

From Proposals to Recommendations

Synod 2020

Towards the end of 2020, Synod members showed their preferences for the proposals that they felt would help us to become the Church God is calling us to be. These proposals were put together from the thousands that were submitted across the Archdiocese, and this was the opportunity for Synod members to, after a period of discernment, share what they were most drawn to. This process informed the categorisation and wording of the Synod Recommendations that are found and expanded on in our book and resource for discernment sessions Together On The Road.

As part of our commitment to transparency through the Synod process, this document highlights how we have moved from those proposals, especially those that Synod members were most drawn towards, to the recommendations that will be voted on at our Synod in June. For each topic, an explanation of what came forward from Synod members through this process follows. It notes all recommendations, even those that didn't emerge as strongly for Synod members, and includes those affirmations that received over 60 preferences.

The one exception to this, and the only thing we have removed after preferences were cast are those things which relate to safeguarding. Our commitment to ensuring the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults is not only a statutory obligation, but at the heart of our commitment to the dignity of each and every person that God has created. We didn't deem it appropriate to put a recommendation forward for to the Synod because we recognise how important this is to Synod members and not something that can be ranked alongside other pastoral priorities.

A final recommendation, 'The Church in Today's World' has been added in light of conversations that have taken place throughout the Archdiocese during the global pandemic.

Where possible the narrative for each topic introduces proposals in order, beginning with proposals that Synod members were most drawn to, ending with those that didn't emerge strongly. More detailed data on affirmations and proposals can be found at results.synod2020.co.uk



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Evangelisation and Ministry

Evangelisation

Through the proposal stage of the Synod journey, members affirmed their passion for sharing with all people the Good News of the saving power of Jesus Christ. Likewise the listening stage clearly showed that evangelisation was the first concern of the People of God in the Archdiocese when they were asked about the purpose of the Catholic Church in the world today.

Specific proposals relating to evangelisation, however, were not amongst those that emerged most strongly from Synod members. The proposal relating to Evangelisation and Ministry that came out in the top 50% asked for a “review and reform of the catechetical processes of the Archdiocese to better suit the faith development needs of our age”.

Other proposals that were put forward, but didn't emerge strongly from Synod members suggested an annual mission, a “new framework for evangelisation” which included a bespoke Archdiocesan course, and for sacramental formation to reflect the renewed understanding of the Eucharist we have in light of the pandemic.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms that we are passionate about sharing with all people the Good News of the saving power of Jesus.
- Proposal 2.01 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese develop a new framework for evangelisation to include (but not restricted to) a bespoke Archdiocesan course for evangelisation and to ensure that our preparation and celebration of sacraments makes the most of the opportunity to evangelise.
- Proposal 2.02 The Synod proposes that each parish, in collaboration with neighbouring parishes, undertakes an annual programme of evangelisation/mission.
- Proposal 2.03 The Synod proposes that there is a review and reform of the catechetical processes of the Archdiocese to better suit the faith development needs of our age.
- Proposal 2.04 In the light of COVID-19 we have discovered a new depth of what Eucharist means. The Synod proposes that programmes of sacramental formation are adapted to reflect this.



Synod Recommendation #1

Evangelisation

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan heed the call of the Church to be courageous in guiding all Catholics to deepen their relationship with Jesus, and to engage in our mission to help make Jesus known and loved in our world.

Lay Ministry

Synod members affirmed the value of lay ministers in serving, supporting, challenging, strengthening, and empowering local communities and their contribution in the celebration of the liturgy was also strongly affirmed. A specific proposal that relates to lay ministry that was amongst those Synod members were drawn to called for lay people to be “used more fully in the celebration of the liturgy”.

Other proposals that came out strongly from Synod members spoke of the “the giftedness of all the faithful” and the need for this to be “recognised, valued, nurtured and given opportunity to flourish within governance structures, formation initiatives, and leadership roles”. In proposals lay people were spoken of either in a more general sense, or specifically as “professional lay ministers working in collaboration with clergy and volunteers”.

