



# Synod Feedback Form

<b>NAME OF PARISH</b>	<b>NAME OF PASTORAL GROUPING</b>
<b>Mother of Divine Grace, Ballygall</b>	<b>Glasnevin Grouping</b>
<b>VENUE OF GATHERINGS</b>	<b>IN PERSON OR ZOOM</b>
<b>Sacred Heart BNS</b>	<b>In person</b>
<b>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (1<sup>st</sup> Gathering)</b>	<b>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (2<sup>nd</sup> Gathering)</b>
<b>10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 - 21</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 - 18</b>

## THE JOYS

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.	
<p><b>Community, belonging and common values</b> – Sense of being part of something, being community, group with common values and shared values, good people journeying together, common beliefs</p> <p><b>Family and inclusiveness</b> – a feeling of belonging, and being included, being part of something beautiful</p> <p><b>Ceremonies and sacraments</b> - celebrating the sacraments brings joy, a feeling of security; the familiarity of the sacrifice of the Mass</p> <p><b>Love v fear</b> - God is loving; God is not a God to be feared but a loving God as a spirit who loves us all</p> <p><b>Volunteers</b> – people giving of themselves in the church and admiration of the volunteers</p> <p><b>Liturgy and sermons</b> – sharing the liturgies; Liturgies and sermons inspire to live a better life, great liturgies; readings which are still relevant today as they were 2000 years ago.</p> <p><b>Pope Francis</b> – leadership of the church is good; Pope is now giving women roles in the church, women are contributing so much in the church</p> <p><b>Feeling of welcome</b> – in the church and by parishioners</p>	11	<p><b>Women’s role in the church</b> - Women hold roles but less significant roles in the church, women who are leading roles on our behalf</p>	2	
			Women contribute so much in our church	2
		4	<b>Church as a place of peace</b> – the church is a place where one can feel at peace, a sense of security in the church	2
		8	Making connections in the church	1
			Caring for others	1
		4	Church offers shared experiences and goals	1
			Guidance offered by the church to people	2
		4	<b>Singing</b> – people get joy from the singing in the church/ listening to a beautiful choir	2
				1
		5	Hearing music in the church	1
			Listening to the family mass music	1
		4	The peace of reflective solitude in the church	1
			Church is not universal but church is our own parish church	1
		3	<b>Great occasions, Easter Vigil, Christmas Eve</b> , Great memories and great occasions give joy	2
			<b>Faith</b> - faith of others helps my faith	1
		Physical church where the Eucharist is present	1	
		Clergy is more approachable	1	

		The universality of the church irrespective of religious beliefs or creed	1
		Gathering with fellow parishioners and sharing joy in our belief in our Saviour	1
		Faith in Jesus Christ and his resurrection in which we will all share one day	1
		The closure of the Church during Covid was very upsetting	1

## THE SORROWS

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.
<p><b>Reduced Church Attendance/ Participation</b></p> <p>Absence of young people &amp; mid generations attending Mass &amp; other celebrations; Church needs to facilitate importance of God in lives today; Church not keeping up with change needed in changing world; slowness of Church to respond; future of Church depends on youth</p>	12	<p><b>Influence of Church on the school system</b></p> <p>Creates so many 'superficial' Catholics who are baptised just to get into a school. Church should encourage families to take more ownership and responsibilities for their faiths.</p>	1
<p><b>Role of Women</b></p> <p>Lack of women in Church leadership – cannot be priests or deacons, are excluded, loss of their voice/insight; male hierarchy; other Christian Churches have made more progress.</p>	6	<p><b>Lack of strong guidelines</b> we had in our lives growing up. Now adapted to the time we live in currently.</p>	1
<p><b>Celibacy</b></p> <p>Not allowing priests to marry; dwindling numbers of priests making desperate need for married men to be allowed to be priests; apostles were married; only celibate men have a voice</p>	6	<p>Separation between Church and its congregation</p>	1
<p><b>Abuses in Church</b></p> <p>Abuses in Church; cover ups; lack of leadership shown to those hurt; Church hasn't addressed past failings;</p>	7	<p>(Church leaders) <b>holding onto power</b> – message of service lost</p>	1
<p><b>Use of language in liturgy</b></p> <p>Does not speak clearly to us; does not relate to laity; does not connect with people at Mass; more simplified language needed; Eucharist become lost in too many words.</p>	5	<p><b>Change of Attitude needed</b> – Church needs to change its attitude to women, gay people, divorce etc.</p>	1
<p><b>Lack of Acceptance by Church of Others</b></p> <p>Lack of acceptance of those on fringe/outside norm (same sex relationships, second relationships); Church seems exclusive, not welcoming or inclusive of many groups</p>	5	<p>Lack of respect</p>	1
		<p>Associations of Church with grief</p>	1
		<p><b>Abuses in Church (different perspective)</b></p> <p>Sad that reputation of Church was tarnished by evil; sad about people's distrust due to others actions; abuse occurs in every walk of life and statistically most abuse happens at home</p>	1
		<p>Mass is very depressing &amp; outdated, not relevant to modern life.</p>	1
		<p>How little people feel towards the Church. The message of the Church is still good but the messengers are fallible</p>	1

		and only human	
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## THE HOPES

