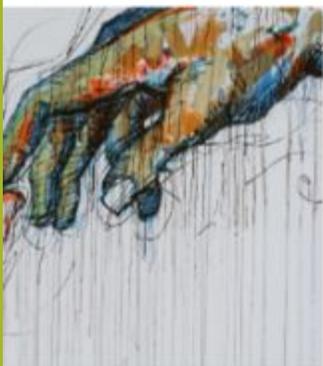


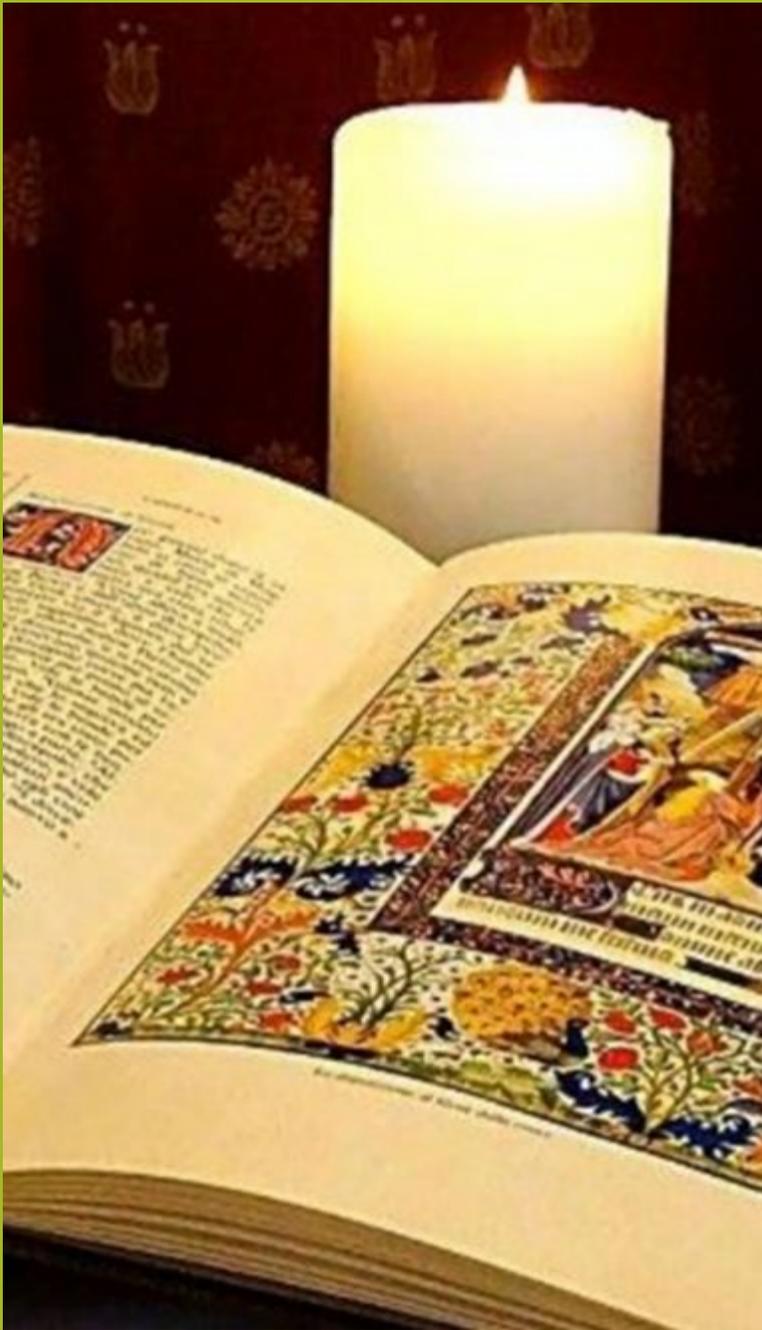


Regional Meetings with Local Synodal Teams

Purpose:

- to deepen our shared understanding of our Synodal Pathway and the role of synodal teams
- to strengthen collaboration between the regions and the national process
- to look at next steps
- to ground our work in prayer and discernment