There were also proposals put forward with more specific suggestions relating to lay people that were not amongst those that emerged strongly from Synod members, these include those asking for lay people to be commissioned to lead baptisms, for the use of Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers to be restricted and the services of the word be “reserved for Sunday in the absence of a priest”.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the value of lay ministers in serving, supporting, challenging, strengthening, and empowering local communities.
- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the variety of roles and ministries in the celebration of liturgy.
- Proposal 1.10 The Synod proposes that parish and pastoral area communities should be able to benefit from professional lay ministers (including but not restricted to pastoral associates and youth workers) working in collaboration with clergy and volunteers to support the vocation of all the baptised.
- Proposal 1.11 The Synod proposes that the giftedness of all the faithful is recognised, valued, nurtured, and given opportunity to flourish within governance structures, formation initiatives, and leadership roles.
- Proposal 1.12 The Synod proposes that the Archbishop appoint suitably trained and commissioned lay people to administer the Sacrament of Baptism when the need arises.
- Proposal 1.21 The Synod proposes that the lay vocation is truly valued and that the voice of lay people is heard in a more structured way.
- Proposal 1.22 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese commits to the promotion of the vocation of all the baptised and a culture of discernment of specific callings within that.
- Proposal 3.16 The Synod proposes that the gifts of lay people be used more fully in the celebration of the liturgy.
- Proposal 3.17 The Synod proposes that the use of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion be restricted to cases of actual necessity.
- Proposal 3.18 The Synod proposes that Services of the Word and Communion be reserved for Sunday in the absence of a priest.
- Proposal 3.19 The Synod proposes that on weekdays, when Mass is not celebrated, a variety of services should be provided, e.g. Divine Office, Rosary and novenas.

Synod Recommendation #2

Lay Ministry

We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan must include honouring the many vocations of all the baptised, women and men alike. This will also include a strong commitment to lay ministry including training employed ministers, supporting volunteer ministers, and coordinating their work alongside the clergy.

Ordained ministry

While the proposals put forward relating to Ordained ministry were not amongst those that emerged most strongly from Synod members, the proposals that they were drawn to in this category called for “a robust programme of ongoing formation is developed for the wellbeing of priests and deacons, that meets their spiritual, intellectual, practical, and mental health needs”. This resonates the concern for clergy wellbeing and recognition of the difficulties they face that was expressed in the listening stage. Although not as strongly, Synod members were also drawn to a proposal which suggested “seminary training takes place within the Archdiocese” and this was also in the higher 50% of proposals.

Other proposals which made specific suggestions about clergy living in community, regular reviews of ministry and a call for a more “open, transparent, and accountable process for selecting candidates for seminary” were not in the top 50% of proposals.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms that there is a great love, appreciation, and valuing of priests, deacons, and seminarians of the Archdiocese who continue to generously respond to God’s call.
- Proposal 1.23 The Synod proposes that there is a more open, transparent, and accountable process for selecting candidates for seminary that seeks and respects informed views from the People of God.
- Proposal 1.24 The Synod proposes that seminary training takes place within the Archdiocese with studies being undertaken at local universities and seminarians living in local houses of formation.
- Proposal 1.25 The Synod proposes that a robust programme of ongoing formation is developed for the wellbeing of priests and deacons, that meets their spiritual, intellectual, practical, and mental health needs.
- Proposal 1.26 The Synod proposes that a regular review of ministry for each bishop, priest and deacon is put in place as an integral part of on-going formation and accountability.
- Proposal 1.27 The Synod proposes that priests live in community for their care and support.



Synod Recommendation #3

Ordained Ministry

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include a strong commitment to ordained ministry including a programme of support and formation for priests, deacons, and seminarians, and coordination of their work alongside lay ministers.

Invite and Welcome in God's Name

A More Inclusive Church

The theme of inclusivity has come forward as the thing Synod members were most drawn to through the proposals stage of the Synod process, with the affirmation 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” being the one that came out on top across all themes. The overall proposal that Synod members were most drawn to was also about inclusivity, calling for “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”. The outpouring of love and compassion from members of the Church for those who feel marginalised or excluded from the Church was strongly affirmed.

Another specific proposal which was amongst those Synod members were drawn to was the suggestion “that we work to remove the physical, linguistic, emotional and cultural barriers that prevent people from fully living their baptismal vocation” by tackling unconscious bias. A proposal to develop an “Archdiocesan ministry to the LGBTQI community” was amongst those proposals that were in the top 50%.

A proposal about reviewing buildings to ensure they are “accessible and equipped for a range of needs”, and another asking that “at Archdiocesan, parish, and individual level, to humbly and honestly look at racism in the Church” didn't emerge strongly in this stage of the process.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the outpouring of love and compassion for those who feel marginalised or excluded from the Church.
- Affirmation: 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.
- Proposal 1.09 The Synod proposes that we work to remove the physical, linguistic, emotional and cultural barriers that prevent people from fully living their baptismal vocation by developing training programmes to combat unconscious bias within structures and communities.
- Proposal 2.19 The Synod proposes that we find ways, at Archdiocesan, parish, and individual level, to humbly and honestly look at racism in the Church.
- Proposal 4.01 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.
- Proposal 4.02 The Synod proposes that all our buildings be reviewed to ensure that they are accessible and equipped for a range of needs.
- Proposal 4.03 The Synod proposes that an Archdiocesan ministry to the LGBTQI community be developed.

