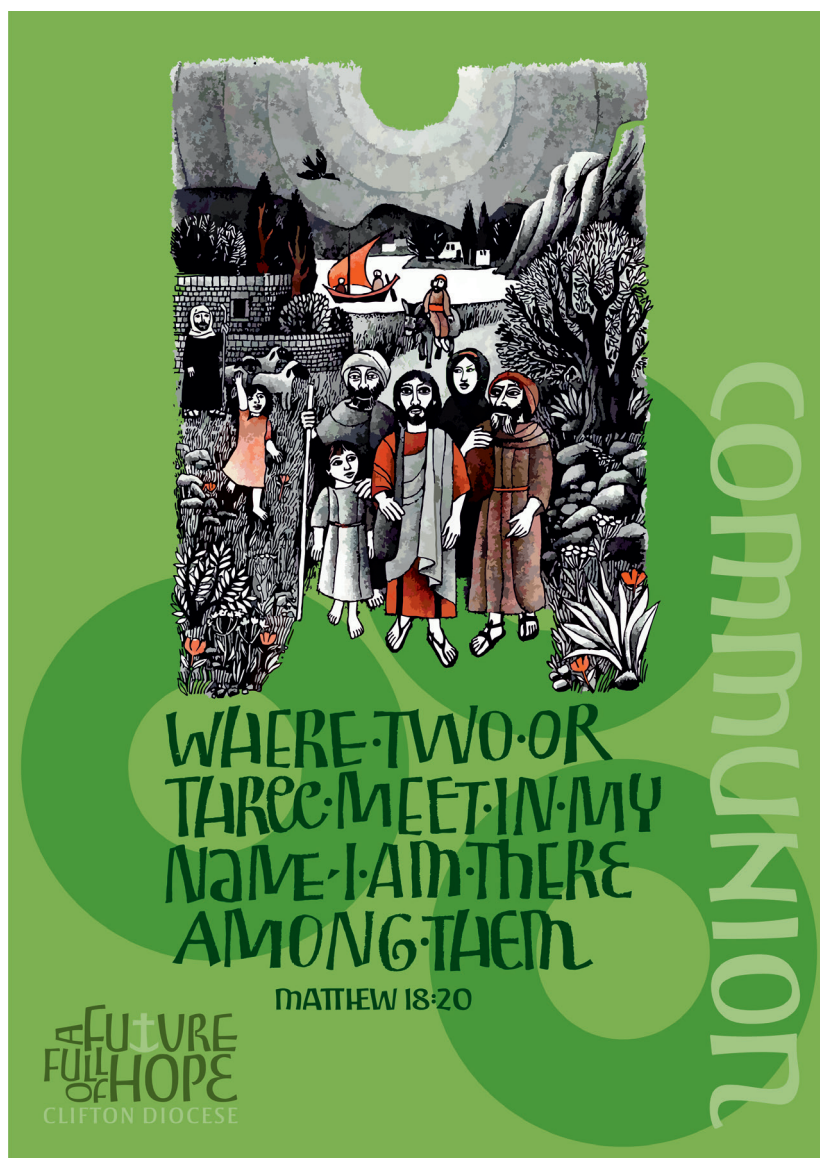


COMMUNION

2019-2020



A FUTURE
FULL OF HOPE
CLIFTON DIOCESE



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Acknowledgements

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OUR BISHOP'S VISION

The Church of Clifton
is called to be a people
who believe in Christ,
who celebrate Christ,
and who live the way of Christ.

The Church is created by God
to live, not for itself,
but for others;
to be a people who share
in the mission of Christ,
to proclaim the Kingdom
and to make disciples
so that the world will be transformed
according to God's plan.

Our Parishes and Communities
should be places
where Christ is celebrated,
shared, proclaimed and lived,
where everyone
is welcomed and valued,
and all have a sense of responsibility
for the life of the community and the world.

We are called to be disciples
who not only know about Jesus
but also come to know him in prayer.
Our liturgies
should be celebrated in such a way
that Christ's word is heard,
his presence known,
and which are so connected to our lives
that we joyfully
take up the command
'Go in peace glorifying the Lord by your life'.

MISSION

COMMUNION

PRAYER





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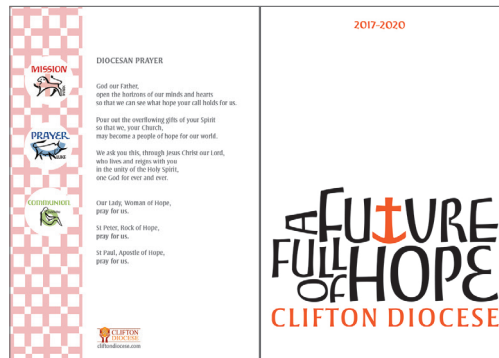
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INTRODUCTION

A Future Full of Hope

This booklet should be read in the light of the document 'A Future Full of Hope' which gives us a roadmap for the three years of Mission, Prayer and Communion. It was presented to the people and communities of our diocese by Bishop Declan on 29 November 2017. It can be downloaded from cliftondiocese.com.



It offers an overview of the three years that will enable us to root ourselves once again in the Bishop's threefold vision of

Mission	2017-18
Prayer	2018-19
Communion	2019-20

The gospels of each liturgical year will accompany us and support us in all that we do so that, Sunday by Sunday, returning to the source, which is Christ and his Gospel, we come to appreciate all that we are being called to be for our world and for others.

St Mark anchors our reflection and our activity in Mission.

St Luke will shape and fashion us in Prayer.

St Matthew will cultivate our sense of Communion.

This third year of these three focuses us on Communion and seeks to unfold the Bishop's vision '**where everyone is welcomed and valued, and all have a sense of responsibility for the life of the community and the world**'.

There are two main parts to this resource:

Part One provides us with reflections on the Year of Communion.

Part Two presents some of the events and liturgies that are taking place in our diocese during this year. There is a guide to how to use this resource and some further reading suggestions.



Message from the bishop

In his encyclical letter 'Laudato Si' – on care for our common home, Pope Francis reminds us that, as members of the human race, we belong to one another as brothers and sisters. The Pope goes on to say that our connectedness is not only amongst ourselves but with the whole of creation of which we are part. Creation has been entrusted to our care to be respected and cherished, not to be exploited for human greed. In God's loving plan of creation every creature has its own value and significance. Creation can only be understood as a gift from God for the common good of all.

As human beings we are made in the image and likeness of God who is community, a communion of persons in love, yet one God. We are made for loving relationships, for community, for communion with God, one another and the whole of creation. We are called to be a holy communion.