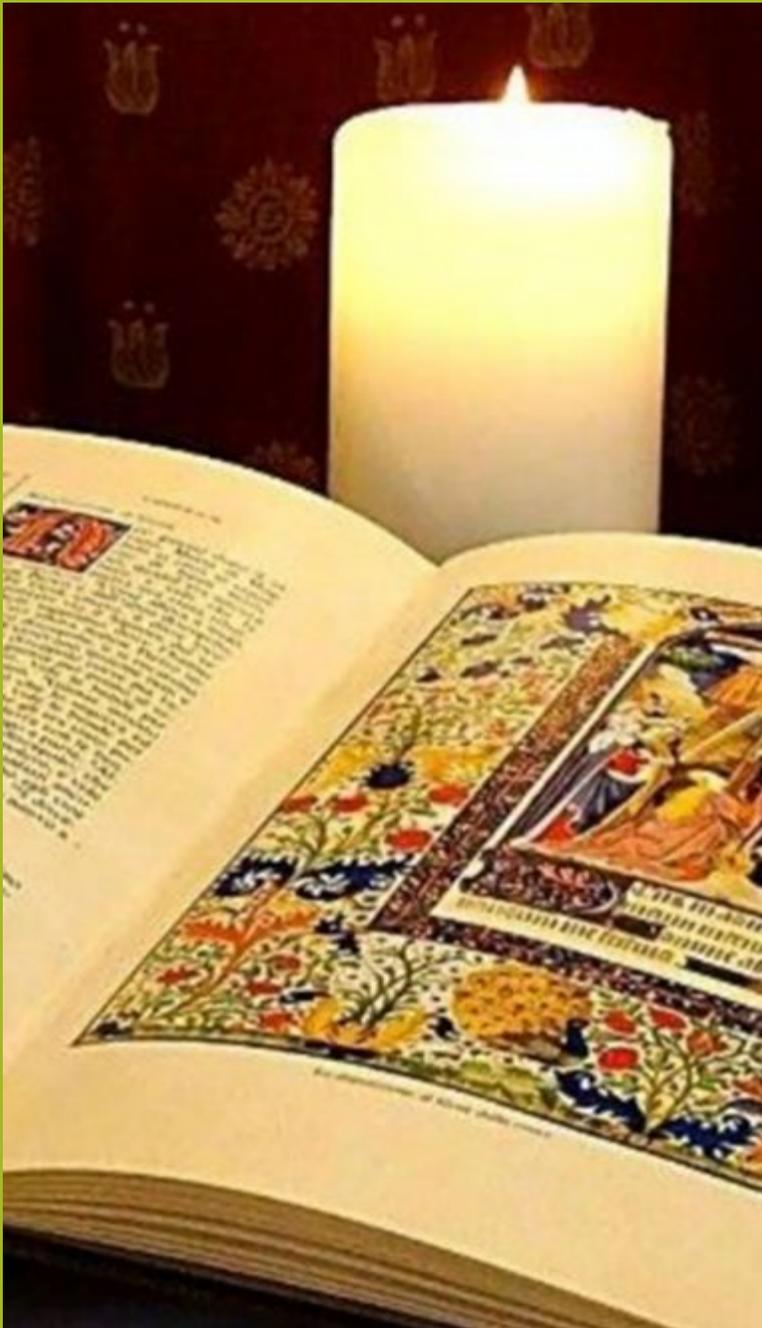
Opening Prayer

We say together:

Christ as a light, illumine and guide us.

Christ as a shield o'er shadow and cover us.

Christ this day, be within and without us.



A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 6:1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook, and the temple was filled with smoke. “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.”

