



Week 1 – Listen

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Listen

*A time for prayer and silent meditation –
you may wish to light a candle.*



For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

*“The Synod offers us the opportunity
to become a Church of closeness,
that does not stand aloof from life,
but immerses herself in today’s problems and needs,
bandaging wounds and healing broken hearts with the balm of God.”*

Pope Francis

Opening Prayer – Prayer by Henri J.M. Nouwen

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness,
send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.
We who have so much to do - seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day,
We who are anxious over many things - look forward to your coming among us.
We who are blessed in so many ways - long for the complete joy of your kingdom.
We whose hearts are heavy - seek the joy of your presence.
We are your people, walking in darkness yet seeking the light -
to you we say, “Come Lord Jesus!”

Amen.

Readings – Jeremiah 33:14-16

See, the days are coming – *it is the Lord who speaks* –
when I am going to fulfil the promise I made
to the House of Israel and the House of Judah:
“In those days and at that time,
I will make a virtuous Branch grow for David,
who shall practise honesty and integrity in the land.
In those days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell in confidence.
And this is the name the city will be called: The-Lord-our-integrity.”

Luke 21:25-28

Jesus said to his disciples
“There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars;
on earth nations in agony,
bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves;
men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world,
for the powers of heaven will be shaken.
And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud
with power and great glory.
When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high,
because your liberation is near at hand”.

Psalm 24:4-5

Lord, make me know your ways. Lord, teach me your paths.
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me: for you are God my saviour.

Reflection – Gerard W. Hughes SJ in “Cry of Wonder”

The gift of being a compassionate listener,
a gift which requires constant practice,
is perhaps the most healing gift anyone can possess,
for it allows the other to be, enfolds them in a safe space,
does not judge or advise them,
accepts them as they are without desiring to change them,
and communicates support at a level deeper than words.

Themes for Reflection

If you are doing this reflection with others, try to listen actively and without judgment. Do not enter into debate but rather search for what the Holy Spirit might be saying through the other person; pay attention not only to the words but also to the tone and feelings of the speaker; and listen actively to yourself, mindful of your own thoughts and feelings as you speak. Whether alone or with others, always pause before saying anything, asking that the Holy Spirit might guide you.

Opening Question –

What has your faith meant to you these past eighteen months living with Covid?

Listen Questions –

1. *Listening:* How do I listen to God?
How do I listen to others?
Who do I listen to most?
2. Do I listen to people with different views to myself?
3. Do I listen to others in the parish –
perhaps groups I am not associated with like:
people from a different age group?
people from a different cultural background?
4. Do I listen to others who are not part of our Church?
5. How does the Parish listen to the Holy Spirit?
6. How would our listening skills be seen by others not involved in our Parish?
7. How do we as a Church listen to others?
How do we as a Church listen to those outside the church?
8. How does the wider Church relate to the society of which we are a part?

You are very welcome, indeed encouraged to share your answers with the parish. All responses will be anonymised, and they will not be judged, but taken and shared with the diocese. E-mail to ElkValleyRC@gmail.com with the heading “Synod”