



# Synod Feedback Form

NAME OF PARISH	NAME OF PASTORAL GROUPING
St. Paul's Parish, Ayrfield	
VENUE OF GATHERINGS	IN PERSON OR ZOOM
St Pauls School Hall	In Person
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (1 <sup>st</sup> Gathering)	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (2 <sup>nd</sup> Gathering)
41 excluding animators	24 excluding animators

## THE JOYS

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.
<p><b>The Church gives me a sense of belonging, a place to meet friends and socialise in a spirit of community</b></p> <p>Meeting together. Meeting fellow parishioners. Made lifetime friends attending church. Sharing time. Where I meet with friends. Meeting like-minded people. Together with people being with in union with others I feel joy when I am in our parish community partaking in our church services The people I meet in Church Belonging. Being part of parish and community. Coming together in support of the bereaved. The joy I feel when I go into church in a foreign country – Home. Just being part of the church. Joy at being part of church family. Being part of the church community Joy is seeing people on way to Mass. Greeting each other with a smile Sharing the Mass with friends and relations.</p>	19	<b>The 2nd Vatican Council changed to Mass and ceremonies (English Mass etc.)</b>	1
		<b>Greater openness by church establishment.</b>	1
		<b>Acknowledgement that clergy and faithful are journeying together.</b>	1
		<b>Married clergy and female clergy would encourage expansion.</b>	1
		<b>General absolution should be more often.</b>	1
		<b>Feeling the spirit in me that other people can see.</b>	1
		<b>I would replace the word joy with comfort.</b>	1
		<b>Would have preferred if the meeting was held in the church</b>	1
		<b>So much joy is missing in the</b>	1

<p><b>The Church is my home, it brings me peace, solace, joy and contentment.</b></p> <p>Being present in the church, feeling that it's my place to be.  The church, to me, is my home place, where I belong.  The peace I feel within (sometimes).  I'm not over religious but just going to Mass gives me peace and contentment.  The quiet and peace in the church  Being there alone to pray  Sharing my thoughts, my anxieties knowing that God is with me, helping me to accept the bad times and good times.  Someone to look up to and to pray to.  Joy that most things that happen in my life relate to religion or have an answer in religion, - it's as if I have a guidebook to help me.  I look but don't always get something to take me through week - that challenges me.  Where I go in sorrow.  Not a lot of joy in the church as a whole, but certain things like the spirit gives me comfort in bad times and help me understand the real love of Jesus.  The knowledge, according to St Paul, that there is nothing that can come between me and the love of Christ.  Joy in Jesus.  The joy of being in the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.</p>	<p>15</p>	<p><b>world today</b></p> <p><b>What makes me sad is the people who stopped coming to church because of the wrongdoings of a few. These people are missing out on so much!</b></p> <p><b>These days since I gave up attending anything with the institutional Catholic Church, nothing.</b></p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p>
<p><b>Church music, choirs and singing bring joy</b></p> <p>Joy equals music in the church.  Singing in church.  Music choirs - our ukulele supremo.  Live music in the church.  Ukulele music gives joy.  Singing and belonging together.  Music in the church.  When I can go to Mass and sing with the choir.  Music singing brings me joy  In the past, joy came with beautiful church music  Hearing happy young children</p>	<p>11</p>		
<p><b>Celebration of the Sacraments especially with family members</b></p> <p>Joy in weddings, baptisms, communions, confessions, community.  Celebrating sacraments with family gatherings.</p>	<p>9</p>		

The celebration of the Sacraments e.g. Baptism of grandchildren.  
Availability of confession, Eucharistic adoration, communal celebrations.  
Where we celebrate.  
I like to attend Mass, go to the sacraments and thanksgiving.  
Receiving the Eucharist.  
The reception of the Eucharist.  
Availability of penance.

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### **The joy of attendance at Mass**

Joy in Mass.  
The daily celebration of Mass.  
Attendance at Mass – when I wish to go.  
When first being brought to Mass by my mother.  
Thinking of my mother bringing me to church when I was young.  
The many happy Sundays going to Mass with my grandfather and all the family; everyone was clean and tidy – all had their Sunday best clothes on.  
My communion, confirmation etc. Are things that give me joy  
Nice flowers on the alter, reflection, able to concentrate on prayers and nice Mass.  
It makes me feel good for the day.

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### **Listening to and understanding the word of God through good quality sermons and my bible**

Sermons of quality that engendered deep reflection.  
A good, well-prepared sermon without endless repetition.  
Listening to the word of God.  
Good well-prepared sermon.  
In the past, joy came with the very occasional decent sermon  
To get the meaning from the Gospel.  
Joy in my bible.

