



Synod Feedback Form

NAME OF PARISH	NAME OF PASTORAL GROUPING
ST LAURENCE'S KILMACUD	SYNOD PARISH GROUP
VENUE OF GATHERINGS	IN PERSON OR ZOOM
PARISH CENTRE	IN PERSON
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (1 st Gathering)	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (2 nd Gathering)
55 (held on 23 rd March)	56 (held on 30 th March)

THE JOYS

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.
<p>Our Community: The community, as a people of God, coming together, praying together, participating and giving a comforting sense of belonging and involvement and forming and sustaining relationships, everyone connected, genuine sense of purpose, a safe place</p> <p>Music: Music, singing and choirs enriching the sacraments, the celebratory quality of music</p> <p>Liturgy: Gospels offering enlightenment and truth and also good liturgy and short, relevant and meaningful sermons and homilies</p> <p>Our people; Generous, sharing, caring, good neighbourly people of faith in our community with concern for others</p>	38	<p>The physical church and being able to worship there again</p> <p>God loves me unconditionally and knows me by name</p> <p>Structure and routine again (after covid)</p>	2
	16	<p>Peace and joy in prayer</p> <p>Family mass and young families in church</p>	2
	14	<p><u>The following comments / remarks were also made</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nice rituals eg lighting candles to remember loved ones Church really manifests itself when it stands up for justice and the poor Mass.. calvary .. has opened up heaven for me 	2
	11		

Our mass, the sacraments and the eucharist	7	
Own personal faith and belief in God, in Jesus and in the resurrection	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating special festivals with family and friends, Christmas, Easter etc • When people stand up for faith • Parents and grandparents passing on faith
Pope Francis, his books and encyclicals including on human fraternity	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's presence in everyday life • Having a living spirit of belief • His promise to be with me to end of life
The commitment and dedication of our priests, staff and volunteers	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His guidance for life – ethics / commandments • Faith giving meaning to life • People smiling more to each other
Our open, welcoming and inclusive church and peaceful atmosphere	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular communications, newsletter, “ a few words from Fr Joe....” • Religious orders helping people in many ways
Use of technology and capacity to adapt to streaming etc, using screens to get better engagement and involvement	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture of St Joseph in the Church • Faith of the older generations • Children and others not afraid of priests and teachers
Simplicity and relevance of prayers our children use in school and how this relates to everyday life	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for worship, prayer and thanksgiving • Lack of a social class in the church • The beauty of churches and cathedrals
Presence of god and my relationship with him and the joy of feeling and experiencing his love, forgiveness and compassion	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increase in laity participation • Church services can be uplifting • Church calendar follows the highs and lows of life • Simple sacraments

THE SORROWS

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.
<p>Role of Women; Lack of female leadership roles, involvement of women and status of women not officially recognised in church but contributing a lot and can do more, no or limited involvement in decision-making, no female priests</p> <p>Handling of Abuse cases; Church handling of abuse cases, cover up and legacy of shame resulting in priests being less visible and impactful</p> <p>Lack of love, compassion and inclusiveness: In a compassionate and loving church, lack of welcome for and exclusion of people in a range of circumstances, new relationships, same sex unions, personal and relationship issues, LGBTQ+, marginalised etc.. inequality and inequity existing, people excluded from sacrament.. falling short of a loving and compassionate church that reaches out</p> <p>Younger generations: Absence of and/or incapacity or capability to attract and involve younger generations and young people, lost generations and as a result empty churches except for OAPs</p>	19	Lack of clear, simple teaching of God, lack of a newssheet for us on all the beautiful and key elements of our faith	2
	15	Covid legacy – fear to stop, socialise, engage, Lack of follow up to sacraments by families and sacraments seen as the “exit” from church by some	2
	16	Weak , poor leadership, not addressing the challenges Absence of focus on Jesus / no real relationship with Jesus	2
	13	<p><u>The following comments / remarks were also made</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that all the baptised are church and can lead in future .. not just a hierarchical model • No or limited attempt or effort to regain those who still have an affinity • Belief in the church but not in structure • Priests should be allowed to marry • Lack of involvement in social justice issues • Society moving on and church being left behind • Priests overworked and don’t have the energy to lead and sustain this 	2