Synod Recommendation #4

A More Inclusive Church

a) We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan include action on the part of both parish and archdiocese to announce the welcome we offer to everyone.

b) We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan include dialogue with those who feel excluded, in order to develop initiatives so that the whole Church can reflect on what it means to be more inclusive.

Ecumenism

The proposals relating to ecumenism that Synod members were most drawn to spoke of practical action, and the proposal that Synod members were drawn to most strongly, being third in the overall ranking, recommended “that our parishes turn outwards, joining with other churches, faith communities, charities, and other organisations to serve the local community”. Another proposal spoke of being proactive when it comes to “opportunities for ecumenical and interfaith prayer, action, and formation”.

A proposal that spoke in a more general sense of the value of ecumenism and the need for renewed enthusiasm was not amongst those that emerged most strongly from Synod members.

- Proposal 3.02 The Synod proposes that we are proactive in using opportunities for ecumenical and interfaith prayer, action, and formation.
- Proposal 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.
- Proposal 4.20 The Synod proposes that we engage with renewed enthusiasm in the ecumenical journey at every level.



Synod Recommendation #5

Ecumenism

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include a commitment for parishes and schools to develop education about ecumenism which would lead to concrete actions with ecumenical partners.

Young People and Young Adults

Synod members affirmed the joy that is found when children and young people are visible and active in our worshipping communities and expressed a yearning to be a place where more young people find belonging, meaning, and purpose. Proposals that emerged from Synod members suggested “regular, well-advertised opportunities” and called for young people to have “an active voice” in parish and deanery structures also came out strongly, as did the specific suggestion of a “further development of peer to peer youth ministry”.

Other proposals in the top 50% sought to better understand and reflect upon the needs and barriers that can prevent “full participation” of young people in our communities and develop an “appropriate response”.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms that the people of the Archdiocese find joy when children and young people are visible and active in our worshipping communities. We yearn to be a place where more young people find belonging, meaning, and purpose.
- Proposal 1.18 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese works to understand and challenge the linguistic, emotional, and cultural barriers that prevent young people from full participation.
- Proposal 1.19 The Synod proposes that reflection is needed on the needs of young people in our communities in order to develop an appropriate response.
- Proposal 1.20 The Synod proposes that schools and parishes work to find creative and accessible ways in which young people have an active voice in the synodal structures of our parishes and pastoral areas.
- Proposal 2.25 The Synod proposes that there are regular, well-advertised opportunities for worship, service and socialising for young people across pastoral areas.
- Proposal 3.29 The Synod proposes that parishes find ways to involve the gifts of young people in liturgical celebration.
- Proposal 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.



Synod Recommendation #6

Young People and Young Adults

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include a plan to assist parishes in understanding, meeting, forming, and welcoming young people and young adults, and developing locally employed and volunteer youth ministers to work with young people and young adults.

Faith Formation

Faith Formation and Adult Education

Although proposals that spoke of formation in a more general sense were not those Synod members were most drawn to in the proposal stage of the Synod process, formation is brought up in many of proposals that relate specifically to other areas such as inclusivity, ministry of welcome, Sunday worship, spiritual formation, and more.

Proposals that emerged from Synod members that fell into this category called for a review of “formation and Catholic teaching for life, from the cradle to the grave”, and another asked that online formation not be underestimated as a way to help adults grow in faith.

Proposals which weren't amongst those that emerged strongly from Synod members affirmed the need for good formation and proposed specific methods, such as, creating opportunities to discuss areas of Church teaching “that some people find difficult”, developing bespoke resources, and the training of local trainers. Others proposals also affirmed the importance of formation, and spoke of it in relation to specific groups such as increased provision for young adults or a review of formation in light of growing diversity in the Archdiocese.

- Proposal 1.13 The Synod proposes that adult faith formation in the Archdiocese focuses on the development of good quality resources that meet local needs and are easily adaptable to particular circumstances.
- Proposal 1.14 The Synod proposes that adult faith formation opportunities are provided to help adults to grow in their own faith. In the light of our COVID-19 experiences, we must not underestimate the value of online formation.
- Proposal 1.15 The Synod proposes that adult faith formation focuses on the training of trainers to deliver the formation locally.
- Proposal 1.16 The Synod proposes that increased resources be allocated to young adult ministry and pastoral formation for those in the 18-30 age group.
- Proposal 2.07 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese reviews how it offers formation and Catholic teaching for life, from the cradle to the grave.
- Proposal 2.08 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese provides opportunities for conversations about aspects of church teaching that some people find difficult.
- Proposal 2.09 At All Levels led by In the light of the Archdiocese becoming increasingly multicultural and ethnically diverse the Synod proposes that this is reflected in the way religious education and formation is delivered.

