

“Something to say”

Assembly for schools – raising awareness of National Youth Sunday and the upcoming Synod for Youth called by Pope Francis next year

What is National Youth Sunday?

National Youth Sunday is celebrated in England and Wales on the last weekend of the Church's year; the feast of Christ the King. This year this is **November 24th-25th**. We know that National Youth Sunday would normally fall in the remit of Parishes, but felt it important to send out some resources to schools. National Youth Sunday is an important date in our diaries, and we hope to increase its profile across Parishes and indeed in schools. This year's theme has been set as **Something to say**, linked to the upcoming Synod for Youth next year.

“Something to say” and the Youth Synod

What a time we have in the Church currently with Pope Francis calling for a Synod for Youth! This Synod will focus on the experience of young people aged 16-29. We recently heard from Sarah Wells, CAFOD, on her experience at one of the Youth Seminars that have been held in Rome in the lead up to next year's Synod. In the seminar they discussed much of the Preparatory Document that Pope Francis has published called Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment. Over the Summer a Mega Youth Poll was undertaken by the Church of England and Wales. These results, from young people, will form the report that is sent to the Vatican and discussed during next year's Synod. It was encouraging to hear that over 13,000 responses were submitted in the Mega Youth Poll.

Despite the Mega Youth Poll being closed, a questionnaire can still be submitted directly via the Vatican's website. This questionnaire is for young people aged between 16-29. You can find out more about the Synod here.

DO YOU HAVE ANY 16+ YOUNG PEOPLE THAT YOU COULD DIRECT TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE VATICAN WEBSITE??

In school

Before the Advent season begins this assembly would be a great addition to raise awareness of this important celebration in the Church's diary. It is a good way to introduce what the Youth Synod is too. It is a wonderful thing that the Pope has called such a gathering, and encouraged a world-wide survey from young people. *It is a good opportunity to encourage your student voices in the Catholic life of the school.*



Assembly plan

Aims and Objectives

- To learn about National Youth Sunday
- To learn about the Youth Synod initiative called by Pope Francis next year
- For young people to reflect and pray together

Duration of session

Time	Activity	Resources needed
0-1 mins	Opening prayer	
1-3 mins	Intro	
3-6 mins	Synod presentation and Reflection	Projector and laptop
6-8 mins	Prayers	Students to read
9 mins	Conclusion reflection	

Sign of the Cross

Opening prayer

In this month of November we pray for our loved ones who are no longer with us, we pray for peace around the world and in our own hearts, give us the strength for the things we cannot change and courage in the things we can change. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Introduction to session

1 minute

Today in this time of prayer we will reflect on two upcoming things in the life of the Church.

- 1) National Youth Sunday, which is at the end of November.
- 2) The Youth Synod that is being held by Pope Francis in Rome next October.

Here is a great quote from Pope Francis about why he needs your help.

"Every young person has something to say to others. He or she has something to say to priests, sisters, bishops and even the pope. All of us need to listen to you" Pope Francis

What is the Youth Synod?

It's an initiative from Pope Francis who wants to hear the voices of young people from all over the world, of faith or no faith. He is welcoming every young person voice to be heard and understood.

Just before the summer a questionnaire was put online for young people to answer, over 13,000 questionnaires were completed in England and Wales. Next October Pope Francis has organised a youth conference to look at the results of those questions and put all those voices of young people into action.



ENCOURAGE - EQUIP - EMPOWER

Shrewsbury Youth Mission Team

With the youth questionnaire from the Synod initiative, it's giving young people of today's world a real voice, the church wants to hear what young people have to say. This is one of the most exciting initiatives in modern times of the Catholic Church. Not least because the voices of the young people from around the world will be heard, how the Churches response will be.

Link to National Youth Sunday

Because of this amazing Youth Synod next year, the Church in England and Wales have set the theme for National Youth Sunday as "Something to say". Every year, on the Feast of Christ the King, the Church celebrates National Youth Sunday. Our words are very powerful. So today let's reflect on the many voices we have in our lives, and commit to listening to the voice of the Lord.

Powerpoint reflection

5 Minutes

Have some quiet reflective music playing in the background. Ask the young people to follow the reflection points on the screen.

During this month of November we remember our loved ones who have gone before us. We take a few moments for ourselves as we reflect on where we are in our own lives.

Bidding prayers

2 minutes

Leader: To remember the upcoming celebration of National Youth Sunday we pray together. Lord, we pray for our community, students and staff of this school. Let us all pray to the Father for our own needs and for the entire world.

Young person: For the whole world and for its leaders that the Lord may help them be examples of mercy. We pray for those who work with young people and for Bishop Mark as he guides and shepherds our diocesan community. Lord in your mercy, **All:** Hear our prayer.

Young person: For our School that we will continue to be faithful to Christ in our welcome of all and in our witness of His merciful love. We pray especially for the students of our school that they will continue to trust in God's love and mercy. Lord in your mercy, **All:** Hear our prayer

Young person: For all who are in need of mercy, who are afraid or lonely. That they will come to feel God's love and presence in their lives, through the witness of those around them. We pray for our families that God will bless them abundantly in his love. Lord in your mercy, **All:** Hear our prayer

Young person: For all the conflicts around the world, that forgiveness, solitude, and peace will rein in troubled hearts and communities. Lord in your mercy, **All:** Hear our prayer

Leader: Father we ask you to answer all our prayers those spoken and those left unspoken, we ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Reflection conclusion

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives: Be kind anyway. If you are successful you will win some false friends and true enemies: Succeed anyway. If you are honest and frank people will try to cheat you: Be honest anyway. What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight: Build anyway. If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous of you: Be happy anyway. The good you do today, will often be forgotten by tomorrow: Do good anyway. Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough: Give your best anyway. (Saint Mother Theresa)

