

Sunday Message from Fr William for the Seventh Sunday of Easter 2023

Dear People of St Mary's

On this 57th World Day of Social Communications, Pope Francis has taken the opportunity to remind us about the current two year Synod 2021-2023 taking place across the world in the Catholic Church, and how good communication is at the heart of this process. St Mary's played our part in this Synod in December 2021, and our input is on its way to Rome, having been collated on its journey first into the diocesan response, then into the national response, and then into the continental response. It has been described as the biggest consultation exercise in human history.

The Synod is also described as a listening exercise. And it has been a listening exercise at every level – not just listening by the Pope and his Synod committee and the Synod of Bishops who will be presented with the final synthesis, but listening at every level. We listened to each other on that day in December 2021 when we shared each other's responses. And we will continue to listen to these responses. They are still there on website homepage (link Synod 2021-2023: St Mary's Knaresborough and on the website events page, and we were taking another look at some of these responses last Monday in our Parish Pastoral Council. In has informed, and continues to inform the way we do things.

'In the Church there is a great need to listen to and hear one another. It is a most precious and life-giving gift we can offer each other. Listening without prejudice, attentively and openly, gives rise to speaking according to God's style, nurtured by closeness, compassion and tenderness.' Not my words, but the words of Pope Francis in his message for the 57th World Day of Social Communication. You'll find a link to it on this Sunday's bulletin. He goes on:

'We have a pressing need in the Church for communication that kindles hearts, that is balm on wounds, and that shines light on the journey of our brothers and sisters. I dream of an ecclesial communication that knows how to let itself be guided by the Holy Spirit, gentle, and yet at the same time prophetic...

'We have a pressing need in the Church for a communication which puts the relationship with God and one's neighbour, especially those most in need, at the centre, and which knows how to light the fire of faith, rather than preserve the ashes of self-referential identity, a form of communication founded on humility in listening and *parrhesia* [I had to look it up] in speaking, which never separates truth from charity.'



Seventh Sunday of Easter, 21 May 2023