In reality, we know that the connectedness between people and with creation has been ruptured by sin. One definition of sin in the Scriptures is 'missing the mark'. We have lost the purpose of what it is to be in relationship with one another and the rest of creation. We have been unfaithful to our original calling. God is always faithful. In his love God has sent his only Son to restore again right relationships. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and Life. The mission of Jesus is to restore communion and bring Peace – Shalom.

The mission of the Church is to share in the mission of Jesus. Through prayer we deepen our understanding of the mission and we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live that mission in the world today. The purpose of the Church is to enable and to create communion – to build bridges and tear down walls of division, hostility, injustice and war. In a society which is often characterised by its animosity, we are called to be peace makers. Peace does not just happen, it has to be created through relationships of justice and truth which bring healing to a broken world.

During the coming year, through the Gospel of St Matthew, we will be reflecting on what it means 'to be in communion'. This is a challenge for parishes, religious communities, schools, organisations, families and curial offices. Who are we 'in communion with' and how can we strengthen those bonds? Who are we not 'in communion with' and what do we need to do to bring about reconciliation? Do we as parishes withdraw from what is often a hostile or indifferent society or do we engage in the wider world for the common good? Do we need to look again at our ecumenical and interfaith relationships? In a world where religion is often seen as a problem what are we doing to show that true faith leads to peace not war?

Every time we celebrate the Eucharist we are participating in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus who brings us into communion with God and the whole of creation. We are a people becoming a holy communion. We pray that God our Father may open the horizons of our minds and hearts so that we can see what hope he offers us as he calls us into communion with the Trinity now in this present life and for life eternal.

Bishop Declan



PART ONE

COMMUNION



Year of Communion 2019-2020

Our Parishes and Communities
should be places
where Christ is celebrated, shared,
proclaimed and lived,
where everyone is welcomed
and valued
and all have a sense of responsibility
for the life of the community and the world.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ (1 Jn 1:1-2a 3).

The Word of God also invites us to recognise that we are a people: “Once you were no people but now you are God’s people” (1 Pt 2:10). To be evangelisers of souls, we need to develop a spiritual taste for being close to people’s lives and to discover that this is itself a source of greater joy. Mission is at once a pattern for Jesus and a passion for his people. When we stand before Jesus crucified, we see the depth of his love which exalts and sustains us, but at the same time, unless we are blind we begin to realise that Jesus’ gaze, burning with love, expands to embrace all his people. We realise once more that he wants to make use of us to draw closer to his beloved people. He takes us from the midst of his people; without this sense of belonging we cannot understand our deepest identity (Evangelii Gaudium 268).

At the beginning of 2017, Bishop Declan wrote a pastoral letter inviting us to ponder the question: what is it to be the Church for our day and our culture? Two additional questions followed: what is God calling me to be and do as a member of the Body of Christ, the Church? What is it for me to be a Catholic today?

During the Year of Mission our focus was to reflect upon the ways in which we can grow in discipleship and so become more actively effective in our mission, especially to the poor and to those on the peripheries of society.

In our Year of Prayer we have focused on the fact that in the work of evangelisation we are entirely dependent on the gift of the Holy Spirit for which we must pray unceasingly.

As we begin our Year of Communion we will focus on a Spirituality of Communion and how we are called and saved, not as individuals but as God’s people. We will build upon existing ways in which parishes collaborate with each other and will encourage the work that has already begun.



From the Gospel of St. Matthew

‘Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field”’ (9:35-36).

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me”’ (25:34-40).

‘You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven’ (5:14-16).



Developing a Spirituality of Communion

Pope St. John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Inuente* (NM), challenges Catholics to develop a Spirituality of Communion:

43. To make the Church the home and the school of communion: that is the great challenge facing us in the millennium which is now beginning, if we wish to be faithful to God's plan and respond to the world's deepest yearnings.

But what does this mean in practice? Here too, our thoughts could run immediately to the action to be undertaken, but that would not be the right impulse to follow. Before making practical plans, we need to promote a spirituality of communion, making it the guiding principle of education wherever individuals and Christians are formed, wherever ministers of the altar, consecrated persons, and pastoral workers are trained, wherever families and communities are being built up. A spirituality of communion indicates above all the heart's contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling in us, and whose light we must also be able to see shining on the face of the brothers and sisters around us. A spirituality of communion also means an ability to think of our brothers and sisters in faith within the profound unity of the Mystical Body, and therefore as "those who are a part of me". This makes us able to share their joys and sufferings, to sense their desires and attend to their needs, to offer them deep and genuine friendship. A spirituality of communion implies also the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God: not only as a gift for the brother or sister who has received it directly, but also as a "gift for me". A spirituality of communion means, finally, to know how to "make room" for our brothers and sisters, bearing "each other's burdens" (Gal 6:2) and resisting the selfish temptations which constantly beset us and provoke competition, careerism, distrust and jealousy. Let us have no illusions: unless we follow this spiritual path, external structures of communion will serve very little purpose. They would become mechanisms without a soul, "masks" of communion rather than its means of expression and growth.

Living out a 'Spirituality of Communion' is a life-long vocation for all Christians. It is fostered and lived out within our homes, parishes and the wider community of our world. We are created in the image and likeness of the Triune God. This is our model for how we are in relationship with one another. We belong to one another in a commitment of love and genuine friendship. This gives us a shared responsibility for ministering and using the gifts of the Body of Christ. A spirituality of communion welcomes all with no deference to ethnicity, educational level, gender or economic strata. A spirituality of communion welcomes cultural diversity as a gift. The theology of communion implies a radical and true equality among all those who share in that relationship (Lumen Gentium 32). Such equality must include a diversity of vocation, role and activity but does not imply that everyone is the same or that everyone is involved in the same activities. It does, however, require us to think about the relationships which people have and how they work together.



Communion means that unity can be found within diversity and that differences can be accepted as enriching and not divisive. To be catholic is to be inclusive and in an increasingly fragmented and divisive world *'the Church's ability to live as a sign of communion and to draw out the implications for human relationships, is vital. A communion of Church is a Church which is inclusive of persons of all kinds, because of their unique personhood. It is a Church in which all are welcome and have a part to play, young and old, those who are disabled, black and white, men and women, rich and poor, lay, ordained, or consecrated. The relationships of communion are the new relationships of Christ, in whom there is no longer 'Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Jesus Christ' (Gal.3:28). To convey this effectively, the symbolic role of its ministry and leadership is very powerful. As many kinds of difference as possible should be represented in some way as a sign of the inclusiveness or catholicity of Church communion.*¹

Communion is a basic biblical theme. Isaiah presents a vision of a great pilgrimage of nations streaming to the house of the Lord to worship and receive instruction (Is.2:1-5). In the event the vision was to be fulfilled, not by the nations coming to Jerusalem, but by the word of God preached to the nations. At Babel, human pride sought to erect a tower to heaven resulting in the confusion of languages (Gen 11:1-9); at Pentecost, the gift of the Spirit revealed a new and lasting basis for the unity of the human family in charity and adherence to the Gospel preached in every tongue to every people and class (Acts 2:1-13).