Lack of training / support / formation for catechists, lay people, parents, priests	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of irreverence in church, maybe due to lack of awareness or understanding • Church failing to serve people of God • Injustices in church at central and parish level including in working conditions of staff • Adverse media attacks on church • Division among Christians • Young people and their faith – not meeting them where they are • Churches are dark , need to be brighter • Discrimination against other faiths • Young people not coming themselves to a belief in God • More interactive masses and age appropriate eg young people • Young people not getting guidance after sinning • Vatican 2 opportunity lost • Faith v religion • Explain teaching more clearly and with more relevant stories • Can we allow divorced to get married in church • Sacramentalised but not evangelised • Need to listen before it is too late • Maybe a trimmed down church would be appreciated more • Lack of communications and no mechanism to have views heard and responded to by church leaders • Infallibility – leading to close down of discussions • Unprecedented decline in vocations
Mass not attractive or celebratory, lack of joy in liturgy and falling attendances and age profile not representative of community	5	
Slow pace of change	5	
Too Hierarchical. Male dominated and excessive central control, legalistic and unattractive, overemphasis on law	5	
Lack of Input and involvement of lay people at all levels	5	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New hymns • That we are here in this position after 1500 years .. hope “ obey, pay and pray” attitude is gone • Suggestions not listened to and no real dialogue • Sunday mass attendance not valued and only attend if anniversary mass etc • That the message of Jesus as presented by our Church is not attracting young people • Lack of a sense of sin in life • Living in an age of relativism and existentialism • Church should be a teaching church, so why not • Misogyny and Homophobia • General apathy at this time • Don’t believe teaching faith should be left to our schools • Transparency on use of monies to charities 	
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THE HOPES

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.
<p>Pope Francis: Francis is Hope. Our present Pope is a beacon of hope for young people. The way Pope Francis promotes a different way. Pope Francis’s humility, reaching out to the poor and forgotten people trying to bring all into the church. I find great hope with the courage and leadership of Pope Francis. Hope that the changes recently approved by Pope Francis will be implemented without delay by local dioceses, so that any member of the faithful can preside over senior local church positions to invigorate the faith of local congregations.</p>	11	<p>Past Failings: The truth will set us free. Face the failings is essential. Include imperfections. We had to forgive as a church the serious damage done by a few.</p>	2
		<p>Questioning Voices: Marie Collins, Mary McAleese; Questioning is positive, cleansing is healthy.</p>	2
		<p>Archbishop Dermot Farrell</p>	2
		<p>Domestic Church: Groups forming and meeting as domestic church. Domestic Church offering spirituality and nourishment.</p>	2