Synod Recommendation #7

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include resources dedicated to adult faith formation, offered both in-person and online at the archdiocesan and deanery levels.

Catholic Schools

The proposals regarding our Catholic schools which Synod members were most drawn to were those which proposed the strengthening of “links between schools and parishes” to “better serve the mission of the Church”; “more collaboration and interaction to enable the strengthening of the home/school/parish partnership”; and that there be innovation in this area.

There was an affirmation of the great resource that Catholic schools are, but this also noted that there was potential for more to be done to enable them to achieve their potential in handing on the Catholic faith. This was reflected in a proposal that asked for a review of the “teaching of the Catholic faith in our schools” and another expressed desire for the whole Catholic community to be involved in “developing a renewed understanding of what Catholic schools are about and what a Catholic education is.” There were also two proposals Synod members were drawn to, although not quite as strongly (but still in the highest 50%), one recognised that schools are “privileged places for the teaching or prayer” and they be supported in this, and another proposal which asked that lay chaplaincy in schools is strengthened through “clear and well-defined career path, pay scale, and development structure”.

Two other proposals, one which asked for the RE syllabus to be reviewed and another to review “what it means to be a Catholic school” were not amongst the proposals that emerged strongly from Synod members.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms that Catholic schools are a great resource but do not always achieve their potential in handing on the Catholic Faith.
- Affirmation: We affirm the place of schools in the prayer life of the parish community
- Proposal 1.30 The Synod proposes that lay chaplaincy within our schools is strengthened and promoted with a clear and well-defined career path, pay scale, and development structure that supports the recruitment and retention of qualified, enthusiastic, and experienced people.
- Proposal 1.31 The Synod proposes that innovative ways be found to create links between school and parish and that this collaboration is appropriately supported.
- Proposal 1.32 The Synod proposes a thorough review of the RE syllabus.
- Proposal 1.33 The Synod proposes a review takes place of what it means to be a Catholic school particularly in reference to staffing.
- Proposal 2.26 The Synod proposes that the links between schools and parishes are strengthened to better serve the mission of the Church.
- Proposal 2.27 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese review the teaching of the Catholic Faith in our schools.
- Proposal 3.28 The Synod recognises that all schools are privileged places for the teaching of prayer and proposes that they be supported in this ministry.
- Proposal 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.
- Proposal 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.



Synod Recommendation #8

Catholic Schools

a) We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan include a comprehensive review of how we hand on and nurture the Catholic faith within the school context.



b) We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan include the promotion, support, and strengthening of chaplaincy in all our secondary schools, colleges, and further education institutions.

c) We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan include the creation of two or three models of home/school/parish partnership at both the primary and secondary school levels, which can be developed and shared among all the parishes and schools.

Children and Young People's Faith Formation

In the listening phase of the Synod process there was a lot of concern shared for the faith formation of young people, especially when it came to people's own children and grandchildren. One of the proposals that came out more strongly in theme 4 asked for "new ways of enabling parents to hand on faith to their children be established, recognising the many challenges this presents".

- Proposal 3.13 In the light of COVID-19, people have a renewed understanding that the Church is the people not the buildings. The Synod recognises that home is a holy place and proposes that resources are provided to support and develop the domestic Church.
- Proposal 4.12 Archdiocese and The Synod proposes that new ways of enabling parents to hand on faith to their children be established, recognising the many challenges this presents.



Synod Recommendation #9

Children and Young People's Faith Formation

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include a programme of formation through which parents (assisted by parish catechists and Catholic schools) can become the primary educators of their children.

Prayer and Spirituality

Spiritual Formation

Synod members affirmed the importance of spiritual formation as well as the value of accompaniment through every stage on our own journey of faith. In the proposal phase of the Synod process, the value of varied opportunities for prayer was affirmed, while noting how this has the potential to be further developed.

Proposals that were amongst those that Synod members were drawn to called for parishes to provide opportunities “outside the celebration of Mass for people to gather in prayer”, and another which wished to affirm our renewed understanding of Church as “the people not the buildings”, and recognised that “home is a holy place” and resources are provided to support the domestic Church.

Other proposals that were in the top 50% were a request for traditional devotions to be “renewed for our age”, and for the creation of a “Spirituality Department” to resource and serve parishes.