In some of the parishes of our diocese, Isaiah's vision is being realised in a special way. Believers from multiple ethnic groups, with their different customs and languages, come together in the unity of the one Body of Christ. These parishes are like microcosms of the Universal Church, to which it is intrinsically linked.

Christian Meaning of Communion

Vatican II described the Church as a sacrament of a twofold communion: intimacy with God and the unity of the family (LG 1). A *sacrament*, taken broadly, is a sign and instrument of an invisible grace, that is, a sign instituted by God for the purpose of conferring the grace it signifies. Thus, communion in the Church is an invisible grace served and signified by promises given and fulfilled. The invisible grace is the Spirit's gift of charity, faith and hope, which incorporate a person into the Church not only bodily but also through the heart (cf. LG 14). The visible and hierarchical structure of the Church, its worship and sacramental life, its preaching and teaching, are signs and instruments of the invisible grace. A proper Christian understanding of communion holds together both the invisible and the visible bonds and recognises the different offices, roles and tasks assigned to the various members of Christ's faithful people.²

¹ The Sign we Give, 1995 (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales)

² cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, On Some Aspects of the Church understood as Communion, 28 May 1992



A People in Communion with the Trinity

The Church is “a people made one by the unity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” (LG 4). The vocation of the Church is to be both the sign and the instrument of intimacy with God and the communion of the whole human family (LG 1). This is true, not only of the universal Church throughout the world, but also of the local Church in the Diocese of Clifton. The Year of Communion invites us to make a commitment to a spirituality of communion described in *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, n43:

A spirituality of communion indicates above all the heart's contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling in us, and whose light we must also be able to see shining on the face of the brothers and sisters around us. A spirituality of communion also means an ability to think of our brothers and sisters in faith within the profound unity of the Mystical Body, and therefore as “those who are a part of me”. This makes us able to share their joys and sufferings, to sense their desires and attend to their needs, to offer them deep and genuine friendship. A spirituality of communion implies also the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God: not only as a gift for the brother or sister who has received it directly, but also as a “gift for me” (NMI n43).

In Christ, the Incarnate Word, the eternal love of God the Father for God the Son is extended to all those who belong to him. The love of God is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us (Rom 5:5). In the Trinity each person lives not for him or herself but for the others. So, too, Christ came among us and lived and died not for himself, but for others, in order to make us his friends. His command to us is that we should love one another as he has loved us (Jn 15:12ff), that we should be one as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one (cf. Jn 17:11, 20ff; LG4).

As Christians we are called to give ourselves to one another, to love, no longer for ourselves but for Christ and for all those who belong to him. This deep connectedness means “*If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it*” (1 Cor. 12:26). Everyone is called to unity of Christ's Church, because the Saviour came to draw all people to himself. (LG 13) At the same time a spirituality of communion is also a spirit of ecumenical generosity. We are called to recognise where Christ is at work beyond the boundaries of the Church and to engage with those of other faiths and none.

In the Church, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. We may consistently receive messages which can lead us to a mentality of scarcity, but as a Church we are called to live out of a mentality of abundance: “*I came that you may have life, and have it to the full*” (Jn 10:10).

‘Let us have no illusions: unless we follow this spiritual path, external structures of communion will serve very little purpose. They would become mechanisms without a soul, “masks” of communion rather than its means of expression and growth’ (NMI n.43).



A Spirituality of Communion – the Domestic Church

Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony, whereby they signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church, help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children. By reason of their state and rank in life they have their own special gift among the people of God. From the wedlock of Christians there comes the family, in which new citizens of human society are born, who by the grace of the Holy Spirit received in baptism are made children of God, thus perpetuating the people of God through the centuries. The family is, so to speak, the domestic church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children; they should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them, fostering with special care vocation to a sacred state (LG 11).

This quote from *Lumen Gentium* highlights the significance of the family. The family is the domestic church. Family, in this context, does not mean simply any group of people but an intimate group, bound together for life by blood, marriage, or adoption. Single people are also part of the domestic church as they also have families and are involved in the needs and concerns of their own family members.

Formation in the spirituality of communion begins in the family. The sacrament of marriage embodies the meaning of a spirituality of communion and its grace bears fruit in the sustained self-giving of family life. It is through the family that vocations to priesthood, religious life and the lay apostolate are fostered.

*‘It is here that the father of the family, the mother, the children, and all members of the family exercise the priesthood of the baptised in a privileged way “by the sacraments, prayer and thanksgiving, the witness of a holy life, and self-denial and active charity” (LG 10). Thus the home is to be the first school of Christian life and ‘a school for human enrichment’ (Gaudium et Spes 52:1). Here one learns endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, generous – even repeated – forgiveness, and above all divine worship in prayer and the offering of one’s life’.*³

At the same time, it is recognised that family life is rarely perfect. Parents and children struggle with many demands made upon them from work, school, financial worries, sickness, to name just a few. Sometimes the pressures are so great that families can feel at a loss, fearful of the future and an overwhelming sense of failure. How then do they also uphold the expectations placed upon them to be the first teachers of the faith? In today’s frenetic and often confusing world, families need support, particularly from the Church, if they are to live out their vocation to be at the service of communion.

Growth in faith is a life journey which engages the whole person. Adolescence and young adulthood are a crucial time in that journey for asking questions and searching for truth and identity. The Church is challenged to foster in young people a sense of Catholic wisdom and identity that will provide a guiding direction for the rest of their lives. Moral and spiritual growth begins in childhood and continues through the young adult years and beyond.



This development does not happen in isolation from other groups within the parish or deanery but as part of a holistic approach to living a spirituality of communion.

Young people need to be nurtured in developing a sense of self-worth, understanding that they are created and loved by God, who has a plan for them. As a faith community we assist this through prayer and example and providing solid foundations for character and moral development.

A Spirituality of Communion - Multiculturalism as a Gift

In several parishes of our diocese, one of the distinctive opportunities is the co-existence of many different cultures within the community. Within the wider society there are currents in the culture that are afraid of diversity because they worry about the erosion of cultural cohesion and can be fearful of difference. At the same time there are many who celebrate diversity and embrace the opportunity to learn from and be alongside others.