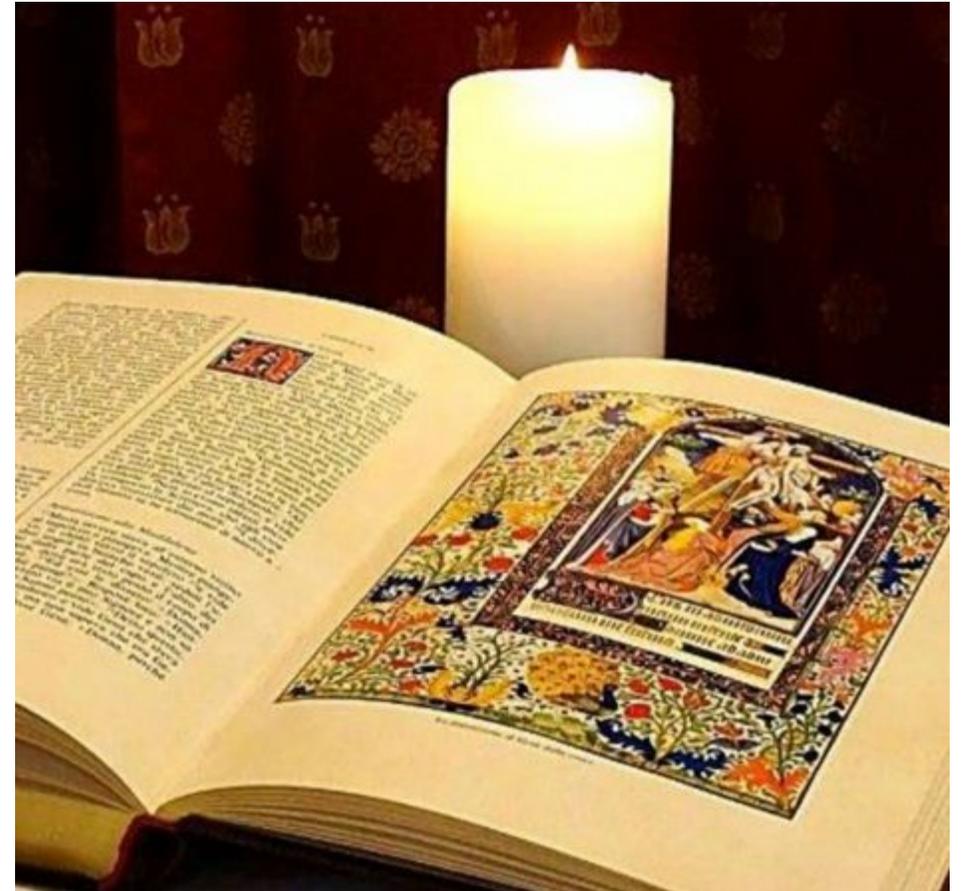
Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

Reflective Questions

- Share a word or phrase that stays with you
- In what way do I, as a baptised member of the Body of Christ, feel sent and to whom?



Reflecting on the Kilkenny Assembly

Your experience of the
Assembly in hindsight (six
weeks later)?

What insights from the day
do you think are important
for bringing forward?



Clarifying the Role of Synodal Teams

1

Distinguishing between
"Participatory
Bodies" and Synodal
Teams

2

Ensuring synodal ways
of working locally

3

Providing formation and
support at local level
(e.g., Conversation in
the Spirit)

4

Staying connected to
national and universal
processes

5

Supporting evaluation
and ongoing
discernment –
particularly the
evaluation phase of the
Universal Synod
(2027-2028)

1. “Participatory Bodies” and Synodal Teams

The Diocesan Synodal Team is **Not**

- a substitute or replacement for a Diocesan Pastoral Council, a Presbyteral Council or a Finance Council or Committee
- a permanent committee with executive authority
- an independent body that acts apart from the Bishop or a duplication of other roles in diocesan offices

It is at the service of the Bishop and the diocesan community (see *Pathways for the Implementation Phase* document section 2.1–2.2)

2. Ensuring Synodal Ways of Working

- helps the whole diocesan family to practise synodality more intentionally - to animate, accompany and resource the local Church as it grows in synodal culture and practice.
- the *Pathways* document calls them “Laboratories” of synodality
- inclusive and representative, bringing together clergy, consecrated persons, and lay faithful of different backgrounds, charisms, and ministries

3. Providing Formation and Support

- support the diocese and parishes in developing strong habits of listening, prayer, and shared discernment (e.g., Conversation in the Spirit).
- help councils and committees use a synodal approach in their work - encouraging consultation, prayerful reflection, collaborative decision-making, and open communication/feedback.
- foster participation and co-responsibility