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### **Attendance of young people at Mass**

When young people attend.  
Seeing young families attending.  
Full church congregation.  
Years ago, going to church with all the other children for Mass and the May procession.  
Going to Mass at Lent, you would hardly get a seat with all the mummies and prams and buggies. It's a lovely memory.  
The beautiful atmosphere in the children's Mass; kindergarten teaching kids Gospel



<p>What impelled me to stop attending was not only the destruction of innocent children through sexual abuse by priests but also the complacency of congregations regarding the matter.</p>		<p><b>We need a living Jesus.</b></p>	
<p><b>Organisation and management of the church</b></p> <p>A question is what happened to our church or what has been happening. Young people feeling too much wealth in the institutions. Power being abused. What makes me sorrowful about the Church is the Financial corruption. What makes me sorrowful about the Church is a hierarchy that is not fit for purpose The way the Church was run Where are the leaders?</p>	7	<p><b>We have come through a priest led church and are coming to a lay church.</b></p> <p><b>Secularisation/consumerism in society.</b></p> <p><b>Clericalism in society.</b></p> <p><b>What makes me sorrowful about the Church is a homosexual cabal that has infiltrated the Church, which covers for itself, protects itself, Invades the seminaries and filters out good candidates for the priesthood in favour of their own kind or weak minded ones. We must clean up the Church before we can renew the Church's mission</b></p>	1 1 1 1
<p><b>Lack of Priests and the decline in vocations</b></p> <p>The lack of priests and nuns. Priests overburdened. That the priesthood demise rolls on unaddressed. Decline in vocations. Lack of vocations. Lack of Priests</p>	5	<p><b>Really and truly, no respect for Jesus' presence in the tabernacle - so much talking and joking when trying to pray.</b></p>	1
<p><b>Poor Conduct of Clergy towards their congregation</b></p> <p>The conduct at my mother's burial. That the men and women of God never behaved in a God like way – they did not show the love and care of Jesus. Also the harsh regime in seminaries which attempted to dehumanise young men. They did not learn the love and compassion of Jesus Christ in their formation. The way people were so afraid of the clergy. You could not say a wrong word about the priests. They would make a show of you if you had not your Christmas, Easter, harvest collections paid. Your name would be called out from the pulpit. I would feel so sad and sorrowful for those people that had not got the money</p>	5	<p><b>I have been very fortunate to say that my personal experiences have all been positive</b></p> <p><b>All the hurt in the world.</b></p> <p><b>Children suffering.</b></p> <p><b>Poverty and third world countries living in desperate conditions.</b></p> <p><b>No understanding of our Church v their Church.</b></p> <p><b>Shame or sorrow?</b></p>	1 1 1 1 1
<p><b>Lack of Women in and all levels of the clergy e.g. priests, deacons etc.</b></p> <p>Women's role in the church to date () No women deacons.</p>	4	<p><b>No preparation of Sunday sermon.</b></p> <p><b>Canonisation of doubtful candidates.</b></p>	1 1



<p>Mass – especially the youth.</p> <p><b>The Church will always be with us</b></p> <p>It is how it will always be there no matter how low the numbers. God won't desert us. Knowing that God will always be with us In Christ's words "I will be with you always even to the end of time" Jesus always was and always will be with us in the church Despite circumstances everything is in God's hands I hope the church will survive into the future and I believe it will for some time to come.</p>	6	<p>church unless there is radical change. Nothing</p> <p><b>That Rome listens to and recognises active participation of laity</b></p> <p>I hope for a better church to listen to the people I have Hope in the Church going forward because: I think Rome is at last recognising the necessity of more active participation by the laity This may take a lot of time but feel the process has begun, hence my reason for Hope</p>	2
<p><b>Dedication of our priests</b></p> <p>The dedication of our priests Priests are very devoted in their commitments The strong faith and hard work of priests who are serving despite all the scandals I hope and pray for more vocations</p>	4	<p><b>The faith of previous generations</b></p> <p>I think of my mother's faith and those of her generation. The non-attendance of this generation compared to my mother's.</p> <p><b>Hope that women can become priests,</b></p>	2
<p><b>A more active laity</b></p> <p>The laity playing a bigger role in the liturgy of the church I think the church will survive but in a more laity run church. I thank all the lay people doing good duties. The role the laity is forced to take because of the lack of clergy.</p>	4	<p><b>That the Catholic Church continues on after all the hurt some priests all over the world did to it's population.</b></p> <p><b>We have a lovely church</b></p> <p><b>Joyful singing accompanies Sunday Mass</b></p> <p><b>Mass is celebrated daily</b></p> <p><b>This Synodal Process</b></p>	1 1 1 1 1

