

DIOCESE OF  SALFORD



The Big Listen

Saturday 18th May 2024

“I hope for a new Church when the Universal Synod completes its work and guides our faith in the 21st century.”

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|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Total | 589 |
| Group responses (Adult) | 271 |
| Group responses (C/YP) | 59 |
| Individual responses (Adult) | 207 |
| Individual responses (C/YP) | 43 |
| Organisations. | 9 |



Adults



Main Thematic Areas

Nurturing Faith for Tomorrow's World

Building Connections

Enabling Access

Fostering Christ-like Care

Nurturing Faith for Tomorrow's World

- We need to recognise the church as a whole body.

“We, the people, are the church.”

Nurturing Faith for Tomorrow's World

- Priests are important and valued.

“Having lovely priests in our parish makes attending church easier. They make us welcome. Our faith would be harder if we didn't have them.”

Nurturing Faith for Tomorrow's World

- The laity are prepared to “step up.”

“Appreciate the giftedness of its laity - engage with them.”

Nurturing Faith for Tomorrow's World

- There needs to be a way forward on the issue of women and leadership.

“The church is breathing with one lung - the ordination of women would transform the church”

Nurturing Faith for Tomorrow's World

- Investing in children and young people is essential for the future of the Church.

“Don't see the need for religion”

“Fascinated and thirsty”

Nurturing Faith for Tomorrow's World

- Not-addressing contemporary issues creates a barrier to faith for many.

“Not many churches are connecting with younger people and don't seem to do much to connect with them.”

Building Connections

- The majority no longer want to simply be a “beacon” - they want to reach out.

“For me it’s all about relationship.”

Building Connections

- Building community is a continual and cooperative process.

“Children unruly or not should always be welcome in the
even if they are noisy”

Building Connections

- Each individual parish is situated within a specific local community, which has its own context. There might not be a “one size fits all” solution as to how to do community outreach.

“Every Church in the Diocese will have different needs and circumstances.”

Building Connections

- Clear communication is repeatedly raised as essential for progress and cooperation.

“To be open to listening to what parishioners feel they need.”

Building Connections

- Social media may be a concern in some areas, but it is a question of how it is used - there will be no Catholic presence to find, if the space is filled by someone else.

“We need to...break into the media world, and especially to reach younger generations. There is a strong need for the faith to be communicated.”

Enabling Access

- Church participation, in whatever form, provides hope and supports developing faith. Restricted access excludes people from faith.

“God would like to bring children to Mass , encourage young families and make it a bit easier for them to attend”

Enabling Access

- People want the Diocese specifically, and the Church more generally, to understand the social and economic barriers they face.

“It's hard to concentrate on God when your starving and can't pay the rent after working a full week.”

Enabling Access

- The need to welcome people is consistently mentioned, but is not defined. Some people include the need to accept people as part of welcoming people, others unconsciously frame their welcome with boundaries.

“To be more understanding and accepting of individuals and families who don’t appear to conform to all of the Catholic teachings and to welcome anyone into church as equals.”

Enabling Access

- According to priests, the Diocese needs to make connections with, listen to, include and learn from different cultures, instead of keeping its distance.

“It is vital that the Churches allow people to gather before and after Mass for informal chats and exchange of news.”

Enabling Access

- The Church needs to carefully consider how it treats divorced Catholics.

“If I can be in communion with the church after confession and a murder conviction, why can't my father take communion when he has been divorced.”

Enabling Access

- The Church needs to carefully consider how it treats LGBTQ+ Catholics.

“Treat all God’s children with love. Their souls belong to Him, only He should judge.”

Enabling Access

- Practical, physical access to the Church is often not a priority, causing problems for those affected.

“My disabilities make it hard for me to participate in the community life of my parish”

Enabling Access

- Linguistic access affects both non-English and English speakers.

“Tolerance within the Church to Catholics who love traditional liturgies”

Enabling Access

- Gaps in education cause people to call out for training in their faith; they want to engage spiritually and for the Church to facilitate meeting with God.

“Baptised people don't understand doctrine.”

Enabling Access

- Technology should be used positively to enhance the Church's position and voice within society.

“To be more prominent in the world and to be open and transparent. To appeal to young people by being obvious and public in their good works.”

Fostering Christ-like Care

- Wanting to be Christ-like is a common value, even if there are different interpretations of what being Christ-like means.

“Recognising and protecting the dignity of all.”

Fostering Christ-like Care

- Service is seen as a core Catholic value

“God is asking for the Church to shift from religiosity to practical things”

Fostering Christ-like Care

- Being Christ-like is equated by most responses as meeting people where they are at.

“The church needs to live through Jesus’ example and meet people where they are”

Fostering Christ-like Care

- Dealing with historical abuses and trauma is still something that the Church is not perceived as having done effectively.

Fostering Christ-like Care

- When contemplating if/how to change, younger Catholics especially want the Church to think outside the box rather than resort to what has always been done. They want the Church to be organised according to how society functions now, rather than how it functioned hundreds of years ago.

“A voice for the voiceless”



Thinking Outside the Box

1

A teenager does not attend Mass because it is early on a Sunday morning.

2

A woman complains because she cannot find a husband.

3

There are repeated requests to fix the church boiler.



Remaining Questions



- How is the church going to define its values and characteristics?
- What does inclusivity and welcome actually look like on a practical level?
- Quieter voices also need to be heard, as they are also important.

Transparent Honest Empathetic Open

 Humble Compassionate Safe

Faithful Servant-hearted Listening

Christ-like Non-judgemental

 Obedient

Teaching Loving Tolerant

 Kind

Community-minded Accessible Modern?

 Outward-looking? Welcoming





Remaining Questions



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Listen



Talk



Change

“Are we going to make the same mistakes and just talk?”