

## Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Three important events are happening today in the local, diocesan and universal church. Here at our local cathedral parish, I'm asking each of you to make your annual pledge for your contribution to the weekly collection. You come to church out of love for God and neighbor, and you promote the mission of this cathedral. Your financial offering shows that you sacrifice and share, you take part in our community, and you enable us to continue proclaiming the gospel in diverse ways. Your pledge form will arrive in the mail. Filling it out commits you to putting charity first.

In the mail and in your pew is the pledge form for the diocesan Annual Catholic Appeal. We conduct the parish and diocesan requests together each year. The diocesan appeal also supports the parish: we receive help on the upkeep of the cathedral, our plans for future building, couples who seek marriage, and the formation of future priests. In a few moments you'll hear Bishop Johnston's audio recording asking for your support.

Also this weekend, for the universal church, Pope Francis has opened the synod of bishops to discuss the process of decision-making in the Vatican. He is asking all the bishops of the world to open the synod in their cathedrals this weekend, which Bishop Johnston will do with a special Mass tomorrow morning, invoking the aid of the Holy Spirit. The word "synod" means "walking together," not "walking ahead," as James and John attempted in today's gospel. The synod concerns three concepts: communion, participation and mission. Because we are in communion, we listen to one another. Through our participation we discern what the Holy Spirit asks of us. Then we go on mission into the world. Pope Francis wants all Catholics involved, but he says that the synod is "not a parliament nor a survey of opinions;" rather, it is, "an ecclesial moment whose protagonist is the Holy Spirit."

As we reflect on these three levels of Church today—local, diocesan and universal—let us ask the Holy Spirit to open our hearts to give support, pray for guidance, and commit to mission.

Now, let's listen to Bishop Johnston.