

Monsignor Aldo Angelosanto asks for our prayers as he heads for a synodal meeting in Rome.

On February 3rd 2024, the Synod Secretariat announced that Pope Francis has invited 300 Parish Priests from around the world to come to Rome to take part in a Meeting in preparation for the final session of the Synod on Synodality. I felt privileged and utterly nervous when I was asked to be the Scottish Delegate to this Meeting of “listening, prayer and discernment”.

The Vatican press release went on to explain that “ the initiative responds to the indication expressed by the participants” of the Synod, who in the Synthesis Report released after the October Session, identified the need to “develop ways for a more active involvement of Deacons, Priests and Bishops in the synodal process during the coming year. A Synodal Church cannot do without their voices, their experiences and their contribution”.

Members of that last Synod meeting which included Cardinals, Bishops, men and women Religious, Lay men and women, noted their concern with the almost total absence of Parish Priests at the synod assembly.

Their concern centred on the need for priests to be more involved in the synod process as they are the key to the implementation of any programmes aimed at promoting synodality at the grassroots level. I hope to make my voice heard, based on the submissions of our Diocesan Core Group and from the joint submissions of the other Scottish Dioceses

So here I am from Bonnie Scotland and our beautiful Diocese of Dunkeld, setting out for Rome on Sunday 28th April for five days, to a Retreat Centre called Fraterna Domus, about 25 kilometres north of Rome, to a meeting which requires active involvement of participants and includes round tables for the sharing of best practices, workshops around pastoral proposals, dialogue with experts and Liturgical celebrations.

To bring these meetings to their conclusion, we then travel back to the Vatican for an Audience with Pope Francis who will lead a question and answer session. We will celebrate Holy Mass in St Peter's Basilica and I hear, there is the possibility of a tour of the Vatican Gardens for a bit of relaxation.

The findings of this Meeting will contribute to the drafting of the Working Document (Instrumentum Laboris) for the Second Session of the Synodal Assembly in October.

So, a full and varied programme, but I have to keep in mind the underlying question at the heart of it all, namely,

“ How to be a Synodal LOCAL Church on Mission?”

As well as sharing this information with you, I once again beg for the support of your prayers as I accept, with not a little trepidation, this mammoth but wonderful task.

Mgr. Aldo Canon Angelosanto,