The Church is called to be a sign and instrument of the unity of the human family. It is united around the table of the Lord, even when the broader society is divided. As a diocese we are called to recognise and incarnate a distinctively Christian meaning of communion in diversity. The Church deliberately takes up and encourages the riches, resources and customs of people in so far as they are good. The People of God is not only gathered together from diverse peoples, but within itself is made up of the union of different orders (cf. LG 13). Different members have different gifts, roles and tasks. Different parishes will bring different riches and different experiences to the unity of the one local Church.

St. Pope John Paul II reminded us that we are called to see every that every person is created in the image of God and we are called to love as God loves.

'In the light of faith, solidarity seeks to go beyond itself, to take on the specifically Christian dimension of total gratuity, forgiveness and reconciliation. One's neighbour is then not only a human being with his or her own rights and a fundamental equality with everyone else, but becomes the living image of God the Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and placed under the permanent action of the Holy Spirit. One's neighbour must therefore be loved, even if an enemy, with the same love with which the Lord loves him or her; and for that person's sake one must be ready for sacrifice, even the ultimate one: to lay down one's life for the brethren'.⁴

St Paul says that we are not to make distinctions between people. He writes: *'You are all of you, sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ. All baptised in Christ, you have clothed yourselves in Christ, and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus'* (Gal 3:26-28).



A Spirituality of Communion – the gift of ecumenism

*‘Today, in many parts of the world, under the inspiring grace of the Holy Spirit, many efforts are being made in prayer, word and action to attain that fullness of unity which Jesus Christ desires. The Sacred Council exhorts all the Catholic faithful to recognise the signs of the times and to take an active and intelligent part in the work of ecumenism’.*⁵

It is not uncommon to hear Christians saying of each other, ‘*what unites us is much greater than what divides us.*’ In 1964, the Second Vatican Council gave us the Decree on Ecumenism ‘Unitatis Redintegratio’. In it we learn that the Holy Spirit calls us to be ecumenical, to devote ourselves to it in a particular way. Division hurts us all, especially when it comes to evangelisation. It is not easy to show others that Christ came to redeem the whole world when Christians cannot seem to agree on what that means. By our common baptism and the Holy Spirit, Christians are in communion with one another, albeit imperfectly.

Walking this journey together requires us to dialogue honestly, participate in serving others and take time to reflect. We are urged by the Church to pro-actively engage with other Christians and to remember that our example is our best witness. Whilst we may differ in, more or less serious, ways all Christian communities, of whatever denomination, share a belief in Christ as the Son of God and have a reverence for Sacred Scripture, both basic components for unity. Baptism remains a sacramental bond orientated toward full communion in the Eucharist. In our daily lives, many of the things we do - prayer, community worship, family life, bible study as well as shared principles such as justice and charity - bear witness to our communion.

When, as Christians, we rediscover together the mystery and spiritual riches of our baptism, we can grow closer to Jesus Christ and to one another, we become more aware of our common vocation.



⁵ Unitatis Redintegratio – Decree on Ecumenism 4, 1964

A Spirituality of Communion – Interfaith Dialogue

*‘The Catholic Church is conscious of the importance of promoting friendship and respect between men and women of different religious traditions – I want to repeat this: promoting friendship and respect between men and women of different religious traditions – a sign of this can be seen in the important work carried out by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue’.*⁶

In the same way that many of the parishes of our diocese are enriched by the presence of variety of different cultures, our whole diocese exists within the context of a pluralist society. Daily we rub shoulders with people of different faiths and religious traditions. Christians, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Buddhists among many world religions, make up the rich tapestry of communities in our society. As Catholic Christians striving to live a spirituality of communion, we have a responsibility to dialogue and collaborate with the followers of other religions.⁷

In a spirit of love and prudence the Church exhorts us to *‘recognise, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values’*⁸ which are to be found among the people of different religions.

As we do with other Christians, we are impelled to dialogue, to discover ways of relating and living alongside those of different religious traditions with a generosity of heart and an open mind. We are urged to promote mutual understanding, respect and collaboration between Catholics and the followers of other religious traditions. It is essential that we study other world religions and promote the formation of people dedicated to interfaith dialogue.

*“As experience has shown, for (inter-religious) dialogue and encounter to be effective, it must be grounded in a full and forthright presentation of our respective convictions. Certainly, such dialogue will accentuate how varied our beliefs, traditions and practices are. But if we are honest in presenting our convictions, we will be able to see more clearly what we hold in common. New avenues will be opened for mutual esteem, cooperation and indeed friendship....For the sake of peace, religious beliefs must never be allowed to be abused in the cause of violence and war. We must be clear and unequivocal in challenging our communities to live fully the tenets of peace and coexistence found in each religion, and to denounce acts of violence when they are committed”.*⁹

6 Pope Francis audience with representatives of the churches & ecclesial communities and of the different religions, 20 March 2013

7 Nostra Aetate – Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions – Pope Paul VI, 1965

8 Ibid 2

9 Pope Francis on Interfaith dialogue – meeting at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall, January 2015



A Spirituality of Communion – Care for our Common World

“We cannot help but admire the beauty and harmony that exists in all of creation; that is the gift that God has given us that we may find him and contemplate him through his work”.¹⁰

Pope Francis’ long awaited ‘Laudato Si’ continues and significantly develops the tradition that St. John Paul II and Pope Emeritis Benedict VI established in their own pontificates. All three Popes call us to broaden our understanding of how we live in communion, not simply with one another, building up community between peoples and nations across the face of the earth, but how we deepen – through communion with others – our communion with God lived out, also, within a communion with the whole of creation. Pope Francis calls us to consider an “authentic human ecology,” which can help restore “the original balance of creation between the human person and the entire universe”.

‘In his Encyclical Letter Centesimus Annus, Pope John Paul II wrote: “Not only has God given the earth to man, who must use it with respect for the original good purpose for which it was given to him, but man too is God’s gift to man. He must therefore respect the natural and moral structure with which he has been endowed”. By responding to this charge, entrusted to them by the Creator, men and women can join in bringing about a world of peace. Alongside the ecology of nature, there exists what can be called a “human” ecology, which in turn demands a “social” ecology. All this means that humanity, if it truly desires peace, must be increasingly conscious of the links between natural ecology, or respect for nature, and human ecology. Experience shows that disregard for the environment always harms human coexistence, and vice versa. It becomes more and more evident that there is an inseparable link between peace with creation and peace among men. Both of these presuppose peace with God’.¹¹

What we see in Pope Benedict’s words is an interplay between our care for our world and creation as well as upholding the dignity a respect of others. We cannot, it seems, say that we have a care for creation and ignore a care for others; nor can we truly say we care about others if we continue to exploit and abuse the created world. When we have a care for both then we will find a peace and a harmony that reveals something of God’s intention for our world. Communion is found when we allow the loving intention of the Creator to be refashioned in us through our care for the created world and truly care for one another. ‘A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings.’¹² Creation is God’s gift to us and we – humanity – are the gift of God to one another.