<p>The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit was given to guide us and bring us to fulfil the Church. Faith in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit working in us, in the people rejuvenating the Church.</p>	6	<p>Lay participation: Great hope for more lay participation in Church. Volunteers active work at local level in parishes.</p>	2
<p>The Synodal Process: Processes like the Synod give me hope that this synodal path meeting will be constructive in generating solutions to address all the challenges facing the church in the 21st century. The Synod. Ready to LISTEN and HEAR and RESPOND in a POSITIVE way to what we are looking for – MEANING. This is listening to the voice of the people.</p>	8	<p><u>The following comments / remarks were also made</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many rules impinge on people’s lives. Marriage – church should simply teach fidelity of partners for life as long as partners adhere to concept of fidelity for life. Church should not interfere in matters of sexual relations save to teach that nothing should be done without consent of partner. Humanae Vitae should be repealed, to the intent that contraception and planning of family is solely a matter for the Partners and Church should not interfere. 	
<p>Young people: The Youth..Young People will find a way. The Young People Today – more compassionate and questioning. Young people are reacting to the scandals and hypocrisy.</p>	9		
<p>Community of Faith. The experience of meeting very good people who are church people gives me hope. Faith of others gives Hope. The passing of faith from generation to generation. Elders have a lot to pass on. The witness of the elderly parishioners to their faith.</p>	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a multicultural society, the Church must be free to spread its message without the need to depend on secular authority • The great openness within Church leadership to learning from the errors and wrongdoing of the past and to moving humbly forward towards a new dawn. 	
<p>Longevity of the Church: The church has survived for over 2000 years despite disasters, corruption and hopefully will learn from its mistakes. Continuation of Church. God hasn’t changed and the Church is still around (going) so that gives me hope. Great traditions and teachings. There remains solid foundations on which we can build.</p>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Communion / Religious instruction taken into community away from schools as with Protestant churches. • Young shoots appearing • Approachable priests who meet you as equal. • The Taskforce • Vatican II • Clustering Parishes / Sharing Resources 	

<p>Charity: Response to war in Ukraine as an example. The generosity of Irish people towards others – Christian in spirit even if not regular attendees at church services. In spite of all its hardships, the church continues to help the faithful. There is concern for and awareness of people in need.</p>	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The peace I get sometimes that I cannot find anywhere else – so that is hope. • I hope that the Lord will come into people’s hearts. That there will always be religion in everyone’s heart. 	
<p>Hope is hard to find. The Church has a long way to go before we are back to where it was as we knew it. Then we come to Hope. I find it hard to have hope but believe that the church will find a way forward as it has in the past. Very difficult to have hope – Hope for change that must come. Hope is hard to find. I have hope when I think of the early church. If we return to the message of LOVE we can have hope for the future</p>	5		
<p>Inclusiveness. Today our churches are less judgemental and accept people of all persuasions and none. A more welcoming, compassionate and inclusive church. Our moves towards being a more inclusive and welcoming church give me hope. The new church will be more compassionate and welcoming. The church needs to be more accepting of difference and humanity. Hope that our Catholic Church becomes inclusive of all people with a special welcome for all marginalised groups (women, married men, divorced, remarried, LGBT, Transgender and non-practicing Catholics).</p>	5		
<p>Covid19 Response: Reaching out to other denominations and coming together when troubles arise. Prompt action when faced with the Covid challenge. Streaming and how quickly the church adapted to the use of multimedia during Covid19 gives me</p>	5		

<p>hope. Multidenominational services and masses during lockdown. The use of digital technologies to broaden the reach of the church.</p>			
<p>Faith: The greatest source of hope is salvation through our faith in Jesus, in knowing that God loves us and his Divine Mercy is available to everybody. Realising that we / I am loved by God. I believe that God is always with us, but very little signs that the clergy know that.</p>	4		
<p>Eucharist: Even at low moment, Eucharist is central to my life. I have hope because I believe Jesus is present Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Sacrament. Eucharist and prayers.</p>	4		
<p>Gospels & Scripture: Essential message of gospel and scriptures give me hope. The Church and its scriptures is full of care and compassion which traits are essential to encourage young people back into church.</p>	3		
<p>Sacramental Preparation: Parents continuing to avail of sacraments for their children. Seeing young people receiving sacraments (First Communion, Confirmation). Hope lies in the fact that children are being baptised. Communions and confirmation give me hope.</p>	3		

