

THE SYNOD

A Church Synod is a Gathering of the Members of the Church to Listen to one another so as to hear the Guidance of the Holy Spirit. There is a National Synod being planned to take place in 5 years and each diocese in the country is preparing for that. It is thought that this is the way the Church should operate into the future, listening to everyone sharing their experience. The preparation for the Synod is the beginning of this Synodal Pathway. Our own diocese is getting parishes to organise local assemblies in March, and all parishioners, whether Church –going or not, will be invited to attend those meetings to share their experience of life as these are what makes up the life of Church members. You may have seen the Synod Logo already. **The lighthouse** represents the guiding light of the Holy Spirit who guides us on our synodal path. **The boat** represents the Church, we are all in the same boat together. **The water** represents the waters of baptism, sustaining us on our way.

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD, 23rd January 2022

Pope Francis established that the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be the Sunday of the Word of God. He is clear that the relationship between the Risen Lord, a community of believers, and Sacred Scripture is essential to who we are as Christians. The Sunday of the Word of God comes just after the celebration of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. While we are not yet united around the table of the Eucharist, we do share on many Sundays of the year the same scriptural readings in our different Christian assemblies. Pope Francis urges us to strengthen our bonds with the Jewish people and to continue our prayer for Christian unity. The Bible is the privileged collection of communications between God and his people. These stories and poems have nourished the lives of the people of Israel and the Christian Church right through the centuries. They tell the story of God's love and our salvation from ancient times onwards. The scriptural texts offer us both challenge and encouragement for our lives, and are especially valuable to us through the hope they offer us at dark moments. The Holy Spirit, who dwells in us by virtue of our baptism, is also at work in us as we listen to the text. Therefore, through the Spirit's inspiration, the words of Scripture can become a living Word of the Lord to us here and now.

NOVENA OF GRACE

With God's help we will be having our annual novena in honour of St Francis Xavier again this year, and Fr Gerry Mc Carthy, will be conducting the retreat morning and evening beginning 4th March.

