

PARISH AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON CANON 21

Consultation Meeting held at **St Andrew's, Wellington**, April 13, 2018 with 12 people in attendance.

The meeting involved the presentation of documents from General Synod re: canon 21, plus a series of questions from our diocese for further consideration based on *This Holy Estate*. Diocesan norms re: discussions, the GS 2016 resolution, and what is necessary for canonical change were reviewed.

- Suggestion made that SSM be approved if a vow of celibacy is included. Comment: it would be unjust for the majority to dictate to a minority; surely the church had the right to set rules re: marriage.
- Discussion re: interpretation of scripture culturally and historically. Is this a canon?
- Questions for clarification on "EXPLORING THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON CHANGING THE MARRIAGE CANON" - very little free discussion. We were encouraged to reread the pages and wrestle with the questions in a prayerful way.
- Concern expressed that rural dioceses with mostly older people may have a harder time with the topic
- Round the table for Questions and Comments:
 - focus on marriage, not homosexuality
 - concern over the long wait since 2004
 - what if homophobic bishop, WWJD?
 - we must respect everyone's feelings
 - discussion and learning contribute to one's own ideas evolving
 - trust the Holy Spirit
 - hope we are all open to grow
 - can't put God in a box
 - love neighbour as self
 - we hope there is no congregational division
 - Jesus asks us to follow God. Are we?
 - we don't want people to feel they have to lie or hide in order to be part of the church.