the Holy Spirit



The Boat is
the Church

The Sea
Our own Time

Pope Francis has called the Church throughout the world to follow a path of reflection, discernment and decision for the Church in our time. This path is called **Synod** which means to travel together. Each country, each parish and each person is invited to take this path together. Our Archbishop Dermot Farrell reflects on the history of the church in Ireland

“The Church centred around the monasteries of early medieval Ireland was replaced by the diocesan Church. When one studies the history of the Church in Ireland, there are five discernible historical phases:

1. The Gaelic and Monastic Church. 2. The Anglo-Norman Church. 3. The Reformation and Penal Church. 4. The Post-Emancipation Church. and now....The Church in Contemporary Ireland

In each of these historical phases there was a beginning, a flourishing and a decline. In the words of *Qoheleth*: “there is a season for everything under heaven” (Eccles 3:1). God is the Lord of history. Christ was humble before history. We are foolish and vain if we think we are the lords of history. Such vanity—and its oftentimes dreadful consequences—belongs to the despots and tetrarchs of yesterday and today who dominate and oppress their people.

What remains constant in the midst of all the change?

- **The community**—without which there is no Church; our Christian faith is rooted in our humanity: the Word became flesh and dwells among us. This is at the heart of our faith.
- **The living Tradition**—made life-giving in the Spirit and actualized in the Scriptures. The risen Lord continues to speak to us through the Sacred Scriptures and in the words and witness of those who seek him with a pure heart
- **The Breaking of Bread**—the summit and source of the very life of the Church and of the faithful
- **Prayer**—the lifeblood of the Church’s life, where the Father’s closeness and care, and the fullness of His will are revealed.

What we are experiencing today is a crisis in a particular historical form of Church. The Church, however, is more than any one particular historical form. Since change occurs over a period of years, our generation cannot easily see the contours—not to mention the final form—of what is going to emerge.

However, just as the raindrops on the footpath suggests the imminence of rain, we are surrounded by signs of change that are as profound as they are imminent.”



**During the next months the Path of reflection, discernment
will be opened in our parish community**

Our Lady of Good Counsel Church

09 January 2022

the deep end

This Sunday's Gospel

The Baptism of the Lord

Today's Gospel tells us that the people were 'filled with expectation'. It sounds like a very exciting time as they wonder who this prophet John could be. John must have been a very dynamic and inspiring preacher as the people speculated if he were the one they had been waiting for. He uses all of this attention for one purpose: to point people to Jesus. There are many people in our own lives who have pointed us towards Jesus, perhaps by an invitation to an event or a retreat or by sharing a reflection with us at just the right time. In them, we see something special and interesting that makes us wonder in our hearts and seek a little further. They are the John the Baptists in our lives, pointing us towards the Lord like signposts along the way.

John humbly responds to the people by saying: 'One who is more powerful than I is coming.' He emphasises that it is He who will really set their hearts on fire. While the words concerning 'winnowing forks' seem harsh, we might interpret them as speaking of God's power to transform our lives through Jesus. When Jesus enters into the narrative, Luke emphasises that He is at prayer, and it is then that this powerful experience of God occurs. A nice meditation for today is to repeat the last sentence of today's Gospel, imagining God speaking these words to you: 'You are my Daughter/Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

Parish Link

The Parish Newsletter welcomes notices relevant to the newsletter.

The best way to ensure your notice, is to sent it by email as a word document to johnstownparish@gmail.com

Further information to 01 2351416

Submissions by the Mon before the Sunday

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2022

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Middle East Council of Churches, based in Beirut, Lebanon, is the convener for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2022 .

18th. January to 25th. January

The reflections explore how Christians are called to be a sign to the world of God bringing about unity. This year's theme is "*Justice and only Justice you shall pursue*".

Laudato si' (Praise Be to You) is the second encyclical of Pope Francis. The encyclical has the subtitle "**on care for our common home**"

In Laudato Si, Pope Francis quotes Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew who asks us to replace consumption with sacrifice, greed with generosity, wastefulness with a spirit of sharing, 'an ascetism which entails learning to give, and not simply to give up. It is a way of loving, of moving gradually away from what I want to what God's world needs. It is liberation from fear, greed and compulsion.'

Parish Baptisms

The sacrament of Baptism is Celebrated on the 1st. Sunday of the Month at 12.30 pm.

Please give two months notice so as to secure your desired date and make the necessary preparations.

Call parish office 01 2351416