

Revised Synod Summaries

Parish

Parish & local community

1. But all worried about the loss of links with the community that has happened over the past two years, especially those dependent on home visits and communion at home (or care home). Also aware of a lot of hesitancy and fear about coming back to Mass.
2. How do we re-establish the community that we had (pre-covid)? We need to find a way to reach out to people.
3. Our mission: To be more open, unafraid, able to challenge people. To advertise ourselves openly as Catholics. To help people come back to Mass and the Church.
4. We need to think of every possible way to invite people back to church and the parish (social media, mentors, personal invitations, schools, parish events).
5. We need more joy in the Church. We need to bring people together and involve everyone so that people want to come to church.
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7. We must find ways to improve our feelings of togetherness in our parish. We may need to start from scratch (post covid) and think about how the whole parish could contribute to various activities – not just the people who have always done things. However, we should also be thinking of the wider community, working ecumenically with other local churches, both by prayers and community work to help our whole neighbourhood. Previous public church events to bear witness, such as neighbourhood processions and the coastal rosary, were discussed.
8. Be involved with working with other community groups. Help build up good community morale. Need to address social justice issues and old-fashioned Catholic traditions. i.e. what can we keep and what can go?
9. The summary is that the prime mission is to support the family and faith in that family, through being an example to children and grandchildren. After that to contribute to and participate in the life of the church as a community, rather than seeing faith as an individual and private thing. Examples are helping the gardens to be a public witness to the faith, and everyone using the variety of gifts of which Saint Paul speaks to the good of the local community.
10. Can feel separated and can be quite cliquy. It could be better at welcoming the stranger.
11. Does the Catholic Church reach as many people as it used to? What does it mean to be a parishioner today?
12. Felt that forthcoming Mission week / event could provide focus to take forward concerns / ideas discussed today.
13. Church is to be visible in the community – helping / reaching out to others – need to resurrect ecumenism and links to the developing world but also less insular at parish / inter-parish level.
14. Evangelising is not a strong point amongst the older generation, maybe for fear of historic prejudices in Scotland. However, there is hope that some of the younger generation have a more evangelising mind-set, and the church locally should find ways to encourage this.

Young people and families

15. Concern for engagement with children / young people. Could we start youth club?
Need to involve schools including secondaries more.
16. We felt that the youth of our society could be left on the margins, could we be more involved and inclusive in discussion with the "Church of the future".
17. Where is the relevancy to the next generation? We felt like the youngest generation in our church, yet we're all in our mid-40s or 50s – what about the youth and the young people?
18. All felt strongly about creating a faith for our children and passing it on to them, although also acknowledge the difficulty in keeping this going during lockdown

Liturgy

19. Liturgy and Music. To try and bring all people's together with the music and Liturgy trying to help make sense of the Mass giving it a theme that could engage people more, bringing us more into Communion with each other.
20. To realise that we do live in an increasingly atheist society and a world where aesthetics play a huge part, can we push ourselves to really spread God's word in our lives and bring /include others to our Church.
21. Made us question the relevance of our faith in today's society – the idea of a Mass of Reconciliation was valued in the past at Holy Cross as Confession, especially for very young children, sometimes felt uncomfortable as they haven't sinned at all

Care for creation

22. We all need to grow in love, humility, respect, joy, gratitude and wonder in all the marvels of God's creation.
23. We need to recognise the Spirit working in each one of us, and in all of Creation.
24. Pope Francis has been a front-runner amongst world leaders; Laudato Si is something the whole church can stand behind and was important in the run-up to COP26. Local churches must support its vision.

Wider church questions

The need for reform

1. We need the Church to be more joyful and less focused on institutional obligations.
2. Need to discern what is relevant for all times, what was relevant for its own time only, what is useful and applicable today and what is now actually harmful.
3. We felt that society has moved on so rapidly in our lifetime, but the church hasn't- yes we want the core within our Mass to be the same and unchanging, but the areas where there could be change (lay ministry, female priests etc) haven't been addressed
4. Make the Church more inclusive with more interfaith connections and make it more relevant to youth.
5. Church maybe too Western centred: listen to Afro / Asian / Lat American opinions.
6. As a group, we wished that the office of priesthood would be a more open one – we hoped for priests who would reflect the whole of society and not just male, heterosexual, unmarried
7. There must be better equality of respect between clergy and laity – we are all one in Christ.

Need to address bad practices

8. Sense that the Church needs to change in line with the direction set by Pope Francis. Cannot be held back by curia. Needs to be open to new ways – be more transparent
9. There have to be changes in the Vatican and the Curia.
10. Media image of the Church poor due to handling of abuse which was dealt with late: management of paedophile activity grim, little thought for victims.
11. Bad news about the Church isn't addressed but rather brushed over – this is very off-putting, especially for young people.
12. Issues in the worldwide Catholic church of sexual abuse, cover-ups and lack of apologies felt very hypocritical, when we're being asked to be honest and confess
13. Particularly issues of sexual abuse within the church, made us feel isolated from our faith
14. Bad practice needs to be addressed, not hidden.
15. The Church is a place to provide healing, peace and forgiveness – yet is itself profoundly damaged and compromised – especially in matters of abuse.

More openness to women – and others

16. There's a strong male/female divide within the Catholic church and reconciliation, discussion and learning, needs to occur on both sides to find a way forward in today's society
17. It (the Church) is out of touch with the 21st Century regarding treatment of ordination of women, women's role in teaching / Catholic faith, homosexuality, trans issues.
18. Must set an example and show more acceptance of all backgrounds and identities. Women need to be seen to be more involved with delivery of sacraments, etc.
19. Lay women are still far from being given equal status in the Church. If we are the Body of Christ we must all be prepared (and trusted) to assume responsibility as our abilities and qualifications allow.

20. Support for gay people needs to be taken much further.
21. We are “just” managing to keep together. People are the Church, and we have to be more open and inclusive, especially to those presently seen as excluded, e.g. homosexuals.
22. We worried that sexual repression within the faith was damaging and also unnecessary – need more openness about sexuality and relationships – all the school’s our children were at were far more progressive and yet there’s mixed messages with their faith
23. Through discussions with friends from different walks of life, there are elements that – by not moving with the times – are isolating people and mean that those raised Catholic, are finding their faith isn’t accepting them as adults for one reason or another. I also feel that God’s Loving Plan needs to be updated as it’s making some children feel shame about their start in life (e.g. IVF children) which they didn’t choose.