Exodus –
A People Moving Forward Together in Hope



Challenges

along the Way

 **Opening Responses**

Reader We gather in the name of the Father:

**All Who lays before his People a journey –**

 **that will challenge and stretch them**

 **but will help them to grow into the people he longs for them to be.**

Reader We gather in the name of the Son:

**All Who led his early disciples on a journey of discovery –**

 **and who continues to call disciples**

 **to continue the quest of building the Kingdom of God.**

Reader We gather in the name of the Holy Spirit:

**All Who works in the minds and hearts of men and women –**

 **gifting them with skills and strength**

 **to overcome the challenges before them**

 **and the love to do all for the glory of God.**

**Remembering the Journey**

We will hear a couple of extracts from the Book of Exodus which tell us about some of the challenges faced by the Israelites on the Journey. (Note: you may not use all of them!)

**Thoughts for Reflection**

* How much sympathy do you have for the Israelites?
* What do you think about how God responded?

*After the second extract:*

* How does the hankering back to the good times reflect how people might feel – perhaps quite legitimately – in your community?

*After the third extract*

* This is clearly a “false god” taking the place of the one, true God. But when are we also tempted to see things – even holy things – as more important than God?

*After the fourth extract*

* A time for honesty! How often do you think your parish priest – deacon – Sister – pastoral council and finance committee feel like Moses?
* Have you ever felt like it? (Not necessarily in a church setting but that is our focus today).

**Exploring the Way**

The questions for reflection today come from three sections – *Finance* and *Facilities* (how we use the resources given to us) and Geographical Distance.

**Looking at our community’s data.**

Information relevant to our reflective questions is presented to help our discussions.

**Reflective Questions** (more overleaf)

* How do you feel about the average weekly offertory donation in your community? Will this be adequate to enable your community to flourish in 2020?
* If you are a finance-rich community, how do you feel about sharing some of your resources with very poor parts of the diocese?
* What sort of use can your community foresee for unused or underused facilities in the future?
* How can the community develop the capacity to look after them?
* How does your community feel bout the possibility that the only way to ensure flourishing in the future is to become part of a new parish community?
* Are there ways in which your community can serve and support neighbouring communities?

**Closing Prayer *Forward Together in Hope prayer***

 **Glory be to the Father -**

**in whom we live and move**

**and have our being.**

**Glory be to the Son -**

**Whose name we bear**

**and who calls each of us**

**to be his disciples;**

**to build his Kingdom**

**and to go out into the world**

**and bear its fruit.**

**Glory be to the Holy Spirit -**

**pouring out grace and guidance,**

**forming us and renewing us.**

**Inspire us all**

**In the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle**

**to live the Gospel,**

**to be open to change**

**and to move forward together in hope.**![Hope Logo [Converted]]()![Hope Logo [Converted]]()![Hope Logo [Converted]]()