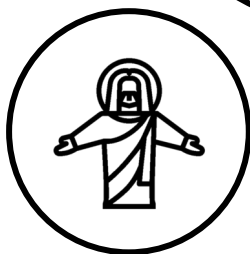


Reflection period on the Synod during the COVID-19 Pandemic



**How God
is speaking
to us through
our present
experience**



**In this Synod leaflet
we reflect on the kind of Church
God is calling us to be
in the light of the changes
COVID-19 has brought to our lives.**



**Scripture
Mark 4:35-41**

‘Even the wind and the sea obey him’

With the coming of evening, Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Let us cross over to the other side.’ And leaving the crowd behind they took him, just as he was, in the boat; and there were other boats with him. Then it began to blow a gale and the waves were breaking into the boat so that it was almost swamped. But he was in the stern, his head on the cushion, asleep.

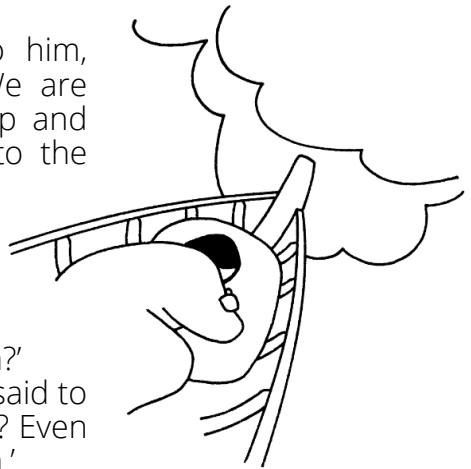
They woke him and said to him, ‘Master, do you not care? We are going down!’ And he woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, ‘Quiet now! Be calm!’

And the wind dropped, and all was calm again.

Then he said to them, ‘Why are you so frightened?

How is it that you have no faith?’

They were filled with awe and said to one another, ‘Who can this be? Even the wind and the sea obey him.’





To ponder

(based on Pope Francis' *Urbi et Orbi* message, 27 March 2020)

- The Gospel begins with the coming of evening: we have been in the evening and in the dark, and find ourselves lost and afraid: is this how you have felt in recent times?
- The disciples say to Jesus: "Do you not care...?" Have you felt like that about a situation, about your family, about God?
- In the Gospel the disciples call on Jesus to wake up: is God calling on us to wake up to something new at this time, to re-evaluate, to re-think what matters, to abandon ourselves to a creative Spirit?
- Jesus calls on us to "have faith". What is the anchor that we need, what gives us firmness and stability?
- Pope Francis says we must have Easter faith: we cannot come to Easter without the Cross. What will Easter faith mean to me in future?
- What new things come to mind that God is calling you to and calling us to as Church?



Reflections from experience

- What has it been like to have time that you didn't expect to have?
- What have you missed most about not being able to go to a church building?
- How have you kept in touch with family, friends, parishioners?
- Has this been an experience that has deepened your faith?
- Fear and anxiety have been very real emotions at this time: how have you managed to keep them in proportion?

Questions that might help you make a further contribution to Synod proposals: you can revisit themes 3 and 4 (how we pray together and building community, nurturing belonging)

- Have bonds of communion been strengthened and have new ways been found to be together as a parish or wider church community?
- Have people been able to be alone and yet be together?
- What has it meant for our home to be our church?
- How is faith to be nurtured at home?
- What can we do to strengthen faith as we go forward?
- What proposals for the Synod would help us to pray together in a world that has now changed?
- Is there something new that we must learn about what it is to be a parish?



Prayer

Loving God,
as we live through these days,
may our hearts and minds be turned towards you.
May we see your face in those with whom we journey.
May we be open to your voice
speaking in the darkness
and turning all things to good.
When the storm gives way to calm
may we be ready to be what you have called us to be.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Your proposal

Having reflected on the situation, how our faith informs us and what needs to be done in order to become the Church God is calling us to be, write your proposal for action and submit it online at www.synod2020.co.uk