Proposals that didn't come out strongly from Synod members were those calling for an annual deanery retreat and for the training and support of spiritual directors, in collaboration with the Anglican Diocese of Liverpool.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the variety of opportunities for prayer that exist and need to be developed.
- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the importance of spiritual formation and accompaniment at each stage of the faith journey.
- Proposal 3.01 The Synod proposes that each parish provides opportunities outside the celebration of Mass for people to gather in prayer.
- Proposal 3.03 The Synod proposes that traditional devotions, which have nurtured people in ages past, be renewed for our age.
- Proposal 3.12 The Synod proposes the creation of a Spirituality Department in the Archdiocese which provides resources to serve the needs of parishes.
- Proposal 3.14 The Synod proposes that an annual retreat is offered in each pastoral area.
- Proposal 3.15 The Synod proposes that in order to train and support spiritual directors we work in collaboration with the Anglican Diocese of Liverpool in their programme of spiritual direction and accompaniment.

Synod Recommendation #10

Spiritual Formation

a) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include a provision to help parishes develop spiritual formation opportunities at the local and deanery level.

b) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan encourage the process of developing “accompaniment parishes” in which family members would accompany one another to deepen faith, and where the parish would play its part in accompanying all who seek “life to the full” within the Catholic Church.



c) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan warmly encourage all Catholics to grow in confidence in the grace of their baptism, taking the initiative to meet with others (using pandemic learning experiences) to share scripture, faith, and prayer.

Sunday Liturgy and the Other Sacraments

While many proposals have a bearing on Sunday liturgy, and its centrality came through clearly in the listening phase, proposals relating specifically to this category were not amongst those which emerged from Synod members.

Proposals that Synod members were drawn to called for the Archbishop to ask the Bishops' conference for a review of "the current translation of the Roman Missal" and a request for a programme of "liturgical formation for all the People of God". Also in the top 50% of all proposals was a call for resources to "promote good liturgical music".

The proposals that fall in this category, but didn't emerge strongly from Synod members, spoke of: the value of the homily and a call for "on-going formation in preaching for priests and deacons be developed"; a request for more value to be placed on beauty in the liturgy; a desire for a greater uptake in the opportunities for silence in the liturgy; and an appreciation of the value of "celebrating Mass well". Also in the lower 50% of proposals were a request for the greater availability of the Extraordinary Form and a call for a "systematic programme of liturgical formation for all celebrants".

- Affirmation: We affirm the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the life of every baptised person and recognise that many Catholics rarely or never celebrate this sacrament
- Proposal 3.04 The Synod proposes that across the Archdiocese there is access to a variety of liturgical styles and celebrations.
- Proposal 3.05 The Synod proposes that the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite be more widely available.
- Proposal 3.06 The Synod proposes that we use the opportunities the liturgy provides for silence.
- Proposal 3.07 The Synod proposes that resources be found to promote good liturgical music.
- Proposal 3.08 The Synod proposes that more value be placed on the need for beauty in our liturgy, in the way it is celebrated and in the liturgical environment.
- Proposal 3.09 The Synod proposes that the Archbishop asks the Bishops' Conference to review the current translation of the Roman Missal.
- Proposal 3.10 The Synod proposes that there be developed an Archdiocesan programme of liturgical formation for all the People of God.
- Proposal 3.11 The Synod proposes that we develop our appreciation of the importance of celebrating Mass well.
- Proposal 3.20 The Synod proposes that a systematic programme of liturgical formation be developed for all celebrants.
- Proposal 3.21 The Synod proposes that because of the importance of the homily in the liturgy a programme of on-going formation in preaching for priests and deacons be developed.
- Proposal 3.25 The Synod proposes that we are creative in how we celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Proposal 3.26 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese develops a programme of formation for adults and children for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Synod Recommendation #11

Sunday Liturgy and the Other Sacraments

a) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan acknowledge the primary place of the Sunday liturgy in the life and mission of the Church.



b) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan propose liturgical formation for both laity and clergy so that the Sunday liturgy is worthy and central in all we do in both the manner of its celebration and the mission it engenders.

c) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan provide a way for us to review how we are celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Social Teachings and Community

Catholic Social Teaching and Creation Care

The importance of Catholic Social Teaching being lived in day-to-day life, and in particular the call to care for creation from successive Popes was affirmed. Proposals Synod members were drawn to asked for better integration of Catholic Social Teaching in formation, catechetical programmes and homilies, as well as the development of substantial “environmental plans based on the principles of Laudato Si’” for every school and parish.