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.
<b>Pope Francis</b> – bringing renewal, change, making Church more inclusive	9	Baptisms continuing	2
<b>Synod Process</b> – listening process from bottom up, asking our opinion, attendance at this process, women in parish leading this process, long-sightedness	8	<b>Participating in Sacraments</b> , bringing nearer to God	2
<b>Church is still going</b> – new people joining and returning; people returned after Covid; Church has been through difficult times in the past and came through them.	5	<b>Prayer &amp; worship</b> , praying for each other	2
<b>Young people &amp; families</b> – their attendance at Mass, enthusiasm, involvement in Liturgy; raising family in Church and passing on traditions, need to attract more young people	6	<b>New approaches to including lay people</b> ; opening of positions in Church structure to laity	2
<b>Spirit of community in the Parish</b> – parish workers, enthusiasm/camaraderie of other parishioners, travelling together, hospitality/welcome, clergy & lay people working together, parish volunteer work during Covid	10	Finding God/religion in creation/environment	2
<b>New technology and ways of communication</b> – reach more people & new generations; diverse ways to attend Church ceremonies; access to Mass at home during Covid	4	EWTN Television Channel	2
<b>Service &amp; leadership of priests of parish</b> including access to early Mass for those who are working; Church building so open	3	<b>Pope Francis</b> but he has a hard battle to bring Church to where it needs to be	1
		My Christian upbringing	1
		<b>Religion now taught in more interesting way in school</b> , more inclusive to all religions in the class and worldwide	1
		Hope for a better, if not bigger Church	1
		Care & love shown to Ukrainians	1
		Life after death	1
		Positive changes that are happening in Parish	1
		<b>Promises, mercy forgiveness &amp; security Jesus has given us.</b> ‘I am with you till the end of time’	1
		That we will continue to trust the Holy Spirit	1
		<b>No rush in God’s time.</b> ‘Rome wasn’t built in a day’.	1
		<b>The women of the Church</b> , if their voices are heard.	1
		<b>Openness/Togetherness</b>	1
		Positive thinking, encouragement, welcoming, thoughtfulness, talking openly/no hidden agendas, embracing belief in what is good, diversity	
		<b>Church Failings</b> – need to accept these	

	<p>failings</p> <p><b>Importance of Jesus</b> – Jesus is no. 1 (the top man). Church - disappointed in same.</p> <p><b>Mortal sins</b> – fear caused scruples</p> <p><b>Sacraments</b> – No proper preparation, mostly about money 'long pockets'</p> <p><b>Pope Francis</b> – hope the Pope is conscious about a new way forward as the people want to see the Church survive and thrive as it has done for 2,000 years.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>
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## THE FEARS

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.	
<p><b><i>Lack of Vocations</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That there are insufficient numbers of new/younger priests coming through</li> <li>• No students going forward for priesthood</li> <li>• Diminishing number of clergy and church attendance</li> <li>• Lack of vocations to priesthood and religious orders</li> <li>• Lack of vocations, people to put themselves forward to help with the church</li> <li>• Lack of priests into the future</li> <li>• The fact that priests can't marry and may lead to a reduced number</li> <li>• What will happen when older priests die?</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Young people and the future</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The numbers gone so few going with their children to church. What will the future bring?</li> <li>• That there won't be options for future children to be involved and have the experiences and opportunities that I've had.</li> <li>• There will be no church for my children</li> <li>• Will our younger people get the church they deserve?</li> <li>• The lack of faith of young people</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Churches/Parishes closing/ Reduced numbers at Mass</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That churches (our church) will close and parish communities dissolve</li> <li>• That people will be afraid to join or stay with the church</li> <li>• Loss of our parishes due to falling numbers</li> <li>• That there will be no one my age (peers) in the church in the future and the church community won't be there</li> <li>• Shocked by the dwindling</li> </ul>	12	<p>Did I do the right thing? Regrets over past mistakes</p> <p>That people will listen to the media who misrepresent the church and our values</p> <p>Afraid as only self to rely on</p> <p>Absence of kindness for the stranger</p> <p>Two extremes in the Church - too rigid &amp; strict/ fearful dictatorship – too liberal diluting important aspects of the faith</p> <p>How can we harness the goodwill in our parish?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorter sermons to reach the congregation</li> <li>• Include younger people in local Christian activities. Engage the parents</li> </ul>	1	
		6	<p>Real acknowledgement of suffering of victims of abuse of every kind, particularly sexual abuse and mother and baby homes</p> <p>Call no one your father, call no one your teacher, God / Alone; Brothers, Sisters equal dignity</p>	1
		6	<p>Stunned by the ultra-conservative position of men in the Church and unlikely it is to change in my lifetime</p>	1
			<p><b><i>Pope Francis and change</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pope Francis being beset by Pharisees in the Curia when he is trying to return the Church to the Church of Christ's compassion and forgiveness and welcome for sinners (all of us)</li> <li>• Anxious Pope Francis will not be allowed to change the Church</li> </ul>	2
			<p>Listening to the readings at Mass</p> <p>Importance of prayer for the future of</p>	1



