

“To be a strong and faith-filled Catholic fraternity committed to serving our Church throughout Australia.”

Theme: Our Landscape – the confidence we can draw from experience.

In the 2018 Formation Programme we considered the forthcoming Synod of Bishops on youth. Last year we spent some time reflecting on the influence of the Holy Spirit on the life of the Church. In March last year the Holy Father delivered his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Youth Synod – “Christus Vivit” (Christ Lives). This is not merely a summary of what happened during the Synod but is a delightful document containing his teaching drawing on some of the elements that was discussed by the Synod Fathers and Participants. It is simple, direct and filled with enthusiasm. The influence of the Holy Spirit in that process can give us great confidence in our continuing preparation for the Plenary Council.

Step 1: Opening prayer: from the Order’s Prayers

Step 2: READINGS ON THE THEME

“Growing older means preserving and cherishing the most precious things about our youth, but it also involves having to purify those things that are not good and receiving new gifts from God so we can develop the things that really matter. At times, a certain inferiority complex can make you overlook your flaws and weaknesses, but that can hold you back from growth in maturity. Instead, let yourself be loved by God, for he loves you just as you are. He values and respects you, but he also keeps offering you more: more of his friendship, more fervour in prayer, more hunger for his word, more longing to receive Christ in the Eucharist, more desire to live by his Gospel, more inner strength, more peace and spiritual joy.” (*Christus Vivit* Para 161)

“Youth ministry has to be synodal; it should involve a “journeying together” that values “the charisms that the Spirit bestows in accordance with the vocation and role of each of the Church’s members, through a process of co-responsibility... Motivated by this spirit, we can move towards a participatory and co-responsible Church, one capable of appreciating its own rich variety, gratefully accepting the contributions of the lay faithful, including young people and women, consecrated persons, as well as groups, associations and movements. No one should be excluded or exclude themselves””. (*Christus Vivit* Para 206)

“Because “time is greater than space”, we need to encourage and accompany processes, without imposing our own roadmaps. For those processes have to do with persons who remain always unique and free. There are no easy recipes, even when all the signs seem positive, since “positive factors themselves need to be subjected to a careful work of discernment, so that they do not become isolated and contradict one another, becoming absolutes and at odds with one another. The same is true for the negative factors, which are not to be rejected en bloc and without distinction, because in each one there may lie hidden some value which awaits liberation and restoration to its full truth”. (*Christus Vivit* para 297)

Step 3: *Allow a few moments reflective silence.*

Step 4: SCRIPTURE READING

[[Too long to put in here – but the Disciples on the road to Emmaus is very relevant (Luke 24: 13 – 35)]]

“Then he told them, ‘This is what I meant when I said, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, was destined to be fulfilled’. He then opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, ‘So it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this. And now I am sending upon you what the Father has promised. Stay in the city’, then, until you are clothed with the power from on high.” (Luke 24: 44 – 49)

Step 5: REFLECTION (5 Mins)

Step 6: SHARING (10 Mins)

For those meeting in a group it can be hard sometimes to recognise the influence of the Holy Spirit operating through each other:

What do I do to 'look out' for that Holy Spirit in the words of others?

How do I manage a point of view different from my own?

What do I do when I am tempted to simply 'take a back seat' in discussions?

Step 7: CONCLUSION

We pray together;

**"Lord, grant me the strength to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference."**

Step 8: *The meeting proceeds*

Step 9: CLOSING PRAYERS – FROM THE ORDER'S PRAYERS