THE FEARS

WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND CONVERGE?	No.	WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE NAMED AND DIVERGE?	No.	
<p>Unwillingness to Change and Listen: Church leaders slow to respond to change, Lack of will to implement change. Fear that nothing will change after the Synod. That the Church will not listen to the Synod and those who had hope will lose heart. That the church will be afraid to change in response to changes in society. Old attitudes are preventing progress. That the Holy Spirit will be ignored and the Church won't change. That we are blocking God's change for the Church. Fear that changes might just be superficial and not considered deeply. There is no change without suffering. The Church to survive and prosper must embrace change – that change must be fundamental and not cosmetic. Eg married priests, women priests, (even deacons) etc. People are not listened to. Must listen to congregation in the future. Anxious that we are doing the same continuously and expecting different results. I am fearful that the Church as we know it today is coming to an end; (because it is NOT listening to what WE – inspired by the Holy Spirit – are saying). I am anxious (angry!) that one cannot Engage with the Church organisation (the Hierarchy) in suggesting how the many challenges facing the Church today might be addressed.</p> <p>Vocations: Lack of vocations to priesthood / religious life. Age of church leaders – priests & bishops. Lack of priests. How the faith community will be sustained when</p>	15	<p>Not willing to market the wonderful history of the church as a caring and compassionate church. Resources not being allocated in promotion of church</p> <p>Lack of Reverence</p>	2	
			<p>Laity: Church leadership slow to respond to change eg vocations, involving the laity, deacons, women etc in solving the crisis. That Bishops and Priests, won't allow lay involvement.</p>	2
			<p><u>The following comments / remarks were also made</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That there will be other scandals / revelations about the treatment of children / vulnerable adults in the church. • My fear is that the current church leadership, especially in the present circumstances when priests are overwhelmed with work and church scandals, are unwilling and/or unable to invigorate the faith of their congregations. • Existentialism. • Relativism. • Can't we the lay people develop and continue a church open to all? 	
	14			

<p>churches close due to lack of priests for mass and sacraments, Because we won't allow others to become priests our church will die.</p> <p>Female Priests and the broader role of Women: 50% of the population are women. Left out of high offices. Need an inclusive church. Openness to women priests. Allow women to be part of church administration. The Role of Women. Need more significant roles for women in the church, I would like to see the development of ordaining women to the priesthood.</p> <p>Inclusivity: That we won't continue to strive to be a more inclusive church. A greater effort is needed to include LGBTQi people in particular. Too many people are excluded, left out, shamed. There will be no meaningful church membership in Ireland unless we move into the reality of the 21st Century – genuine involvement of the laity, married clergy, etc.</p> <p>Youth: If we don't do something about participation of younger people in Church activities we will lose them all. That younger people won't be given a larger part in their liturgies. Reach out to young people is vital. Fear of how we get the next generation involved in parish life. Fear is that my catholic faith, a faith that believes that God's unfailing love sustains me in all my life's circumstances, may not be easily communicated to future Irish generations</p>	<p>12</p> <p>6</p> <p>6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The synodal process, all these conversations are all about sending material to Rome. What about our own parish? The Synod in Rome is all MEN, Women are excluded. There is a contradiction between the local process and what happens in Rome. 	
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<p>Faith: Faith not being passed on by parents / indifference / passive attitude to faith / lack of faith in the home / faith being taken for granted. Faith disappearing.</p>	5		
<p>Church: Image of church is too narrow. It is equated with Mass. To be church isn't only to go to mass. Need other types of nourishment. Church is all those who are trying to live gospel values. The Church needs to change in the way it witnesses the gospel. Hope for the future because people are intrinsically kind towards others – Christianity in practice. Fear of being redundant.</p>	5		
<p>No Fears: I have no fears, my trust is in the Lord who said 'Be Not Afraid'. We must not be negative and we must not fear – Our God Reigns. God said on numerous occasions, Fear Not and that is good enough for me. The Experience is not fear or anxiety not to fear! Very little of my current experience of Church gives me fear or anxiety. God said 'Do Not Be Afraid' and I stand on his word. I am not afraid.</p>	5		
<p>Power: The powerful forces in the Vatican and Curia holding on to power and preventing much needed change. The Curia needs to lose control. Control by laity and clergy. Too much power but Jesus's word's 'Be Not Afraid' compensate. Ambition rather than dependence on Holy Spirit. Looking for success, possessions, power, social status. We need creative fidelity</p>	5		
<p>Diminishing congregations. Covid has withdrawn people from church and they may not return. Loss of young people. Church is declining because it</p>	5		

