



Discipleship Conversations 2022

“Neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything but only God gives the growth.”

1 Corinthians 3:7

As part of our ongoing faith development work at St Mary's we are offering every member of the church who wants one a chance to have a one-to-one conversation about their own faith and journey with God.

We offer this:

- *To help you to understand where you are in your faith journey and what it means to you to be a follower of Jesus;*
- *As a way of reminding us of the life-long process that is Christian discipleship, which takes on different aspects throughout life;*
- *To give all who wish a chance to reflect on their journey through the pandemic and how it has affected their life, priorities and vocation as a baptised person.*

In the coming months one of the clergy will be in touch to such a conversation, which can be on a date and at a time and place of your choosing and at your convenience. We hope to offer each of you an hour.

What is a Discipleship Conversation?

- **A proper, intentional conversation about faith and life.** *We don't do this often enough, and it's easy to think that the clergy are too busy for you. We're not: at the heart of our calling is to give time to people to help you grow in faith.*
- **A conversation, not an exam!** *We are not there to test you, but rather to serve you by asking careful questions, by listening attentively and by reflecting on what we hear.*
- **A conversation in which you set the agenda.** *You should feel able to share only what you feel comfortable talking about us with. We will probably share something of our own faith journeys with you too.*
- **A conversation in which you don't have to speak to the person who approaches you.** *We understand you may have good reason **not** to the priest who gets in touch to offer you the conversation. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with another of us if that's the case. **You don't have to give a reason:** simply make the request and we will honour it.*
- **A bounded conversation:** *These are one-off conversations so there is no expectation on either side that a further meeting will follow, unless you want it. All conversation will take place under "Chatham House Rules": we may share with one another some of what they hear in these conversations, but we will **NOT** identify the person who said it to us. Indeed, we will take great care to avoid the possibility of any individual being identified.*
- **A conversation that isn't just about what happens in church.** *A discipleship conversation is a whole-life conversation, because Jesus calls us to follow him in every aspect of our lives. So don't feel you've got to use 'religious' words or focus on what you do in church. In fact, if you just want to talk about your life in general terms, that's fine!*

Simon Butler, Aaron Kennedy & Joe Moore

Starting the Conversation

To help you think about what you'd like to talk about, this sheet includes two conversation starters. We will use one of the questions in **bold** as a discussion starter; after that, please feel free to choose any of the other questions or simply talk. Remember, this is **time for you** – feel free to set the agenda and content. And please feel free to ask the priest who you meet to share their own answers as well.

Conversation Starter Questions

How have the past two years been for you, both as a person and as a Christian? Has anything changed in your priorities as a result of living through the pandemic?

What are the most significant spiritual experiences you have had in the past (positive or negative) that shape your expectations or apprehensions about growing as a Christian?

Optional Discipleship Questions

Questions about Prayer (Pray)

- How is your prayer life?
- How and when do you find yourself coming closer to God? And what do you find keeps you away from God?
- What are your greatest difficulties in praying?
- Have you ever experienced disappointment with God that causes tension in the way you pray or hinders you from trusting God to answer your prayers?

Questions about Reading the Bible (Read)

- What role does the Bible play in your daily life?
- Are there any blocks in preventing you from reading the bible more regularly or consistently?

Questions about Study (Learn)

- What kind of images or experiences does the word *study* conjure up for you?
- There are many ways we learn: through books, other people, our selves, events, institutions, and cultures. Are there aspects of life you would like to understand and explore?
- Jesus says, “if you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” What does it mean to ‘know’ and be ‘made free’ by the truth for you?

Questions about Sharing your Faith (Tell)

- Who told you about what it means to be a Christian? Who shows you now?
- If someone asked you to tell them about Jesus Christ, what might you say to them?
- Are there people in your life you would like to come closer to God in Christ? What can you do to help them?

Questions about Service (Serve)

- When are you most aware, if ever, of the need to cultivate the Christian virtue of humility?
- What motivates you most to serve others: self-fulfilment, the needs of others, your feelings, or something else?
- Where do you most need others to serve you?

Questions about Giving (Give)

- We can give our time, our talents (gifts), or our treasure (money). Which do you find easiest and hardest, and why?
- What motivates you most to give of yourself to others?
- How does the way you choose to spend your money reflect your values as a follower of Jesus?

Final Question: are you going to do anything differently because of this conversation? How can St Mary’s help you take that step?