4. Staying Connected to Both Synodal Processes

- essential instruments of the Irish Synodal Pathway **and** the implementation phase of the Universal Synod (2025–2028)
- maintain a living link between the local Church, the national structure, and the wider Universal Church
- Connect with the Working Groups (these are currently being formed by the National Synodal Team)

5. Supporting Evaluation in the Universal Process

Synodal Teams will play a vital role in the ongoing Implementation Phase of the Universal Synod:

- Diocesan evaluations in early 2027
- National evaluation in late 2027
- Continental assemblies in early 2028
- Full ecclesial assembly in Rome in October 2028

N.B. the National Synodal Team will be focusing on the preparations for the national synodal assembly in October 2026

Importance of Representative Teams

- Concern: Are Synodal Teams representative of the Irish Church?
- Invitation to review team composition and inclusion
 - representation strengthens discernment
 - encourages diversity of gifts and voices
 - ensures broader participation and local realities are heard
 - helps shape contributions to national and universal phases



Prayer Intercessions

Remembering that we are all baptised in Christ,
daughters and sons together in mission we pray:

HERE I AM, SEND ME

We pray for those who are seeking and searching and want to belong.

HERE I AM, SEND ME

We pray for those who feel called to ministries.

HERE I AM, SEND ME

We pray for those who are living family life and looking for connection.

HERE I AM, SEND ME



Prayer Intercessions

We pray for a deepening of faith and the courage to journey for life.

HERE I AM, SEND ME

We pray for healing of wounds, for reconciliation and accountability.

HERE I AM, SEND ME

We pray for women that their charisms will be recognised and affirmed.

HERE I AM, SEND ME

We pray for the young that they may be offered and accept meaningful roles to participate fully in the Church.

HERE I AM, SEND ME



Introducing the Year Ahead

- Baptism and the Seven Priorities - How these were discerned
- 2025–2026: A Year of Action
- Working Groups
- Local and National Level Tasks



How Baptism and Priorities Were Discerned

- 17 Themes between 2021-2024
- Local spring gatherings 2025
- National Team in Dalgan Park
- 7 Priorities and Baptism as a lens
- Fr Liam Bergin's Reflection Paper on Baptism
- *Baptised and Sent* as a Preparatory Document and still a valuable resource

2025-2026: A Year of Action

A time of practical engagement, exploration, and collaboration as we reflect together on what synodality looks like in practice

- what do I need to be doing as a bishop to model and embed synodality in my diocese?
- are we meeting to reflect on our experiences as a synodal team and modelling the synodal approach we are promoting?
- do our participatory bodies (DPCs, PPCs etc) need to engage with all seven priorities or concentrate on one or two that the diocese have energy for and expertise with?
- what is already happening that is helping the Church become more synodal in daily life?

2025-2026: A Year of Action

- identify practical actions that can be taken already emerging from the seven priorities (keeping baptism as the lens...)
- what is happening already in our diocese or group that we can collaborate with, support, or resource, but can be renewed in a synodal way?
- is there a particular priority we might like to pilot a process or programme for?
- there is a lot happening already so we need to gather this good practice and share our experiences and insights so this local wisdom enriches the national process

Working Groups

To support this shared work, the National Synodal Team is gathering people around each of the seven priorities:

- People with local pastoral responsibility or experience
- National representatives from relevant areas of ministry (e.g. within the Bishops' Conference)
- Members of the National Synodal Team
- Others who can offer theological reflection, whether pastoral, scriptural, canonical etc., and other relevant expertise



Working Groups – Purpose and Focus

- a focused group of people, each with relevant skills and experience
- gathering the fruits of action that is already there - data, examples and experience from across dioceses and groups
- gathering the learning from those who might pilot something around a priority
- research and discern actionable steps at both national and local level
- provide concrete recommendations for implementation, not reports from further listening, that will feed directly into the agenda and materials for the national synodal assembly (October 2026)

Important to Note

- there is no expectation that any diocese or group would work with all seven priorities this year
- look at what is already happening around one or two priorities and continue to further these in a synodal way
- the working groups will gather the data, examples, and experience - especially good practice - but you will be vital instruments for helping them achieve this

