



DIOCESE OF  SALFORD  
SYNOD 2023-2025

## ROLE OF A SYNOD MEMBER

“The purpose of the Synod is not to produce documents, but to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands”

**Pope Francis**

## A Synod for the Diocese of Salford

Thank you for considering being a Synod Member for your Parish or Deanery.

A Diocesan Synod is an important event in the life of a Diocese in which Bishop, priests and lay-people come together in a spirit of prayer to discern together what God is asking of His Church in our Diocese and will help us to live out our calling to be Missionary Disciples.

It is a journey by which we, clergy and laity, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, can together set the future direction and priorities of the life and mission of our Diocese.

As we begin the Diocesan Synod we entrust our journey to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Patron, with St. Joseph, of our Diocese.

Stay with us, Lord, on our Journey.

+ John Arnold, Bishop of Salford

## Synod 2023–2025

The Synod Day itself will take place in February 2025 when the 400+ Synod Members will gather to discern the way ahead for our diocese. These Synod Members will include priests, deacons, religious sisters and brothers, and representatives of every parish and deanery and will reflect the rich diversity of our Diocesan community.

The two years leading up to our Synod in 2025 are most crucial and the participation of the whole diocese in this time of listening and discernment will determine what emerges from our Synod. The Synod members will also have a crucial role to play in this stage of our journey.

Each parish in the Diocese will choose **TWO** members of the parish community to be their Synod Members. These members will coordinate local listening and discernment, will keep the parish informed about the progress of the Synod, will be a local point of contact for parishioners, and will attend the Synod and all preparatory meetings leading up to February 2025.

It is the responsibility of the local parish priest to facilitate the selection of the parish Synod member.

**If you feel like you would like to be a Synod Member for your parish/deanery, please contact your parish priest.**

## Role of a Synod Member

- To lead/facilitate small discussion groups in the parish with the support of the other Synod Members and volunteers in the parish.
- Synod members will be tasked with listening, reflecting and discerning.
- They will be asked to find ways of listening to the concerns, needs and reflections of their communities and to 're-present' these to the Synod where they will be gathered together.
- Synod members will be called to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit guiding the life and mission of the Church in this place and time.
- Synod members will be asked, with their communities, to formulate the concrete proposals upon which the Synod gathering will vote on in February 2025.
- No prior theological knowledge or expertise is required for this role but personal commitment, preparation, prayer, being open to guidance and enthusiasm are crucial to it.
- Members must be willing and able to commit to the Synod process for a period of two years. Members will need to be present for the two Synod gatherings, to facilitate two/three local listening sessions and attend training sessions.

All Synod Members will need to be nominated with a reference from their parish priest plus a secondary reference.

## Our Commitment to You

The role of Synod Member should be uplifting, inspiring, and rewarding but it will also be a demanding and busy task. The Synod Office is here to support you every step of the way and, in particular, we promise that:

- Full training in the art of listening, discernment, safeguarding and an overview of the Synodal journey will be provided.
- Ongoing formation and training throughout the journey at the various stages.
- We will provide resources at each stage of the journey.
- We will provide access to the Synod Members Portal.
- Full training and support given from the Synod Team.

## Synod Timeline

April 2023	Bishop John officially opens our Diocesan Synod.
April - September 2023	Synod Prayer & Formation. Members are required to attend one training session (1 x 3.5 hours available on 4 dates in June, July & September—see website below for details).
October 2023 - January 2024	“The Big Listen” - Wide Consultation.
April 2024	Synod Gathering 1 - Synod Members are presented with what has emerged from “The Big Listen”, presented in themes.
April - May 2024	Local Listening 1 - Synod Members are asked to make recommendations to the Synod after discernment with their communities.
September 2024	Local Listening 2 - The recommendations are collated from across the Diocese. Synod Members, along with their communities, discern the recommendations prior to the Synod Weekend.
February 2025	Synod Weekend - Synod Members vote on the recommendations in the light of their prayerful discernment.

## The Synod Office

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