As Pope Francis reflects: ‘Authentic human development has a moral character. It presumes full respect for the human person, but it must also be concerned for the world around us and “take into account the nature of each being and of its mutual connection in an ordered system”. Accordingly, our human ability to transform reality must proceed in line with God’s original gift of all that is’.¹³ Our mission as the Church is always to bring people to encounter the person of Jesus who is an effective sign of the unity of the whole of humanity and the whole of creation. It is a mission which we hold alongside our brothers and sisters of other Christian communities as well as those who belong to other faiths. The care for our common home is a common concern.

¹⁰ Pope Francis, America in Dialogue – Our Common Home, September 2016

¹¹ Pope Benedict XVI - Message for World Day of Prayer for Peace, 2007

¹² Pope Francis Encyclical letter Laudato Si - On Care for our Common Home 91

¹³ Ibid 5



Living in Communion – Sharing in our responsibility as Parishes for Mission

In his message for World Mission Day 2019, Pope Francis reminds us that every baptised person is called to mission. He says, “People in love never stand still: they are drawn out of themselves; they are attracted and attract others in turn; they give themselves to others and build relationships which are life giving. As far as God’s love concerned, no one is useless or insignificant. Each of us is a mission to the world, for each of us is the fruit of God’s love”.

To be at the service of communion we are called to move away from individualism and live authentic lives which embrace those around us and beyond. In the words of Jean Vanier:

*“Communities must never cut off from one another, forming little ghettos of self-sufficiency, wrapped up in their own affairs. We must be like the bees, going out from the hive, the community, far and wide to scattered flowers, each one uniquely giving glory to God. We must join hands with one another. We need each other. We need to confirm and encourage each other, pray for each other”.*¹⁴

In 2009, Pope Benedict addressed a pastoral convention in Rome on the theme: ‘Church Membership and Pastoral Co-responsibility’. In that address he called for all members of the Church to recognise a ‘pastoral co-responsibility, which in Christ’s name we are called to exercise’.

The concept of ‘pastoral co-responsibility’ is understood within a hierarchal structure of the Church and the authentic meaning of Christian communion. The ministerial and baptismal priesthoods are two different kinds of participation in one priesthood of Christ. The two are intrinsically linked. To be baptised in Christ is to be joined in the communion of the Church which is a visible and hierarchically ordered body. Those ordained to the ministerial priesthood receive a power and office for the sake of the baptismal priesthood: to lead, to govern, form and sanctify the faithful of Christ and to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice in the person of Christ the Head. It is essential that the ministerial priest, as part of his role, empowers the faithful to the fulfilment of their vocations which are priestly, prophetic and kingly (cf. LG11).

Pope Benedict makes clear that pastoral co-responsibility is in fact the fulfilment of the ecclesiological vision of Vatican II:

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the Church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills, (1 Cor 12:11) He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit”. These charisms, whether they be the more outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the Church (LG 12).

¹⁴ The Broken Body – Jean Vanier Darton Lonman Todd, 1988 p.132



Every Christian is given gifts for the common good of the Church and the world. The mission of the parish is a shared mission for which every member of the parish has been endowed with particular gifts and is called to take a personal share of responsibility. The concept of pastoral co-responsibility poses important questions and carries important implications for our diocese. In the first place it raises the same questions Pope Benedict XVI posed in Rome; *“To what extent is the pastoral co-responsibility of all, and particularly of the laity, recognised and encouraged?”* We might also ask ourselves: do we have a mentality of scarcity dominated by the decreasing numbers of clergy and religious or do we have a mentality of abundance that recognises the lavish gifts of the Spirit? Without diminishing our sense of urgency about priestly and religious vocations are we nevertheless open to the ways in which every baptised member of the church, ordained or not, is being called to serve the Church?

Pastoral co-responsibility is not about changing current structures. It calls for a shared ownership and a change in mentality. The mission of the parish is the mission not just of the clergy but of every Catholic in the parish / deanery / diocese. As Pope Benedict explained to his local Church:

*It is necessary to improve pastoral structures in such a way that the co-responsibility of all the members of the People of God in their entirety is gradually promoted, with respect for vocations and for the respective roles of the consecrated and of lay people. This demands a change in mindset, particularly concerning lay people. They must no longer be viewed as “collaborators” of the clergy but truly recognized as “co-responsible”, for the Church’s being and action, thereby fostering the consolidation of a mature and committed laity. This common awareness of being a Church of all the baptised in no way diminishes the responsibility of parish priests. It is precisely your task, dear parish priests, to nurture the spiritual and apostolic growth of those who are already committed to working hard in the parishes.*¹⁵

The co-responsibility of clergy, religious and laity envisioned by Pope Benedict presupposes serious efforts towards formation. In particular, there is a need, on all sides, for an intentional ecclesiological formation focused on the authentic meaning of communion in the Church.

Empowering and forming parents, families and young people will need to be an important focus for co-responsible ministering parishes. In families, the spirituality of communion is learned through intimate shared experience. The family is the school of mutual concern, providing a context for personal development and a commitment to ongoing growth.

When working well and thriving our parishes are inviting places where cultural and generational differences are welcomed as gift. They are places where love is shown and are examples of how the Body of Christ, the community of believers, is intended to be. Thriving parishes seek the common good with a common mission in mind. Parishioners reach out to the marginalized and forgotten with love and faith. Parish growth is enhanced by engaging young people in the life of the parish. In the parish the concern is not about me but about us. Parishes with this vision work with one another to share talents, facilities and human and other resources. Parishes come together and work as one local church (deanery or diocese).

¹⁵ Opening of the Pastoral Convention of the Diocese of Rome on the theme: “Church Membership and Pastoral Co-responsibility” {Address of His Holiness Benedict XIV}, 26 May 2009



This is seen in the way that groups of parishes with one priest are increasingly sharing with one another. Deaneries are coming together to reflect on how they can collaborate with one another so that ministries, sacramental preparation and other resources can be shared. The common goal in mind is the building of the Kingdom of God and proclaiming the good news of the Gospel.

*“I dream of a ‘missionary option’, that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation of today’s world rather than for her self-preservation”.*¹⁶

*“In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptised, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelisation”.*¹⁷

Questions for Reflection

Having reflected upon what it means to embrace a spirituality of communion, what does our understanding mean for the future of our Diocese?

The following questions are challenging but essential if we are to move forward in this Year of Communion.

