



DIOCESAN MEDIA OFFICE

Date: 21 August 2024

Subject: **Historic First Synod To Be Held in Geraldton Diocese**

History will be made this week as people throughout the Catholic Diocese of Geraldton gather for the first Assembly of a Synod.

The Assembly will officially commence outside St Francis Xavier Catholic Cathedral, Geraldton, at 6.00pm on Wednesday 21 August 2024 and will continue through to a concluding Mass at 5.00 pm on Friday 23 August 2024.

Catholic Bishop of Geraldton, Most Rev Michael Morrissey, said: *“This will be the first ever Synod to take place in the Geraldton Diocese. A Synod is a special way of bringing people together to listen carefully to what the Holy Spirit is calling us to be as people of God in this place. Under Pope Francis the entire Church is being reminded that we all have a role to play in the Church as baptised believers”.*

Leading up to the Synod, listening sessions have been held across the Diocese which has given rise to a working document that will form the basis of the Assembly.

The theme for the Synod is, **‘The door is open, the heart even more’** inspired by a script above the Mullewa Presbytery door built by Rev Monsignor John Hawes, a reminder for him to remain open hearted to each person who knocked on his door.

Seventy-six delegates drawn from across the Catholic Diocese of Geraldton, one of the largest dioceses by land mass in the world, will gather for the Assembly. Delegates will represent all the Catholic parishes of the Diocese, as well as ministry areas such as aged care, social services, education and health.

Observers from other Christian faith traditions will also attend this Assembly, joined by seven youth delegates from Nagle College.

“This is not an event, or a conference”, said Dr Mark Copland, Chief Facilitator for the Assembly. **“It is a way of doing or being Church, in which we deeply listen to each other - clergy, religious, lay, young and old.”**

“This Assembly is the culmination of hours upon hours of prayerful discernment and respectful conversations between so many good people of faith. We will be seeking the wisdom and the courage of the Holy Spirit as we gather this week for the Assembly,” said Bishop Morrissey.

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Geraldton Diocesan Synod 2024

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