

Theme 4: Building community, nurturing belonging

Due to Covid19 restrictions the Liverpool Diocesan Synod has been put back to June 2021 but the work goes on and over the next four weeks your help is needed to select the proposals that will be discussed at Synod. You will find below the first of the affirmations and proposals, put together by the Synod working Group from the 3,500 responses received from parishes across the Diocese, in response to the four themes we looked at for Synod earlier this year.

Please take some time to read, reflect and pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance. You may need to read the proposals several times: listen to your heart, listen to the community you are part of; in the light of listening ask yourself what are the affirmations and proposals I am most drawn to? You may select up to 4 affirmations and 10 proposals (you can select less). Please email the titles of your chosen affirmations (e.g. Buildings) and the numbers of your chosen proposals (e.g. 1.17) to eileenjackson525@gmail.com The Parish Synod representatives will select 2 affirmations and 5 proposals from each of the four themes, that best represent the views of the Parish, and submit these to the Synod. In March 2021 we will be given a final list of Synod proposals. The final date for submission of your selections on themes 1-4 is 25th November.

Welcome and Inclusivity

The Synod affirms the principle that churches and parishes are places of welcome and inclusion and that by welcoming a diversity of people we will be enriched by their gifts.

4.1 The Synod proposes that emphasis should be placed on making our churches and parishes welcoming and inclusive, that parishioners need training in the Ministry of Welcome and that the welcome we give must be inclusive of all.

4.2 The Synod proposes that all our buildings be reviewed to ensure that they are accessible and equipped for a range of needs.

4.3 The Synod proposes that an Archdiocesan ministry to the LGBTQI community be developed.

Parish

The Synod affirms that the parish as a structure has the potential to adapt to the needs of our times.

4.4 The Synod proposes that deacons and/or lay people be given a share in the pastoral care of some parishes under the direction of an appointed priest.

4.5 The Synod proposes that parishes exercise proper, transparent and honest stewardship and accountability.

4.6 The Synod proposes that a review be undertaken to see how our buildings can be used to more effectively support community life.

4.7 The Synod proposes that episcopal visitations be developed as the opportunity to promote and monitor pastoral planning and its implementation.

Synod 2020

Summary of Proposals

4.8 The Synod proposes that parishes find a way to keep up-to-date records of parishioners in order to be able to reach out in times of need.

4.9 The Synod proposes that, in the light of what we have learned through COVID-19, each parish develops an emergency response plan.

Schools

The Synod affirms that Catholic schools are a great resource but do not always achieve their potential in handing on the Catholic Faith.

4.10 The Synod proposes that the whole Catholic community be invited to share in developing a renewed understanding of what Catholic schools are about and what a Catholic education is.

4.11 The Synod proposes that there be more collaboration and interaction to enable the strengthening of the home/school/parish partnership by using innovative ways of sharing faith, sharing gifts and resources and enabling joint projects.

Children and Young People

The Synod affirms the valuable work being done in some places in developing the faith of young people.

4.12 The Synod proposes that new ways of enabling parents to hand on faith to their children be established, recognising the many challenges this presents.

4.13 The Synod proposes further development of peer to peer youth ministry as a way of affirming young people as valued members of the church.

Outreach

The Synod affirms the importance of each parish forging strong links with those who are sick, lonely, isolated, or marginalised.

4.14 The Synod proposes prioritising the needs of those who feel on the margins of society.

4.15 The Synod proposes that each parish develops its ministry to the elderly, the sick, the housebound and the lonely.

Community Building

The Synod affirms the variety of ways in which people express their belonging to the Catholic community, including pilgrimages, outings, membership of groups and social activities.

4.16 The Synod proposes that opportunities to belong to supportive and formative small groups, such as family groups and sodalities, be developed so that they become the essential building blocks of parishes.

4.17 The Synod proposes that ways of developing our sense of belonging and community should be part of the regular activities of every parish.

4.18 The Synod proposes that each pastoral area should adopt a charity or project for a specific period of time that enables all members of the community to be involved.

Synod 2020
Summary of Proposals

Ecumenism

The Synod affirms that ecumenical dialogue and activity is essential for the Catholic community.

4.19 The Synod proposes that our parishes turn outwards, joining with other churches, faith communities, charities, and other organisations to serve the local community.

4.20 The Synod proposes that we engage with renewed enthusiasm in the ecumenical journey at every level.

Local/Pastoral Area Organisation

The Synod affirms that structures are at the service of the mission of the church.

4.21 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese should review the numbers and locations of churches required for its mission.

4.22 The Synod proposes that pastoral area boundaries be reviewed.

4.23 The Synod proposes that small clusters of parishes be encouraged to enable more effective working together.

Communication

The Synod affirms the importance of effective communication.

4.24 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese should provide support to all parishes in the use of technologies for communication and for outreach.

4.25 The Synod proposes that a new Communications Department be created to facilitate and promote the use of both traditional and modern media towards more effective communication, evangelisation, and outreach.

4.26 The Synod proposes that, in developing future communication strategies, consideration is given to those who are unable to access online provision.