<p>is losing touch with reality – faith has to be linked with reality in people’s lives. Elderly population.</p>			
<p>Community: Need a sense of community and belonging. Build friendship and community with coffee after mass.</p>	3		
<p>Married Priests: Potential for priests (in some orders) to marry. Fearful of the lack of priests and the lack of openness to married priests. Married priests would be better integrated in secular.</p>	3		
<p>Doubts: Fear that all that I believed growing up as to what was a sin or not will prove to be wrong. Eg How confession is no longer an absolute (before death). Also causing anxiety is the view that <u>only</u> the Catholic Church is the <u>one</u> true church. I am afraid and anxious sometimes when I think of eternal punishment. I tell myself God loves me.</p>	3		
<p>The amount of people who are continuously mocking our faith. Extreme criticism by certain groups that don’t build up church. Internal divisions and a lack of unity in the church’s diversity – this could give a counter witness to the hope and spirit of communion that the Holy Spirit inspires. Living in a secular world and alien environment.</p>	3		

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

WHAT THEMES ARE EMERGING FROM THE GATHERING?

Community

The importance and criticality of sustaining, supporting and nurturing the Parish community and neighbourliness, opportunities for celebration, assembly and gathering for sacraments, prayer and mutual support, harnessing the energy and talents

Role of Women in the Church

The necessity, value and importance of formally, officially and visibly recognising the role of women in the Church, including as priests, deacons and within other key roles. Lack of vocations and aging priest profile requires urgent revision of role of women.

Laity

More concerted effort on formation and training at various levels as well as greater levels of engagement and involvement

Inclusivity

Demonstrating and evidencing greater levels of inclusiveness and welcome to all people and groups within society as proof of a compassionate, caring and loving church

Commitment and dedication

Acclaim and recognise the stellar work of our priests, volunteers and many others who provide local leadership and example every day

Young people

How to stimulate and foster their practice of the faith, mass attendance and participation

Pope Francis

A beacon of hope, an authentic leader committed to change and renewal of the Church

Need for Change

A church that meets the needs of our time and the changing society and demographics, a faithful that recognises that change is necessary but a Curia that may not listen or share this view.

Personal Faith

The importance of individual and personal faith and following Jesus's way in daily life.

The Synod

The Synodal process is giving a lot of hope to the lay faithful who feel they are being asked for their views in a meaningful way and a hope that the views will be listened to

Current leadership deficits

Inaction, tardiness in responding to issues and general reticence to change within the senior church leadership

Teachings and liturgy

Return to basics, simple messages that are meaningful and relevant to today

Wider perspective of church

Recognise the many who practice our faith through their good works, behaviour and conduct and may not be regular mass goers for whatever reason. How help these people who have affinity to come back to sacraments.

WHAT MIGHT THE HOLY SPIRIT BE INDICATING IN THIS?

- Cherish our faith and remain loyal to our relationship with God, even in times of great challenge and adversity
- Serious reflection on role of women in the Church
- Harness, tap into and energise the available resources (women and laity) and agree roles for them
- Need to be a more inclusive, welcoming, loving, caring and compassionate church
- Joyfulness, happiness and celebration should be at the core of how we practice our faith individually and collectively within the community
- Redefinition of Church, messages and teachings centred on people and their conduct and behaviour and the example they set and less on buildings or infrastructure. Focus on faith, hope, love, compassion and caring for all people and their own circumstances.
- Now is the time for the Curia to listen to the voices of the people and be open to change.
- Leadership and Courage to change and trust in the Spirit to deliver the necessary change

SIGNED	DATE
Kilmacud Synod Parish Group	17th April 2022