Diocesan / Group Level Tasks



What local teams can focus on

- Embedding synodality in parish, diocesan and group life
- Exploring at local level how *Baptised and Sent* can be better known and understood
- Identifying local initiatives connected to national priorities and gathering this information
- Assisting the Working Groups (help to facilitate if they come to a region/diocese or look to hold focus group sessions etc.)
- Gathering learning for the diocesan contribution towards the Universal Synod's evaluation stage in 2027

National-Level Tasks

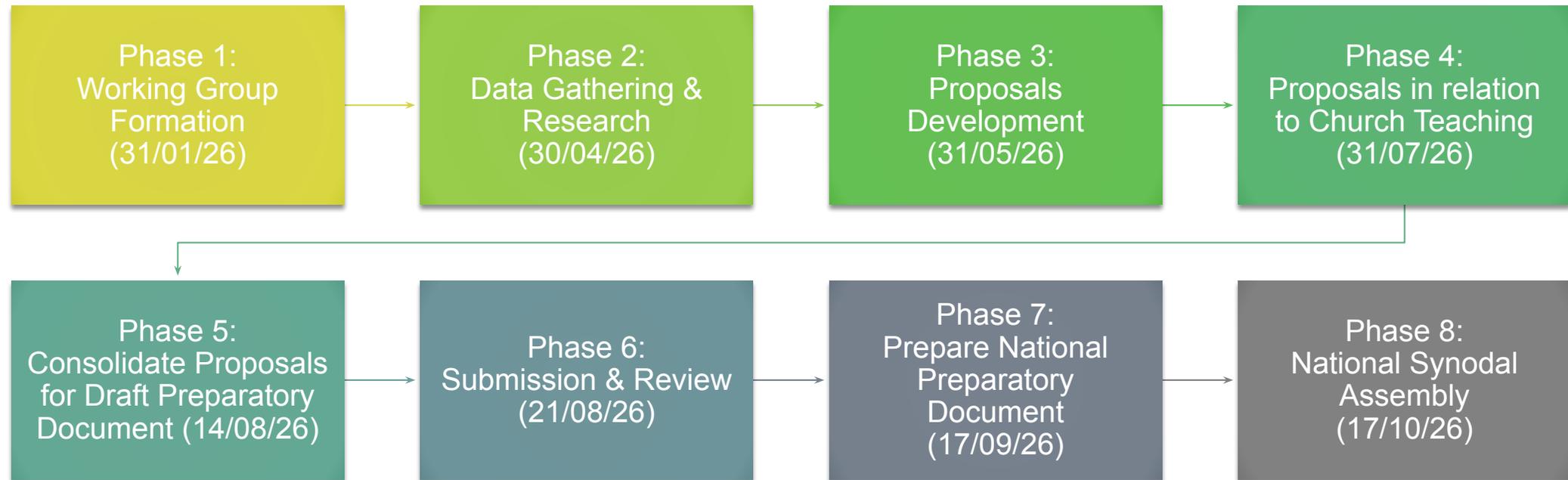


- Form the Working Groups
- Receive the recommendations from the Working Groups
- Continue to support and resource the Diocesan Synodal Teams
- Prepare a preparatory/working document for the National Assembly in October 2026
- Prepare the National Assembly for October 2026

National Synodal Assembly (October 2026)

- 17 October 2026 is held (could be extended)
- Receive the fruits of the year of action and the recommendations from the working groups
- Deliberate and agree practical steps for implementation
- Strengthen the national sense of shared mission and co-responsibility
- This assembly will also help us prepare for the evaluation phases of the Universal Synod (2027–2028)

Proposed Timeline Towards the National Assembly



Baptised and Sent in Lent

As part of our resourcing and raising awareness of *Baptised and Sent*, as well as preparing ourselves for Lent and the assembly in 2026, the National Synodal Team has created a Lenten resource called *Baptised and Sent in Lent*.

- launching on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (11 January 2026)
- 5 week resource for parishes and other groups
- spread the word and share it widely!

