

**CATHOLIC LEAMINGTON**

**EXTRA**

**DECEMBER 2021**



For a synodal Church  
communio | participatio | missio

Special Synod edition

# Your Church – Your Voice!

*Shaping the Church for the future*

Pope Francis has called on the whole Church – the people of God – to 'walk together'.

This is a new venture for our Church, and it is because we recognise that the Holy Spirit talks to *everyone and anyone*. The only way we can discover what the Holy Spirit is saying to us, is if we **all** prayerfully share our experiences, hopes, dreams and insights

- and yes, this means **you and me!**

Our parish, like every other parish in the world, will take part in this sharing and listening – and it's not just parishes, but every Catholic community which is involved. We are encouraging **\*\*everyone\*\*** to take part.

## **What does this mean?**

We will be having meetings in the New Year.

### **Before then, please pray!**

- Pray to the Holy Spirit, specifically to inspire our parish and the whole process. There is a Synod prayer, which is given at the end of this article. (By the way – Synod means “walking together”).
- Use your prayer time to ponder one of the 10 areas for reflection (see below), and make notes.

## **What happens next?**

### **Take part!**

- Come to Parish meetings in January and February for the opportunity to discuss experiences and thoughts to help shape the future expression of the Catholic Church.
- Complete a form (available from 11th / 12th December 2021) – and return by 8th / 9th January 2022.

### **Encourage others to take part.**

- Remember, it is for the *whole* Church, not just the church-going congregation, to share hopes and dreams of how the Church should develop in the future. **We do need you.**
- Give a form to anyone who may not be able to get to a meeting, to allow their voice to be heard.

Continued over ...

## **Website Page of the Month**

[OUR NEW PAGE FOR THE SYNOD](http://www.catholicleamington.org.uk/synod)

<http://www.catholicleamington.org.uk/synod>

## Why are we doing this?

Pope Francis writes:

“The Synod experience allows us to walk together not just in spite of our differences but seeking the truth and taking on the richness of the polar tensions at stake. ... What matters most is the harmony that enables us to move forward together on the same path, even with all our shades of difference.

This synodal approach is something our world now needs badly. Rather than seeking confrontation, .... we need processes that allow differences to be expressed, heard, and left to mature in such a way that we can walk together without needing to destroy anyone. This is hard work; it needs patience and commitment – above all to each other.”

*(Pope Francis, Let Us Dream, pages 82-83)*



## Areas for reflection

### Walking Together

- Who are the community that should be walking with us?
- Who used to walk with us but now we don't see?
- How do we welcome them?

### Listening

- How do we listen to each other and make it a 'listening of the heart' not just of issues and topics?
- How do we listen to the signs of the times and respond to them?

### Speaking Out

- What is communication like in our parish and diocese?
- Are we free to speak our minds frankly, but with charity and prudence?
- How do I live out my prophetic vocation given by baptism?

### Celebrating

- How does the liturgy of the Church or my prayer (private or in community) bring me closer to Christ and inspire me to share my faith with others?
- How central is the Eucharist to my life and does it change my relationships outside the Church?

### Co-responsibility in the Church's Mission

- How do I work with the clergy and bishops in the mission Jesus gave to the whole Church, 'Go and make disciples of all nations'?
- What impact does our parish make on the people of Leamington, or further afield?

### Dialogue in Church and Society

- What is our dialogue with other people like within and outside the Church?
- With other Christians, with people of other faiths or of none?
- How can we, as Church, make a unique contribution to the world through dialogue?

### Dialogue with other Christian

#### Denominations

- What relations do we have with our sisters and brothers of other Christian denominations, united with us by one baptism?
- Do we listen to each other as we walk together?
- How do other traditions enrich us, and what do we offer from ours?

### Authority and Participation

- How is authority exercised in our parish and diocese?
- Each one of us is consecrated by baptism as priest, prophet and king; how can we collaborate with others, laity and clergy, in the life of the parish or diocese?
- What are the fruits of this collaboration, and the challenges?

### Discerning and Deciding

- How do we discern *together* where the Holy Spirit is leading us?
- Am I free to exercise my particular ministry and to participate in the common work of discerning and deciding? Do I help the bishops and priests in arriving at their decisions?

### Training ourselves to Walk Together

- How do we educate ourselves, as individuals and as a community, in the spirituality of walking together, listening to one another and discerning what the Holy Spirit is telling us?