1. In the early Church communities gathered once a week for Eucharist. In the future what would it mean for your parish if you only had one Sunday Mass at the weekend?
2. If we are to be a Church of communion what needs to change in our parishes?
3. Does our parish have a mentality of scarcity or a mentality of abundance?
4. What am I prepared to do to ensure that our parish, our deanery and our diocese work together to build the Kingdom of God, proclaiming the good news of the Gospel and witnessing to a genuine spirituality of communion?

¹⁶ Evangelii Gaudium 27

¹⁷ Ibid 120



EMBRACING A SPIRITUALITY OF COMMUNION

There are a variety of needs and approaches to enabling our parishes to embrace a spirituality of communion. What follows are some key areas with questions for reflection and action.

Forming the Faithful in a Spirituality of Communion

The concept of a spirituality of communion is embedded in Pope St. John Paul II's apostolic letter '*Novo Millennio Ineunte* n.43' yet many Catholics are not aware of what a spirituality of communion is or what it entails.

- How do we help parishioners to actively engage with and practice a spirituality of communion?
- What avenues already exist that can be used to educate and form all parishioners in a spirituality of communion?
- What resources are needed to support this objective?

A space for parish reflections.....



Engaging Parishioners in the life of the parish

Every Catholic should have the opportunity to have the full experience of faith which enables God to be the centre of their lives. Living a spirituality of communion is not just about prayers and words but about actions and deeds which demonstrate our love of God and one another.

- How can members of our parish be encouraged to use their unique gifts and talents in service of the Church?
- How might we identify and register the skills that parishioners are willing to share?
- How might we better recognise ministries so that parishioners are more aware of existing opportunities?

A space for parish reflections.....



Stimulating the whole community to create a welcoming and accessible environment for hospitality and evangelisation

“I dream of a ‘missionary option’, that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation of today’s world rather than for her self-preservation”.

Our mission is to reach out to the entire Catholic population, active and inactive, as well as to other faiths and those of no faith. To live this we need to foster an engaging and empowering environment where all parishioners are co-responsible for creating a welcoming, loving environment.

- How can we enhance or develop hospitality initiatives that go beyond handing out a hymn book as people arrive for Mass?
- In what ways do we reach out to ‘inactive’ parishioners?

A space for parish reflections.....



Evaluating, developing and preparing liturgical and spiritual opportunities that promote individual spiritual growth while facilitating a full and active participation by the faithful in the celebration of the liturgy

The depth of our Catholic tradition with its extraordinary depth and breadth of prayer and liturgy cannot be underestimated. One essential aspect of that tradition is a Trinitarian spirituality. A spirituality of communion draws on the relationship of three Persons in one God – the Holy Trinity. Each parish is called to assist parishioners in that contemplation of the Trinity dwelling within us.

- What are our parish's strengths in promoting personal prayer and celebrating the liturgy so that it is a rich, inviting and uplifting experience for all?
- How well do we engage Catholics, in each age group, in this rich experience of the liturgy (children, youth, single adults, married couples, seniors)?
- Does the parish offer different opportunities (e.g. retreats) in providing for growth in the spiritual life?
- How does one priest looking after three parishes celebrate major liturgical feasts such as the Triduum and Christmas Midnight Mass? What resources might be needed to ensure that the integrity of each celebration is not diminished.

A space for parish reflections.....



Responding to the growing intercultural reality of our parishes

Increasingly, the ethnic profile of our parishes is changing, and we now welcome a diversity of cultural groups. How do we strive to create an awareness and appreciation of the cultural and ethnic diversity within our Catholic family? How do we ensure that they are not excluded from parish activity?

- In what ways can our parish benefit from engaging groups from multiple cultures within our parish and our deanery/diocese?
- Do our ministries and leadership reflect the interests and cultural make-up of our parish?
- Have we identified the needs of different cultural groups in our parish?
- Do we recognise that we have something to learn and gain from having a variety of cultural groups within our parish?

A space for parish reflections.....



Engaging with other parishes within our deanery

As many parishes come to share one priest, building a collaborative relationship with the other parishes will be key to fostering growth and dialogue. Inter-parish/deanery activities and programmes and resource sharing builds communion and builds vibrant centres of faith. To achieve this, we will need to encourage the laity to better assist the clergy to review current events and strategies to determine strengths and opportunities for improvement.

- What does our parish do well that we could offer to share with other parishes?
- In what ways can our parish council share ideas and successes with other councils and at deanery level?
- In what areas would our parishioners benefit from sharing resources with another parish?

A space for parish reflections.....



Life-long Adult formation responding to the various life stages of the parish adult community

Each parish community is composed of people in various age groups and differing life stages that impact on their capacity to participate fully in the formation opportunities offered by the parish. Access issues include limited transportation, physical barriers in parish buildings, being house-bound or having a disability. Identifying, recognising, planning for and responding to the various needs is the responsibility of the whole parish community.

- Has the parish accessed the breadth and scope of current adult formation opportunities?
- How does the parish determine the adult formation needs of all parishioners?
- Are location, time and accessibility given consideration when offering formation activities?

A space for parish reflections.....



Assisting Parents in nurturing the spiritual development of their children

The Catholic Church considers parents to be the chief catechists for their children, partnering with others in the family and faith community. (See Code of Canon Law 774-2).

The role of the parish is to support parents and the family at the time of sacramental initiation and Eucharistic celebrations as well as to provide on-going formation opportunities and tools. Encouraging parents to participate in ongoing faith formation and prayer as a model to their family is also important.

- Which parish activities already involve parents and how can we use these by offering resources to parents at those moments when they are ready to be involved?
- What resources are offered by the parish to assist parents in their homes as they teach their children to become disciples of Christ?
- How do we support parents in growing in their own faith when they are already busy raising their children?
- How do we support families who are struggling with everyday life? What opportunities are available to parents to talk and be listened to when they are in crisis?
- What support do we offer to families when there is break-down?

A space for parish reflections.....



Ensuring a vibrant and comprehensive youth ministry

A comprehensive approach to youth ministry is a balanced mix of catechetical programmes, events and strategies that address the components in '*Called Equipped Sent – a Vision for Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Clifton*'.

A comprehensive youth ministry adopts a variety of approaches that are intended to address the changing needs and life situations of all young people (in particular those aged 11-19) of the parish.

- To what degree are we as a parish engaging with the diocesan vision for youth ministry?
- Does our current youth ministry address every age group or is there one group which is given more attention than others?
- Are our youth ministry activities responsive to the cultural demographics of the parish?
- What formation needs will a group of parishes have to fulfil their commitment to the young people of every parish?

A space for parish reflections.....



