

## **CHURCH OF THE SACRED HEART, DONNYBROOK**

### **FEEDBACK FROM THE SYNODAL PATHWAY**

**Dear Parishioner,**

**In recent weeks, the Parish engaged in the Synodal Pathway, proposed by Pope Francis and implemented in every parish in the Diocese under the stewardship of Archbishop Dermot Farrell. In keeping with the meaning of synod and synodality – walking the road together – a period of deep listening began with two meetings in the Parish Pastoral Centre in March.**

**The Synodal Pathway meetings were organized and facilitated by Donal O'Shea and Bernie Tiernan, both of whom are actively involved in parish life here. The first meeting was attended by fifty-eight parishioners and the second by seventy-eight parishioners. There was active engagement and participation by all.**

**In the time since the meetings took place, Donal and Bernie gathered all of your comments, collated them and returned your feedback, in its truest sense, with neither judgement nor opinion, to the Diocese. I am deeply grateful to our two facilitators for undertaking this very important work and for their painstaking dedication to the process to ensure that every voice is heard. The Synod Feedback Form which was submitted to the Diocese is posted on the Parish website.**

**At the meetings, the four categories considered by the people in attendance were joys, sorrows, hopes and fears in the context of each person's experience. Bernie and Donal can tell us that your feedback gives clear indications of themes emerging. The narrative extract from the Synod Feedback Form reveals the following:**

#### **Joys**

**The themes that emerged from what brings joy were the strongest and simplest to discern: Mass and the Sacraments, the Spiritual experience, the**

**sense of Community and the love of music and special occasions.**

### **Sorrow**

**Within this category the themes were more diverse. There was a strong sense of sorrow over the loss of faith in the younger population, the exclusion of women, declining vocations and smaller congregations. Church abuse and its handling/cover up of this was also a major theme. There was significant concern around the quality of religious education in schools and that the Liturgy needs to be made more relevant to society today.**

### **Hopes**

**The major themes here were around hope emerging from the Synodal process itself, led by Pope Francis, supported by lay people with active youth participation. There was a sense that good religious education and understanding of the message of Jesus would be very supportive of this.**

### **Fear and Anxiety for the Future**

**The major concerns expressed were around the shortage of Priests and that the Synodal process will fail. Lack of Faith, a sense that the Church is irrelevant and non-inclusive were also highlighted.**

**Donal and Bernie will give us an overview of your feedback on Sunday 15 May at all Masses. Their presentation at Masses will be made available on the back of the Notices page this weekend and will also be posted on the website. May I encourage you to have a look at the Synod Feedback Form on the website and once again, may I renew my thanks and appreciation to Donal O'Shea and Bernie Tiernan for their great service to the Parish and to the global synodal process.**

**God bless**

**Monsignor Ciarán O'Carroll**

**May 2022**