# Synod Prayer

We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.  
With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts.  
Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.  
We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.  
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.  
Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life  
and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.  
All this we ask of You who are at work in every place and time,  
in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever  
Amen

## Get in touch:

For more information, check out the webpage (we shall be keeping this up to date with new developments):

[www.catholicLeamington.org.uk/synod](http://www.catholicLeamington.org.uk/synod)

**Email:** [synodleamington@gmail.com](mailto:synodleamington@gmail.com)

**Phone:** 07907 452235

**Write:** Synod Coordinator, St Peter Apostle Church, 3A Dormer Place, Leamington Spa, CV32 5AA

Feel free to get in touch with any ideas or comments you have



## St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) at St Joseph's – What we have been doing in 2021

The SVP would like to thank the parish for their support during a very challenging year. With your donations and support we have

- ◆ Collected and distributed uniforms for local schools
- ◆ Collected for the local foodbank – a special thank you for all your generous donations with this
- ◆ Organised financial support for six single parent families
- ◆ Supported a twin SVP conference in India
- ◆ Organised a Christmas Hampers project along with our SVP brothers at St Peter's and Our Lady's
- ◆ Maintained contact by phone or visits with up to 17 individuals and families

We meet once a fortnight in the Holy Family Room at St Joseph's to pray and organise our work.

We welcome new members to help us. If you would like to find out more, please contact Brian on 01926 613693.

Also, our Society website - [www.svp.org.uk](http://www.svp.org.uk)

## SPAN'S CHRISTMAS VOUCHERS APPEAL

Via your bank to SPAN  
Sort code 40-27-06 Account  
21324004 with reference "Vouchers"  
To Gift Aid this, email  
[michaelbarker77@sky.com](mailto:michaelbarker77@sky.com)

Or by putting cash or cheque in the green envelopes available in all three churches from the weekend of 6th/7th November

Or dropping a cheque to SPAN to  
Michael Barker  
77 Montrose Avenue,  
Leamington Spa, CV32 7DS.  
*Please write 'donation for Christmas supermarket vouchers' on the back of the cheque.*

Or by using our JustGiving page  
<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/spanxmasappeal21>

you can also Gift Aid this donation at the time. Gift Aid or Standing Order Forms can be printed from our webpage <https://www.catholicleamington.org.uk/span>



## **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

**On Sunday 19th**

**December at 7.30**

## **JOY TO THE WORLD.**

St. Peter's choir would like to invite you to a family evening of joyful Christmas Music and Readings. **Free Entry** with a retiring collection for **Zoe's Place Baby Hospice** and **Papyrus prevention of young suicide.**

Each World Gift bought helps those living in poverty and for that reason we don't reduce our prices.



The coronavirus pandemic, combined with the worsening climate crisis, is pushing even more people into poverty. Our charity gifts can bring joy to both those you give them to and the people we work with. Our virtual gifts are waste-free and give opportunities to the most vulnerable people around the world.

**Starting at just £4** and now with a "post direct" option to send a personalised card directly to your loved one, I know there is a perfect gift out there

Wishing you a waste-free Christmas

*Becky*

at CAFOD

[Shop World](#)

[Gifts](#)

## **The Laudato Si Action Platform**

You may or may not be aware that the Pope recently announced in May this year what is called **The Laudato Si Action Platform**, which was officially launched just recently on 14<sup>th</sup> November:

[www.laudatosiactionplatform.org](http://www.laudatosiactionplatform.org)

So, what is this **Laudato Si Action Platform**?

It is an online means to get all of us in the Catholic Church, literally everyone, involved in putting Laudato Si', the Pope's famous Encyclical on Care for Our Common Home, into practice. The Pope wants us all to undergo an '**ecological conversion**', because, he says, "We ... need a new ecological approach, **which transforms our way of living in the world, our lifestyles**, our relationship with the Earth's resources and in general the way we look at people and live our life" to respond to "the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor".

It is designed to address the seven Laudato Si' goals, which are:

- **A response to the cry of the Earth**
- **A response to the cry of the poor**
- **Ecological economics**
- **Adoption of a simple lifestyle**
- **Ecological education**
- **Ecological spirituality**
- **Community commitment**

**When you go to the site, you are invited to [Enrol], which you can do as a Family (or Parish, School, etc), which then gives you access to what the site has to offer. You are asked to make a self-assessment, reflect and then plan what you can do for the future. And it provides plenty of resources and suggested actions, too.**

At first glance, this looks like a very useful tool for us to use in living more sustainably and I'm sure the LiveSimply Parish team will be looking at this to help us live more simply, more sustainably and in solidarity with the poor.  
Brian Austin, LiveSimply Parish

## Christmas 2021 – how shall we enjoy it?

How can we as a *Olive simply* Church community live out our Christian faith this Christmas? How do we resist the rampant consumerism that we see all around us – on screens, in shops, on all the media? Can we avoid all the unnecessary purchases/nice things to have/treats/and deny ourselves and our families – giving instead to charities either at home or abroad? Surely there is such need in many countries including our own that we should concentrate on helping those in need if we can afford to?