Proposals that were more specific that asked for all parishes achieve the Live Simply award and that ‘care for creation’ be a standing item on parish council agenda’s were not amongst those that emerged from Synod members.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the value of the rich tradition of Catholic Social Teaching and the call for this to be lived more fully in the day-to-day life of the Archdiocese.
- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the clear teachings from successive popes and the prophetic voice of our young people calling us to put care for creation at the forefront of our mission.
- Proposal 2.10 The Synod proposes that, in order to form the faithful for practical action, resources are developed that allow Catholic Social Teaching to be an integral part of formation, catechesis and homilies.
- Proposal 2.11 All parishes | The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese and all its parishes become Live Simply communities.
- Proposal 2.12 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese works towards a renewed understanding of Laudato Si’.
- Proposal 2.13 The Synod proposes that every school and parish community develop and implement a five, ten and fifteen year environmental plan based on the principles of Laudato Si’.
- Proposal 2.14 The Synod proposes that care for creation should be a standing item on parish council agendas.

Synod Recommendation #12

Catholic Social Teaching and Creation Care

a) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan acknowledge the primary place of the Sunday liturgy in the life and mission of the Church.

b) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan propose liturgical formation for both laity and clergy so that the Sunday liturgy is worthy and central in all we do in both the manner of its celebration and the mission it engenders.

c) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan provide a way for us to review how we are celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Love of Neighbour

Love of neighbour has emerged very strongly for Synod members with affirmations and proposals being only marginally behind those of the highest concern - those relating to inclusion. Synod members strongly affirmed that they were moved with compassion by the suffering of the poor, weak, marginalised, lonely, and vulnerable and that strong links should be forged with those who are sick, lonely, isolated, or marginalised.

Two proposals relating to love of neighbour were amongst those that emerged most strongly for Synod members, one that asks us to value and find ways of supporting “the sick and the housebound as praying members of our communities” and another that calls for “pastoral areas or clusters of parishes work together to reflect on the needs of the communities they serve, the support available and effective responses”.

Two other proposals resonated with these themes, one asking parishes to develop “ministry to the elderly, the sick, the housebound and the lonely” and another calling for the whole Church to prioritise “needs of those who feel on the margins of society”.

Two proposals that spoke specifically of the necessity for each parish to have a “social welfare group or action” and for a more “strategic approach to charitable giving and fundraising” in deaneries were among those that were not amongst the proposals that emerged strongly from Synod members.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms that we are moved with compassion by the suffering of the poor, weak, marginalised, lonely, and vulnerable in our society.
- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the importance of each parish forging strong links with those who are sick, lonely, isolated, or marginalised.
- Proposal 2.15 The Synod proposes that pastoral areas or clusters of parishes work together to reflect on the needs of the communities they serve, the support available and effective responses.
- Proposal 2.16 The Synod proposes that, following on from lessons learnt and the experiences lived at the time of the pandemic, the parishes of the Archdiocese should always be at the forefront of reaching out to those in most need.
- Proposal 2.17 The Synod proposes that every parish be committed to having some form of social welfare group or action.
- Proposal 2.18 The Synod proposes a more strategic approach to charitable giving and fundraising with each pastoral area selecting a charitable cause to support each year.
- Proposal 4.14 The Synod proposes prioritising the needs of those who feel on the margins of society.
- Proposal 4.15 The Synod proposes that each parish develops its ministry to the elderly, the sick, the housebound and the lonely.
- Proposal 3.27 The Synod proposes that ways be found to support and value the sick and the housebound as praying members of our communities.

Synod Recommendation #13

Love of Neighbour

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include training for parish volunteers who can accompany those most in need; giving special attention to those who are housebound, sick, or immigrants, and to those who are members of cultural and ethnic minorities.

Community Building

Alongside evangelisation, community building came forward as one of the purposes of the Catholic Church in the world in the initial listening phase. One proposal that came across strongly from Synod members under this heading calls for each deanery to offer “opportunities available to belong to small groups for formation, prayer, socialising and action”.

Proposals were put forward affirming this mentioning the importance of belonging, small groups and sodalities, and charity activities, although these proposals weren't amongst those which emerged from Synod members.

- Proposal 2.28 The Synod proposes that in each pastoral area there be opportunities available to belong to small groups for formation, prayer, socialising and action.
- Proposal 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.
- Proposal 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.
- Proposal 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 Recommendation #14

Community Building

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include support for small group or family-based gatherings for social activity, study, and shared prayer.

Communications and Media

The proposals which Synod members were most drawn to relating to communications and media asked for “a new communication and media strategy”; that “opportunities afforded by social media are effectively utilised”; parishes be supported in “maintaining their digital profile”; and that “a new Communications Department be created”.

The global pandemic has brought into focus the need for effective communications and media, and this was reflected in a proposal which asked for the establishment of a working party to “further develop creative online ministries for our Archdiocese”.

Other proposals that were not amongst those that emerged from Synod members also related to the global pandemic, one asked for support for each parish to live stream liturgy and another for particular consideration for those unable to get online.