<p>numbers who attend Mass</p> <p><b><i>Will change happen? /Slowness of Church to change</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the bishops hear and listen to the voice of the faithful as expressed in these gatherings</li> <li>• Have the bishops the courage to lead change i.e. married priests, ordination of women, compassion in practice for LGTB community, simplicity of language and liturgy</li> <li>• Church leaders very slow to change- give greater role to lay people/ women – much slower than other Christian churches</li> <li>• That the church won't change enough to welcome everyone in regardless of their way of living as Jesus would have done</li> <li>• Though this synod seems to give hope, will anything come of the suggestions/ input at these meetings</li> <li>• Change is dangerous. No listening to what the people say, leaving it as status quo</li> <li>• A listening not hearing</li> <li>• Where is the Church going next?</li> <li>• The synod won't change anything for the best</li> </ul>	<p>10</p>	<p>the Church</p>	<p>1</p>
<p><b><i>The relevance of Church in people's lives</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the Church becomes irrelevant in people's lives</li> <li>• Read the signs of the times</li> <li>• Loss of the need of the church in many people's lives</li> <li>• Absence of church, more selfish society</li> <li>• One generation away from extinction</li> <li>• Reality check re 1<sup>st</sup> Communion &amp; Confirmation (Non secular occasions on Church stage)</li> <li>• Indifference</li> <li>• The Church is not relevant to young people, how can this be addressed?</li> <li>• That younger people think its beneath them to go to mass</li> </ul>	<p>13</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will some of Jesus words come true, when the son of man comes will there be any faith</li> <li>• People are away from Church for one or another reasons</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Church as an institution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church protects own interests</li> <li>• Will the Church survive as it is</li> <li>• Hierarchical system too slow to change</li> <li>• We are kind of institutions set up</li> <li>• Hierarchy and misuse of power</li> <li>• Hierarchy that would scare people</li> </ul>	6		
<p><b>Role of Women &amp; other groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No female deacons</li> <li>• Role of women to be expanded, women have always sustained and maintained our faith</li> <li>• We need love and compassion for those who are different</li> <li>• The judgement &amp; exclusion of others e.g. LGBTQI, divorced people etc</li> <li>• That change won't happen i.e. that women's roles won't be recognised and they won't have equal status in the Church</li> </ul>	5		

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

### WHAT THEMES ARE EMERGING FROM THE GATHERING?

- Belonging & inclusion; sense of community
- Church not being welcoming to those on the edge i.e. LGBTQI, divorced people etc
- Joy in the sacraments
- The joy of seeing children in the congregation and the sorrow/ fear of not seeing children/ young people at church. Sorrow of the lack of young people involved in the Church
- The joy liturgies bring but the sorrow of the language used as it is not connecting with the people
- Christianity is more than Mass
- Sorrows – Lack, Loss, Sad
- The role of married men and women in the Church – they are not a minority and are actively involved at parish level but where is their voice heard?
- Church is the people of God so that includes everyone
- Themes that are **not** emerging in the feedback: personal prayer; themes tend to relate to what happens in the Church building rather than other aspects of Church i.e. Faith does not strongly emerge though one participant mentioned that the faith of others, helps their faith.
- Did the synod questions confine people's answers? Themes don't embrace societal changes and counterculture to the church.
- Fears going forward: that there won't be physical churches due to lack of vocations
- Church is **always** one generation away from extinction
- Will change happen? In the past, change didn't happen after similar processes. Most important change comes from the bottom up.
- Change isn't always negative, it can be a good thing. Some say that Church has moved on but institutional Church hasn't.
- There is a crisis of faith – how important is prayer in people's lives? The gatherings were small so themes may reflect the views of a minority. Majority don't make wrong right or right wrong.
- Catholic Social Teaching does not emerge in the themes? Why?

- Community – the concept of community has changed - it has moved from “we” to “I”, the concept of family has changed in society also.
- Concept of relativism is now evident. Religion/ Faith is what I want it for me, “I’m spiritual but not religious”

#### WHAT MIGHT THE HOLY SPIRIT BE INDICATING IN THIS?

- Do we need to focus on the crisis of faith and importance of prayer in our lives?
- Change needs to happen.
- What do we want to change? What does change look like?
- Church needs to be more inclusive. Church needs to reach out to groups on the periphery.
- Does the Church need to get more involved on social media to reach out as it is falling away rather than growing?
- Perhaps it is a good thing that clergy are declining as other people are finding their role in Church.
- The synod gatherings and the PPC synod meeting were positive as we gathered together as a people in the light of the Spirit.
- What does faith mean to us? It is more than coming to the church.
- Why is God not missed? But are people still searching for God in other ways?  
Note: High rates of depression and anxiety in society
- Do not be afraid
- Should we be afraid of a small Church?
- If God seems far away, who moved?

SIGNED	DATE
<b>Lisa Jensen</b> <b>Orla Duggan</b> <b>Catherine Doyle</b>  <b>Animators in Our Mother of Divine Grace</b>	<b>24.04.2022</b>

<b>Parish, Ballygall, Dublin 11</b>	
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