Can the planet stand much more of our using mountains of packaging, extra plastic more emissions from deliveries to our doorsteps, Eating more meat? We know the answer in our hearts, but it is hard to exclude all the nice treats and the presents we associate with the season of goodwill and the celebration of the joyous occasion of the birth of our Lord. We want to give presents and express our love to family and friends, so how can we think of doing it in a sustainable way that is kind to our planet and helpful to our brothers and sisters all over the world?

### Here are a few suggestions

**BUY LOCAL** Our local small shops and businesses have suffered much loss of trade during the pandemic. Some were backbones of the community in lockdown, and support to keep them going will be rewarding all round. The market traders are in Leamington on Sundays at the moment and have a range of goods. Farm shops are nearby too and some do deliveries. Their food has a so much smaller carbon footprint when grown locally.



**BUY FAIR TRADE** We may be familiar with the Fair Trade logo – on many food items, but also flowers and gold (should you be feeling generous) and some clothing. Your tea, coffee, bananas, sugar, chocolate (very important) can all be fair trade and you shouldn't have to look far for these – all the supermarkets have some and, if not, ask for them. The Fair trade premium last year sent to farmers and producers was £169 million and this money can be used in communities as they democratically decide. For example – a health centre, training or micro credit scheme. Some producers sell some of their products via Fair trade but not all and they need more buyers.

**BE THAT BUYER.** Traidcraft are working with many of these groups  
<https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/>

**BUY ORGANIC COTTON** This is so much better for the environment – less water and chemicals needed – much kinder to those engaged in its production. **BAMBOO** is also a sustainable material and nice to wear.



**BUY BOOKS** Give a book - always popular and for all ages – want to avoid Amazon?? Support your local bookshop or consider online store for books and DVDs 'Hive' where a proportion of the sale goes to the local shop <https://www.hive.co.uk/>



**BUY ORGANIC FOOD** Better for the soil, pollinators, birds and ultimately us! Yes it is more expensive but buying some organic will help preserve our countryside for the future and in particular our endangered wildlife

[10 Reasons Why Organic Food is Better for You & the Planet - Nature's Path \(naturespath.com\)](https://www.naturespath.com/)

**CUT WASTE** Choose recyclable wrapping paper – cut up old cards for gift tags, make your own cards with the children. Take a bag when shopping, refuse plastic bags, go to shops where they use less packaging



**HOME-MADE GIFTS** Make cakes, biscuits or sweets and package them in old chocolate boxes or biscuit tins with homemade decorations. What about making Christmas decorations from garden foliage?

**BUY PRE-LOVED ITEMS** Shop in charity shops or websites. Using stuff again is a great way to have a retail experience in a sustainable way.



**CHARITY GIFTS - CAFOD WORLD GIFTS** Buy your family that chirpy chicken for another family  
[www.Cafod.org.uk/worldgifts](https://www.Cafod.org.uk/worldgifts)

**AND HAVE A HAPPY AND JOYFUL CHRISTMAS!**

## Pastimes Save the date! Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January!

Pastimes is expecting to resume on 4th of January, requests have been sent to Saint Peters parish office to be able to commence our Tuesday group, to date no answer has been received.

To celebrate various birthdays and Roger's wonderful reception into and his Confirmation as a member of the Church, it is intended that our re opening would be marked by a **special lunch**.

During the difficult and lonely time of closure due to Covid precautions, several of our valued and much-loved members have suffered illness, some have sadly died. We grieve their loss and their suffering.

**We eagerly await confirmation that Pastimes may once again offer the hand of friendship to those needing and enjoying it, commencing on January 4th 2022.**

A happy, peaceful and holy Christmas to all from Pastimes.