- Proposal 2.23 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese develops a new communication and media strategy that enables people to learn, be informed, communicate and evangelise.
- Proposal 2.24 In the light of COVID-19 people have discovered the power of creative online ministry. The Synod proposes that a working party of priests and laity is established to further develop creative online ministries for our Archdiocese.
- Proposal 3.30 The Synod proposes that the opportunities afforded by social media are effectively utilised and all parishes are supported in producing and maintaining their digital profile.
- Proposal 3.31 The Synod proposes the development of an effective communications strategy at the service of prayer and mission.
- Proposal 3.32 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese supports every parish in providing live streaming of liturgy.
- Proposal 4.24 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese should provide support to all parishes in the use of technologies for communication and for outreach.
- Proposal 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.
- Proposal 4.26 The Synod proposes that, in developing future communication strategies, consideration is given to those who are unable to access online provision.

Synod Recommendation #15

Communications and Media

We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan include a commitment to resourcing the promotion, training, and equipping of parish leaders in communication for evangelisation, mission, and community building. This should include model programmes of communication, proper use and recording of data, technology advice, and outreach plans that parishes can adopt.

Administration and Governance

Governance and Synodality

Synod members affirmed the value of collaborative and synodal leadership in our communities, and wished for this to be lived at every level of governance. It was also affirmed that the parish as a structure has potential to adapt to the needs of our times. The contribution of women to the life and mission of the Church was affirmed, although at the same time it was also noted that it be recognised that many feel this contribution is not sufficiently valued. This theme came out in one of the top five of all proposals which called for the “Archdiocese initiate a process that ensures women are equal, valued, visible and heard”.

A proposal that Synod members were drawn to asked that “clear roles are established for lay people so that, regarding decision making and development of parish life, neither the burden nor the responsibility falls to the priest alone”. Another which Synod members were drawn to called for “parish pastoral councils be established in each parish with clear terms of reference” from the Archbishop.

Proposals relating to governance that Synod members were drawn to, though somewhat less so, called for “deacons and/or lay people be given a share in the pastoral care of some parishes” under the direction of an appointed priest. Another proposal requested decisions be made in an “open, honest, and transparent way that consults and respects the views of affected communities”, while another asked for parishes keep a database of parishioners to be better prepared to reach out in times of need.

Other proposals that didn’t emerge from Synod members called for greater accountability and transparency that were more specific, be it relating specifically to financial stewardship, diversity in governance and deanery forums. Among the proposals that didn’t emerge from Synod members were the calls for an emergency response plan for each parish, a call for a review to see what “lessons must be learnt” after the pandemic, a specific call for pastoral visitations to be a part of a parish planning cycle and the request for the synod to be cancelled.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms that the parish as a structure has the potential to adapt to the needs of our times.
- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the value of collaborative and synodal leadership within our communities and the widely held desire that synodality be lived at every level of local governance.
- Affirmation: The Synod affirms the invaluable contribution of women to the life and mission of the Church and recognises that many feel this contribution is not sufficiently valued.
- Proposal 1.01 The Synod proposes that, for transparent and collective decision making to be enabled, parish pastoral councils be established in each parish with clear terms of reference as given by Archbishop Malcolm.
- Proposal 1.02 The Synod proposes that clear roles are established for lay people so that, regarding decision making and development of parish life, neither the burden nor the responsibility falls to the priest alone.
- Proposal 1.03 The Synod proposes that pastoral area forums, involving a diversity of participants, are established in order to inspire and inform effective collaboration and strategic decision making in pastoral areas.
- Proposal 1.04 The Synod proposes that, in the light of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, an ongoing review be established to see what lessons must be learned.
- Proposal 1.05 The Synod proposes that Synod 2020 should be cancelled.
- Proposal 1.06 The Synod proposes that, at all levels of governance, those with the responsibility of decision making do so in an open, honest, and transparent way that consults and respects the views of affected communities.

- Proposal 1.07 The Synod proposes that, at all levels of governance, good stewardship of finances must include accountability to the People of God.
- Proposal 1.08 The Synod proposes that structures of governance are constituted in a way that reflects and represents the diversity of the People of God.
- Proposal 1.17 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese initiate a process that ensures women are equal, valued, visible and heard.
- Proposal 4.04 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.
- Proposal 4.05 The Synod proposes that parishes exercise proper, transparent and honest stewardship and accountability.
- Proposal 4.07 The Synod proposes that episcopal visitations be developed as the opportunity to promote and monitor pastoral planning and its implementation.
- Proposal 4.08 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.
- Proposal 4.09 The Synod proposes that, in the light of what we have learned through COVID-19, each parish develops an emergency response plan.