## THE FEARS

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.
<p><b>The lack of vocations and its impact</b></p> <p>Priests overworked hence danger of Mass and sacraments being more difficult to access. if churches may have to close due to a lack of vocations Vocations to the priesthood are very scarce I fear the lack of priests No ordinations to the priesthood or religious life for the future of the Roman Catholic Church. There won't be enough priests to fill the needs of the church I am concerned about the lack of priests and the age profile of those already in ministry who have to take on so much in their later years. That we might end up with no priests</p>	7	<p><b>Failure of Church to adapt and allow married priests</b></p> <p>That the church seems unwilling to move with the times - marriage for the priesthood. The failure of the church to move with the times and allow marriage for priests.</p> <p><b>Closure of our parish church due to shortage of priests</b></p> <p>At the moment, I'm extremely anxious and worried that our church will be pulled down and replaced by blocks of apartments and I won't have anywhere local to worship as I grow older. That our church will close due to a shortage of priests.</p>	2
<p><b>The lack of young people in the church</b></p> <p>I am fearful when I see that my grandchildren are not going to church even though they are baptised. The spiritual side of their lives is very lacking. They are all good people so I pray that they come back to, the church Less and less young people. I fear the lack of young people taking part in the Church The next generation won't know what it was all about. That the younger generation may not get the chance experience the church if churches may have to close due to a lack of vocations</p>	5	<p><b>Completing the synodal process</b></p> <p>Hope Pope Francis lives to see the synod through I fear this consultation being ignored.</p> <p><b>I would get anxious to think we may not have any priests or nuns in the coming years – I would like to think that in my final hours on earth that I would have a priest to give me the last rites.</b></p>	2
<p><b>The long-term effects of clerical sex abuse scandals</b></p> <p>I am anxious for the church as long as it does not clear with the past (abuse) and connect with the present Darkness of the past causing people's mistrust to church authority. Fearful of coming persecutions in our country hung on the hook of the terrible scandals in the church</p>	3	<p><b>Church not answering needs which are apparent and not even allowing questions to be discussed.</b></p> <p><b>I am both anxious and fearful that the “decline in vocations” will make the bond between parish and church weaken to such an extent that the relevance of our church will no longer be practical.</b></p>	1

<p><b>Failure of Church to adapt and allow women priests.</b></p> <p>Women are not wanted or affirmed in church ministry That the church seems unwilling to move with the times regarding women and marriage for the priesthood. The failure of the church to move with the times and appoint women priests and marriage for priests.</p>	3	<p><b>Also will the involvement of the laity fill the gap (left by the lack of priests).</b></p> <p><b>Fear of the unknown.</b></p> <p><b>I am also fearful that many people who have fallen by the wayside may in time move to other churches/religions.</b></p> <p><b>That the next generation will not have the same belief in God. A God who is there to support us through all our troubles and worries.</b></p> <p><b>People don't talk about Jesus on a daily basis</b></p> <p><b>Children are sacramentalised too easily without real commitment to faith by their parents</b></p> <p><b>People get embarrassed with being Roman catholic and not to be persecuted</b></p> <p><b>We don't hear the good news of our church.</b></p> <p><b>Very long and boring Homilies.</b></p> <p><b>That there will be no religion in the future.</b></p>	<p>1</p>
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### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

#### WHAT THEMES ARE EMERGING FROM THE GATHERING?

**Responses:**

- Low number of responses 41 in a parish of 2500.
- Despite the nominal response, it was a worthwhile exercise.
- Very broad reflections

**Priests:**

- Married priests - worried there will not be priest in the future.
- Priesthood as a vocation.
- The church allowing Women priests may help relieve the shortage and challenges. Not about numbers but about enrichment.

- First step is to appoint women deacons

**Identity:**

- Sense of belonging
- Sense of identity despite the challenges

**Society:**

- Society has had a huge impact on our religion and how it is perceived by the younger generation. Ireland is a very secular society. The church is not needed as it was many years ago in Ireland.
- Most people return for sacraments. So, there is something spiritual within the younger people.
- There is a switch somewhere an inherent goodness in people so how do we tap into that goodness and bring them back to the church.

**The youth:**

- Will our religion be passed on? Do the next generation want it? Is there a sense of importance in passing on the faith?
- Lots of young people believe even though they are not practicing or attend Mass.
- There is a need to reach out to young people

**Concerns:**

Concerns that our church will be closed and our parish will be lost.

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

- Calling
- Play our part to keep the church going?
- There is a time in the church to bring in women or married priests
- Faith development and evangelisation
- Cut out the distractions and focus on the core issues and build on that
- Do not spread resources out too thin
- Sign of hope

SIGNED	DATE
Gozie Offiah	11.04.2022
Kieran Coyle	11.04.2022