Embracing Others - Ecumenism

The key element of ecumenism is the “Churches Together” approach to being united in faith. This is a commitment by each church and denomination to deepen fellowship with others without losing what makes each different. The aim is to work towards a greater visible unity. This works at a local, regional and national level. In our diocese, *‘Churches Together in England’ has been established to enable the Churches in England to deepen their communion with Christ and with one another and proclaim the Gospel together by common witness and service’.*¹⁸

- In our own parish what are the relationships we share with our Christian brothers and sisters?
- What actions are we taking to enhance and grow our sense of communion with churches of other denominations?
- As a parish how do we welcome people of other Christian communities?
- What services and events do we share with the local Christian churches e.g. prayer times, bible study, specific liturgical seasons?

A space for parish reflections.....



¹⁸ <https://cliftondiocese.com/departments/services-and-commissions/dialouge-and-unity/>

Embracing Others – Interfaith Dialogue

“In dialogue [with other religions] we must not be surprised, but actually expect to find God already there, and that Christ has gone before us.” All Catholics are called to dialogue by their baptism, and continue Jesus’ work of love and healing when they follow this call. We believe that, in our times, interreligious engagement is essential.”¹⁹

Our Diocesan Commission for Dialogue and Unity works steadfastly with the aim of realising the Church’s mission to enter into dialogue with those of other faiths in order to promote peace, justice and goodwill within our communities and beyond. We live in a diverse diocese, covering urban and rural areas in the three counties of Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire as well as Bristol. Although in our urban areas there is some awareness of the need for this mission, there continues to be a need to raise greater awareness in other parts of our diocese. Not only do we need to be aware of this mission but we are actively encouraged to cooperate and dialogue with people of other faiths to promote justice and good will in our communities and beyond. Truly living a spirituality of communion requires of us that we see every person as our brother or sister, created in the image and likeness of God.

- What, as a parish, is our understanding of the mission for interfaith dialogue?
- What barriers do we experience or put up to avoid engaging with people of other faiths?
- Do we have a tendency as a parish to see the work of interfaith dialogue as the role of the Justice and Peace group?
- In this Year of Communion what are we willing to commit to doing which will foster conversation and engagement with local communities of other faiths?

A space for parish reflections.....



¹⁹ <http://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/the-church/catholic-bishops-conference-of-england-and-wales/departments/dialogue-and-unity/>



2019-2020



PART TWO

COMMUNION



RESOURCES

A Future Full of Hope: Communion - a resource for parish conversation

This resource has been designed to enable parishes, communities and individuals to reflect upon the call to evangelise as we encounter the Lord in our personal and communal lives, family, parish and the wider world. Reflecting on what it means to live in communion with God and with one another, we explore what it means to be parishes and communities where 'Christ is celebrated, shared, proclaimed and lived.' This resource seeks to provide food for our diocesan community to reflect upon and deepen our understanding of what it means to welcome, value and be responsible for the life of the community and the world.

Catechists' Course

This diocesan formation course for existing and new catechists seeks to nurture and enrich those with the ministry and responsibility of handing on faith to others with skill, ability and insight to enable them to evangelise through their work of catechesis. This eleven-session course draws catechists together in conversation, reflection, formation and prayer. The next course will begin in January in Salisbury.

Youth Ministry Course

Forming and training those in our parishes who work with young people, this new course in Youth Ministry is facilitated by our Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator, with input from experts in the field of youth catechesis and ministry. Reflecting on Christus Vivit – Christ is Alive, the course will encourage and empower us to see that 'Taking care of young people is not an optional task for the Church, but an integral part of her vocation and mission in history'. (Instrumentum Laboris of the Synod on Youth Faith & Vocational discernment) Details from www.cliftondiocese.com.

Newsletter Inserts across the Year of Communion

Continuing the practice of the Year of Mission and Year of Prayer, these monthly newsletter inserts will allow parishes to anchor themselves firmly into this Year of Communion. This will begin at the start of December and will be sent, by email, to each parish to use in a way that is most useful.

Year of Communion Posters

Using the beautiful and vibrant artwork of Fr Jan Rossey OCSO from Caldey Abbey, crafted especially for our diocesan resources, a set of six posters radiating the life of encounter is available to each parish, school, and community.



LITURGIES

Evening Liturgy & Presentation of the 'Year of Communion'

22 November 2019

Called together by our bishop, we will gather in our Cathedral to embark upon our Year of Communion. We will celebrate Evening Prayer with Bishop Declan, and representatives of each parish and community in the diocese and be presented with the resource for the Year ahead.

Rite of Election

29 February 2019

At the start of the Season of Lent our diocese gathers with those from the parishes of our diocese who are seeking Baptism or reception into the life of our communities at Easter. The Rite of Election is a cry, not simply to them, but to the whole Church to continual conversion. As a sign of our communion with one another we encourage you to join those who present themselves to the bishop to be welcomed and to be encouraged on their journey into deeper faith in Christ.

Liturgies of Reconciliation

Lent 2020

Bishop Declan will once again celebrate Liturgies of Reconciliation in several venues across the diocese during Lent 2019. We gather to celebrate the mercy of God each week of Lent in a different area of the diocese – 3, 12, 17, 26 March and 2 April.

Chrism Mass

8 April 2020

Bishop Declan invites our diocesan community to gather with him and with the Clergy of the Diocese as they renew their priestly promises and the sacramental oils which are taken to every parish are blessed/consecrated for the coming year.

Mass for Newly Baptised and Newly Received

2 May 2020

Bishop Declan invites those who are baptised at Easter and those who are received into full communion with the Church to join him (along with their parishes, their sponsors and their families) at a celebration of Mass in thanksgiving for the gift of faith and the call to 'go, glorifying the Lord by our lives'. We gather in our Cathedral.

Celebrating Marriage

11 July 2020

Each year Bishop Declan invites our diocesan community to gather with him in our Cathedral in celebration of Marriage. He invites married couples to join him and, most especially, those celebrating significant wedding anniversaries across 2019. It is always a great gathering of people and couples from across the Clifton diocese and a tremendous celebration of God's love revealed in the commitment and living out of married love.



EVENTS

Annual Diocesan Day

27 June 2020

St Brendan's Sixth Form College hosts this diocesan gathering for another year and allows us a day of formation, reflection and insight around this Year of Communion. With keynote speaker, workshops, something for the children, and a time just to gather from across four counties with our bishop, this day allows us to reflect on our communion as the Church in Clifton and the wider world.

Glastonbury Pilgrimage

12 July 2020

Gathering as a diocesan family at the Shrine of Our Lady of Glastonbury, this annual pilgrimage invites us to place all that we are and all we are called to be, as the Church in this place, under the watchful care and prayerful intercession of the Mother of God.

Lourdes Pilgrimage

August 2020

This annual pilgrimage to Lourdes invites us to experience ourselves as a wider community rooted in one mission and inclusive of all.

