

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
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Feast of St Kevin, Patron, 3rd June 2022

Dear Father, Deacon and members of Parish Pastoral Councils,

On this, the Feast of St Kevin, I am pleased to publish *Synodal Pathway: the Dublin Diocesan Report (Synthesis)*.

Throughout the Diocese almost 13,000 people engaged in 'spiritual conversations' in their parishes about their joys, their sorrows and their hopes for what the Church can be today and in the future. The Synod invitation, to listen deeply to our people, and to walk together in prayer accompanied by the Holy Spirit, was received enthusiastically by most people. It has become clear that respondents valued the opportunity to share and participate in collective discernment. Pope Francis has stressed that the synodal process is not rooted in specific outcomes, but seeks a recasting of the culture of the Church which will bring about reform and renewal of its internal life so that we can more effectively proclaim the Gospel to our communities.

In expressing my heartfelt thanks to the Diocesan Synodal Steering Committee for their creative leadership in leading the Synodal Pathway in the Archdiocese, I also wish to commend them for the quality of the resources provided. In particular, the planning and implementation of training sessions on Zoom and in parish pastoral centres throughout the diocese. 325 animators led synodal conversations across 173 parishes and 19 sessions with focus groups. I wish to thank sincerely all who participated and gave generously of their time and talents in what was clearly an enriching and transformative experience for many.

The publication of the Report marks the completion of the diocesan phase of the Synodal Pathway initiated by Pope Francis. This Diocesan Report has been forwarded to the Irish Bishops' Conference and will contribute to the 'Synod on Synodality' in Rome, in October 2023. Meanwhile, the Irish Church will continue to prepare for a National Synod which will take place in three years' time. This process will continue building the architecture of substantive synodality in the coming years. We have merely completed the first steps of synodality. The challenge now is to sustain the synodal impulse in our Church so that a process of enduring synodality becomes deeply embedded in the hearts and minds of the people of God.

I encourage you to read the Synthesis and to take steps to make it known and available to the people entrusted to your pastoral care. As we approach the Solemnity of Pentecost, we celebrate that the Advocate, God's own Spirit is at work in and amongst us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dermot Farrell', with a cross symbol to the left of the first letter.

+Dermot Farrell
Archbishop of Dublin