Mary Curran, [grannycurran@aol.com](mailto:grannycurran@aol.com)



## COP26

### What was achieved at the Climate Change Conference?

We all know about COP26, don't we? We had COP for breakfast, dinner and tea from 31<sup>st</sup> October through to 12<sup>th</sup> November. The result was a final document, **The Glasgow Climate Pact**, agreed by all 197 countries that were able to attend, that sets out plans for countries to cut emissions by 2030

There were successes. I have written a separate article with more detail that I can let you have if you email me at [b.austin@live.co.uk](mailto:b.austin@live.co.uk). But there were disappointments, too. and I think overall we all felt that in generally it did not go far enough, fast enough or fairly enough. The most alarming result is that, if all the promises made at COP26 are kept, it has been estimated by the International Energy Agency that it would only limit global warming to +1.8C by 2030., not the +1.5C they were all aiming for. Even then, it is debatable whether that would be sufficient to turn the tide.

We were all upset that the richer nations had not met their promise to give \$100 billion a year in climate finance for poorer nations by now, but at least they re-promised to do so again, albeit from 2024. However, CAFOD were pleased that, as well as giving money to adjust to the effects of climate change, they also agreed to provide for compensation for damage already caused, which was a first

And the other 'first' was the inclusion of fossil fuels in the Pact, even if it was watered down from agreeing to phase **down**, rather than to phase them **out**. And what were there 500 delegates from fossil fuel companies doing there? The UK retain their presidency during the coming year up to COP27 and are therefore in an influential position to ensure countries keep their promises and return with more effective targets. However, the Climate Coalition has said that they had heard regularly from MPs this year that they were not feeling the pressure on climate and nature!

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the hard work is only just beginning! We must not lose sight of the fact that the climate crisis is real and that the people of the world need our leaders to take stronger measures to bring the situation under control before we pass the 'tipping point' and it becomes too late

Brian Austin J&P/CAFOD/LiveSimply



## 'Something Greater'

For parishioners of St Peter's and Our Lady's

Thank you to those who have already completed the

**Catholic Leamington Parish Update** form [*we are up to 109 now*]. If you have yet to fill one in, they are at the back of church and can be posted in the boxes provided. It can also be completed from the Catholic Leamington website

The Something Greater Team have been taking follow-up action by contacting those who have indicated an interest where shown. Where you have shown an interest in **Parish Gatherings** please keep an eye open on events in the newsletter but we really need a Social Group to start again, any offers to us please as below

If you have not been contacted from us regarding a particular interest, or have not received a reply, please let us know as some emails just disappear somewhere!

At our Something Greater Team meeting by Zoom on 8<sup>th</sup> November [*see under Evangelisation Team on website*] progress for the Advent retreat on 27<sup>th</sup> November was in hand. We hoped that Coffees and Teas after Sunday Masses and Children's Liturgy would be starting soon. Pastimes is coming back to St Peter's in January

For now the Synod process is getting geared up and our focus will be on that for the coming months. We are thinking of a new name for the group from 2022, perhaps just back to Evangelisation Team?....

### Something Greater Prayer

Loving Father, as Covid restrictions ease, we pray for our '**Something Greater**' initiative.

As we reach out to others, give us the wisdom to know how to communicate in a way that will attract them to our parish community in worship and fellowship. May we be alert to ways of encouraging them in their faith journey

We make this prayer through Our Lord Jesus Christ Your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen

If you do not have a prayer bookmark please pick one up at the back of church

*Your Something Greater Team*

Contact: Peter, [mdimambro@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mdimambro@hotmail.co.uk) 01926 428399



## ADVENT POEM

There is a heaviness permeating our globe,  
and we, it seems,  
are stumbling in this dark place,  
blinded by its shadows and  
longing for a spark of light.  
Even Mother Earth  
senses imminent rape from  
threats of fracking, mining,  
digging, pipe lines, pollution  
and more.  
Grieved  
I ran to the woods  
to hide.  
Where are You, merciful God?  
Where is Your mercy now  
for a broken people  
and a hurting world?

Edwina Gateley

And from the very soil, the trees,  
the air and every living creeping,  
crawling, flying, walking,  
swimming creature  
rose the whisper, thunderous:  
Here.  
Here I am -  
hiding with you...  
Hush.  
Here I am  
We must cuddle together,  
to share our pain  
and we will plot together  
to birth  
new life...

*submitted by Brian Austin*

**EXTRA** is primarily for information that we do not have room for in the weekly newsletter. But we can only publish what you send in; please send notices (up to 250 words) to [catholicleamington.extra@gmail.com](mailto:catholicleamington.extra@gmail.com) by the **end of December** for the January edition. **And we could do with more help with initial preparation in Word!** Let us know if you can help: Brian Austin, Martyn Hathaway (same address as above)