Diocesan Pilgrimage in the Footsteps of St. Ignatius

October 2020

Our Diocesan pilgrimage invites us to walk in the footsteps of St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, whose life was dedicated to serving the mission of Christ in the world.

Diocesan Youth Gathering

21 November 2020

An opportunity for young people from across the diocese to come together as one community to celebrate their faith, share their joy and challenges and mark National Youth Sunday.

**A FUTURE
FULL
OF HOPE**
CLIFTON DIOCESE



FURTHER READING

Novo Millennio Ineunte

Apostolic Letter of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the bishops, clergy and lay faithful at the close of the great jubilee of the year 2000.

https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte.html

Evangelii Gaudium

Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Francis to the bishops, clergy, consecrated persons and the lay faithful on the proclamation of the gospel in today's world.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html

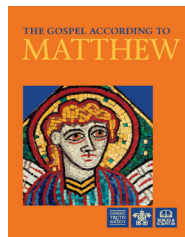
Laudato Si

Encyclical Letter of the Holy Father Francis on Care for our Common Home. Useful resources for parishes to engage with, in relation to this document can be found here: www.cafod.org.uk

Christus Vivit – Christ is Alive

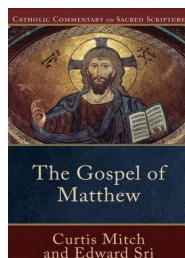
Apostolic Exhortation to young people.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20190325_christus-vivit.html



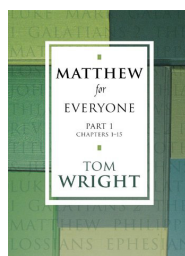
The Gospel according to Matthew

Matthew's Gospel and Companion to the Sunday Gospels are available from the CTS.



Gospel of Matthew

The Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture Book 5 by Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri Baker Academic 2010 ISBN-10: 080103602X



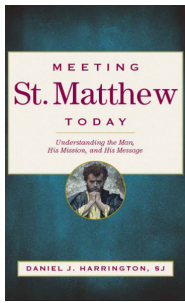
Matthew for Everyone –Part 1

(Part 2 also available)

Tom Wright, SPCK, 2002

ISBN-10: 0281053014



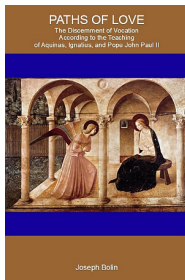


Meeting St Matthew Today

Daniel Harrington, Loyola Press, 2010

ISBN-10: 082942914X

This quick-moving yet insightful book provides a thoughtful and non-threatening introduction to the Evangelist and his message. Special attention is given to a narrative analysis of Matthew's Gospel, including key concepts and themes that develop as the story unfolds. The closing chapter of the book includes three brief lessons based on lectionary readings of St. Matthew.



Paths of Love - The Discernment of Vocation According to Aquinas, Ignatius, and Pope John Paul II

Joseph Bolin Createspace Independent Publishing Platform 2008

ISBN-10: 1438228465

Useful websites to help your parish explore outreach opportunities:

www.caritas.org – *ending poverty, promoting justice, restoring integrity*

www.medaille-trust.org.uk/ - *working with people who have been trafficked*

www.svp.org.uk/ - *turning concern into action*

www.marriagecare.org.uk/ - *supporting marriage and family life*

www.alzheimers.org.uk/ - *supporting those in our community with dementia*

www.borderlands.uk.com/ - *supporting asylum seekers and refugees in Bristol*

www.catholicsocialteaching.org.uk/ - *helping us to understand the social teaching of the Church*

COMMUNION



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This booklet can be used in any way that supports the Year of Communion in the life of your parish. It can be used individually or as part of a parish or school group.


Our parishes are busy places where much is already happening to express our hospitality and desire to be warm and welcoming communities with a care and concern for the marginalised, the poor and those who have yet to experience faith. Deepening our experience of what it means to live in communion does not necessarily seek to add to what we are already doing or to form an additional group to be responsible for the '*Year of Communion*'. Rather, the resource offers the opportunity to look at what we already do and ask ourselves if our activity furthers the challenge to be 'missionary disciples', ensuring that we are outward looking communities fully able to fulfil our responsibilities to serve with God in building up the Kingdom locally and globally.

The Parish Council or Parish Team could look at the material and resources and find ways to direct existing groups to use them to reflect on what they do. Perhaps a few members of the Parish Council could form a working party to direct the various parish groups toward this booklet and the resources it points to. If there is no Parish Council at this time the parish priest might want to call three or four parishioners together to look at the resources and then consider ways to help parish groups to use it as might be appropriate for them.

In addition, the Parish Council could use the reflections to consider how their own work is inclusive and outward looking. Space is provided within the resource to write down reflections which your groups have.



IT IS NEVER THE WILL
OF YOUR FATHER
IN HEAVEN



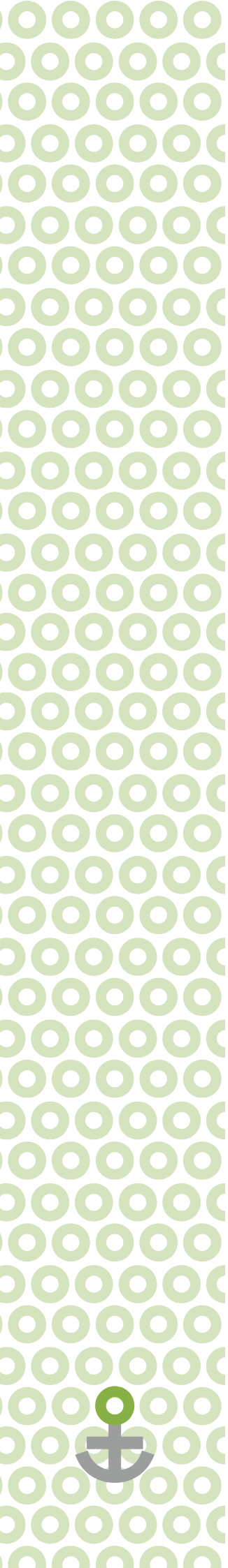
THAT ONE OF
THESE LITTLE ONES
SHOULD BE LOST

MATTHEW 18:12

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communion





A FUTURE
FULL OF HOPE
CLIFTON DIOCESE



DIOCESAN PRAYER

God our Father,
open the horizons of our minds and hearts
so that we can see what hope your call holds for us.

Pour out the overflowing gifts of your Spirit
so that we, your Church,
may become a people of hope for our world.

We ask you this through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.

Our Lady, Woman of Hope,
pray for us.

St Peter, Rock of Hope,
pray for us.

St Paul, Apostle of Hope,
pray for us.

