**Bishops announce submission phase of synodal path**

The Irish Bishops have announced the initial submission phase of the upcoming synod, which was announced March 10.

Commenting on the development, Bishop Brendan Leahy of Limerick said the bishops were inviting submissions “to reflect on what methods/models to adopt” in the coming two years of conversations.

He gave as examples “parish hall meetings, focus groups, questionnaires, deep-listening sessions; written submissions; family- focused gatherings; summary of findings of assemblies that have already taken place across dioceses; and/or conferences”.

“Feedback, which should be no more than 300 words and submitted by Pentecost Sunday 23 May 2021, ought to focus on the nature of the process for the consultation i.e. how we can best go about this initial phase of establishing the conversation,” Bishop Leahy said.

The bishop said this phase is not about the prospective themes, which will be addressed in the next phase.

The responses will be considered by a task group put in place by the bishops this summer to plan and oversee the first steps along the synodal pathway.

Bishop Dónal McKeown said that the Irish Synod must be focused on “re-energising the mercy mission” of the Church or risk becoming a “curious talking shop”.

The bishop of Derry’s comments come as the initial submission phase for the National Synodal Assembly begins.

Writing in The Net, Bishop McKeown said that synodality does not mean a “parliamentary approach where power blocks square up to each other to win votes and

promote their human agenda or the popular ideas in secular society”.

“The Synod of Bishops on young people promoted the concept of ‘missionary synodality’,” Bishop McKeown continued. “Unless synodality is focused on re-energising the mercy mission of Jesus through the Church, it risks becoming a curious talking shop that is going nowhere.”

Dr McKeown also wrote that the purpose of the synod is to ensure the Church is “fit for purpose in our modern technological world”.

Link to website:

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/synod/>

Before embarking on the consultation, between Easter (5 April) and Pentecost (23 May), 2021, bishops are seeking submissions on what methods to adopt in these coming two years of conversations.

Some Themes from rapid transformation in Ireland:

Secularisation of Society.

Shocking Revelations.

The need to promote peace-making and a culture of welcome.

Listening to the Cry for Transparency.

Discovering the Family as “Domestic Church”.

Connecting with Young People.

Honouring the Contribution of Women.