Synod Recommendation #16

Governance and Synodality

a) We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan include a strengthening of collaborative and synodal leadership at local and Diocesan level with a sustained commitment to accountability, transparency, and inclusivity.

b) We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan as part of our growing commitment to synodality, develop a process that ensures women are equal, valued, visible and heard.

Property

The proposal relating to property which Synod members were most drawn to was that which called for a systematic and innovative “review of the buildings we have in our parishes with a view to their better use to serve the mission of the Church” in collaboration with local communities and ecumenical partners. Although less strongly, another proposal calling for a review of buildings so that they can “more effectively support community life” was one Synod members were drawn to.

Proposals that were not amongst those which emerged were those calling for clusters of parishes in large deaneries, and the need to support deanery communities in discerning their own needs.

- Proposal 1.34 Deaneries with help from The Synod proposes that pastoral area communities are supported, encouraged, and empowered by the Archdiocese to reflect on their needs and the needs of their wider community to inform the appropriate use of buildings.
- Proposal 2.20 Large The Synod proposes that, within some of the large pastoral areas, clusters of parishes are established in order to share skills, resources, and best practice.
- Proposal 2.21 The Synod proposes that, when the temptation to focus on local needs is great, we never forget the greater needs elsewhere.
- Proposal 2.22 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese, in collaboration with local communities and ecumenical partners, undertake a systematic and innovative review of the buildings we have in our parishes with a view to their better use to serve the mission of the Church.
- Proposal 4.06 The Synod proposes that a review be undertaken to see how our buildings can be used to more effectively support community life.

Synod Recommendation #17

Property

a) We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan include establishing a working group of clergy and lay people, along with ecumenical and community partners, to study our current portfolio of properties asking how they can best support our mission.

b) We the people of the Archdiocese recommend that the pastoral plan develop strategies to accompany communities as they discern the future use of parish properties.

Parishes and Deaneries

The proposal ranked second overall in the process called for the Archdiocese to “heed the call of Pope Francis to be brave and courageous in renewing structures so that they are at the service of mission rather than self-preservation”. Alongside this the centrality of mission in our understanding of the Church God is calling us to be, was affirmed.

Other proposals that Synod members were less drawn to, but still in the top 50%, called for: parishes to work “imaginatively in sharing resources and in providing a widespread of times for Mass”; more effective communication and collaboration across deaneries; and the specific call for there to be a Shrine Church in each area which is a “hub for the daily celebration of Mass and confession and will be open all day, every day.”

Proposals which called for the Archdiocese to “review the numbers and locations of Churches”, to review deanery boundaries and that there be no Masses should a priest be away were not amongst the proposals that emerged strongly from Synod Members.

- Affirmation: The Synod affirms that mission must be central in our understanding of the Church that God is calling us to be.
- Proposal 1.29 The Synod proposes that pastoral areas develop and implement strategies for more effective communication and collaboration between parishes including the sharing of resources and good practice.
- Proposal 2.05 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese heed the call of Pope Francis to be brave and courageous in renewing structures so that they are at the service of mission rather than self-preservation.
- Proposal 2.06 The Synod proposes that there should be a review and reconfiguration of the pastoral area structure.
- Proposal 3.22 The Synod proposes that in each area there should be a Shrine Church which will become a hub for the daily celebration of Mass and confession and will be open all day, every day.
- Proposal 3.23 The Synod proposes that, by collaborating in local clusters, parishes will work imaginatively in sharing resources and in providing a widespread of times for Mass and other services.
- Proposal 3.24 The Synod proposes that when a priest is on holiday Mass is not celebrated in the Church(es) where he normally celebrates Mass.
- Proposal 4.21 The Synod proposes that the Archdiocese should review the numbers and locations of churches required for its mission.
- Proposal 4.22 The Synod proposes that pastoral area boundaries be reviewed.
- Proposal 4.23 The Synod proposes that small clusters of parishes be encouraged to enable more effective working together.

Synod Recommendation #18

Parishes and Deaneries

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan be bold and creative in renewing parish and deanery structures. We want our structures to be at the service of our mission, and we are aware that we must adapt parish structures to meet the needs of our age and plan to share resources across parish boundaries.

The Church in Today's World

As a Archdiocese and as a country we are concluding this Synod in a very different context than when we embarked on this journey. A desire to reach out beyond ourselves, to show love and mercy to all of our neighbours has been the theme which has come out most strongly in the latest phase of our Synod process. Inspired by this, the conversations relating to the pandemic that have continued in our communities beyond submitting proposals, and the work of the Vatican Covid-19 Commission, this final recommendation has been included.



Synod Recommendation #19

The Church in Today's World

We, the people of the Archdiocese, recommend that the pastoral plan invite and support all the people of the Church to take a leading role to creatively shape the “new normal” in our society and culture that will emerge after the current pandemic.