BAPTISED AND SENT IN LENT

First Sunday of Lent

Theme: Baptised and sent by the Spirit

Opening Prayer

Loving God,
You call us to renew our baptism
during this season of Lent as we
journey to Easter.
Help us to respond more fully to Your
call and send us out to proclaim the
Gospel by our lives,
Through Christ Our Lord
Amen



Baptised and Sent Quote

*"Baptism is an entry point to a life
of faith, a gateway to mission,
and the root and foundation on
which to build a Christian life."
(10)*



Gospel Link

This week's Gospel comes
from Matthew 4:11.
After His Baptism, Jesus is
led by the Spirit into the
wilderness.



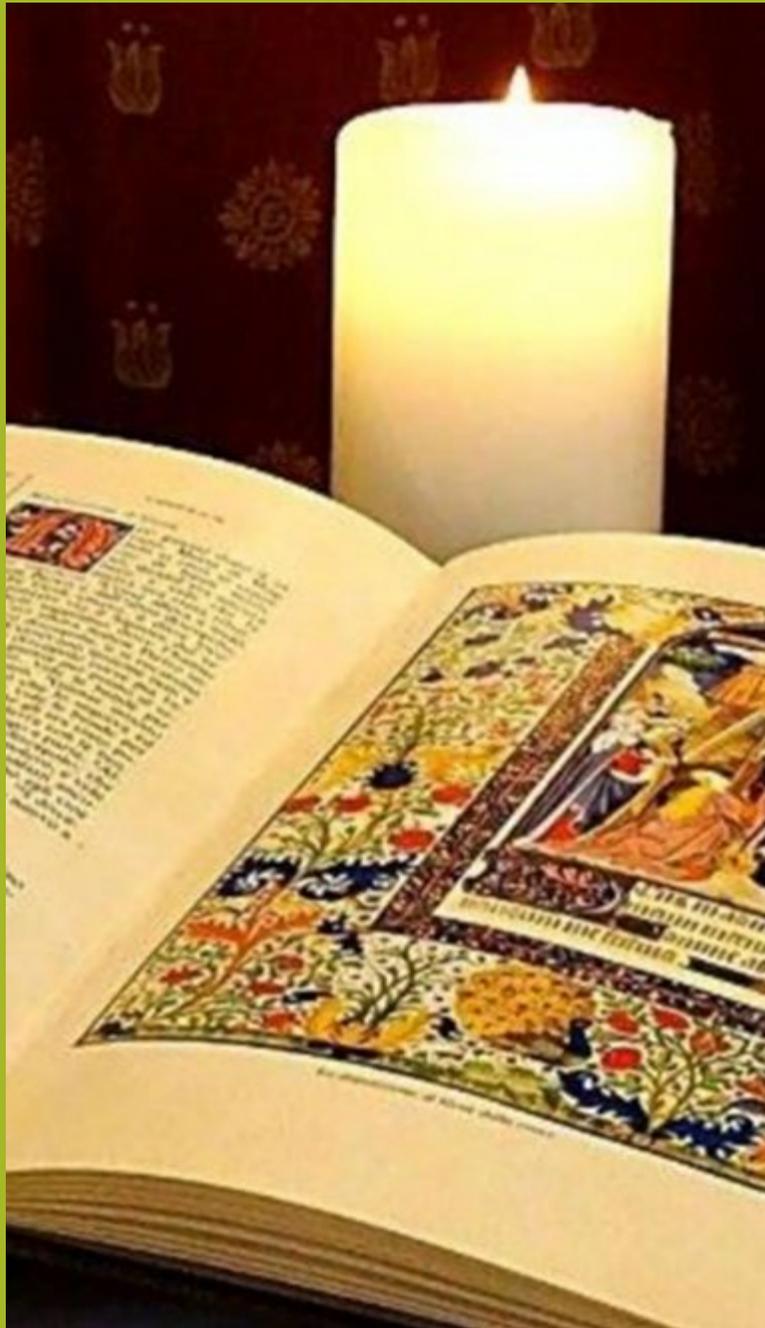
SCAN ME



Conversation Time

Questions / Clarifications?





Closing Prayer

We pray together:

Loving God,
as Isaiah heard your call to be a prophet of a new future,
we pray that like him we will respond to your call
as people who are not just baptised but sent.
May we work together for your Kingdom,
so that we can build up the community of the Church for
mission.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

AMEN.