

We enabled parishioners and others to engage with the synod in a variety of ways. We created activities that people could complete at home, in group gatherings, and even alone. These activities were passed on the Sacred Heart school, but also used as part of a variety of our other groups: Children's liturgy, prayer group meeting, SVP, walking group and others. Feedback from all of these have been collated and integrated into this response.

In addition, we organised a half day for anybody with an interest in being part of a synodal discussion to attend. The fruits of this have also been integrated into the response.

During the half day event we collaboratively created the following definitions:

### **Communion**

We are a faith community that comes together in fellowship and love to be nourished by the Eucharist and empowered by the Holy Spirit. With her guidance we offer empathy, love and understanding to those we are in communion with. We are open to newcomers, we are a diverse parish, and seek dialogue with those that are different from us.

### **Participation**

Each within their ability takes part in being an inviting, active presence within the church and our wider community. We will strive to be an attractive communion for all people. We are blessed with a Catholic School, strong Mass attendance, healthy participation in sacramental preparation programmes and a strong sense of community.

### **Mission**

We want to be an accepting community where dialogue is heard and people are accepted and empowered to take action for the good of all people, but especially for those in need. We struggle to understand clericalism, aspects of Canon Law and scandals within the church at large. We worry about the impact this has on us individually, as a community of faith and the Catholic Church in the global West. The sign we give and our ability to witness to the faith has been damaged. We encourage everybody to remember Jesus and ask: WWJD (What Would Jesus Do), when unsure or unclear. The answer almost always being: see the human being first.

Sacred Heart is not 'just' a church, it is our HOME church, the faith community where we belong and find a community of support. Sacred Heart enables us to come together at Mass, to belong, but also to meet people and support those in need. There is always a friendly, welcoming face.

Based on all the information we collated:

We would like to invite the **Diocese in Communion on their Synodal journey:**

- To be more visible within parishes,

- Be more open to change and foster inclusiveness,
- To encourage both online and physical attendance at Mass,
- Invite live testimonies, and to hear people's faith stories,
- Live out the fact that people are workers in the vineyard and celebrate the meeting of all people from all backgrounds within the diocese,
- To be clearer about the Diocesan pastoral plan and priorities.

We would like to invite the **Diocese to Participate** with parishes:

- Enabling parishes to have a clearer say and be part of joint decision making within the diocese. Where this is happening this is often not visible enough to the parish, for example, does the Diocese have a Diocesan Council which includes the laity, religious and Deacons or only a Council of Priests?
- Consider ways in which those with busy work, family and faith lives can play an active part within the diocese,
- After COVID (re)build a sense of Catholic community within the diocese and enable young people and working adults to establish connections within the church, as well as develop their faith.

We would like to invite the **Diocese in their Mission** to:

- Improve their communication with us, the loss of the Diocesan Directory and soon Hallam News is symptomatic perhaps of a growing distance, lack of structures and organisation,
- Be open to change and support inclusive initiatives and be proactive in promoting and creating these inclusive initiatives.
- address clericalism, particularly where some priests and/or other clergy are not allowing women and laity to engage fully in the life and work of the church
- Re-invigorate the role of faith and the church in young people. Young people clearly see conflict in what the church preaches and how the church responds to LGBTQIA+ and women's rights. They feel this leads to judgement and the church being an unwelcome place, which makes it more likely for them to leave and less likely to join. Church is not fun in their eyes.

We would like the **Diocese the Challenge** the Bishops Conference as part of the synod

- and encourage a review of Canon law, not all church teachings seem to be relevant today, particularly to us in the global West. With particular emphasis on divorcees being allowed to remarry and take Holy Communion; ordained women; married priests; greater roles for deacons as servants of charity and animators of local communities; being welcoming to ALL including people from an LGBTQIA+ background and allow them to be visible within the church so that those from these backgrounds do feel attracted to and not excluded from our communities.
- address clericalism, particularly where priests and/or other clergy are not allowing women and laity to engage in the work of the church
- We would like to see a more modern Church and would like to see more inclusive language throughout church literature (including in the Lectionary and Liturgical texts).
- The Church should prepare to respond to an increase of (elderly) housebound and lonely people, poverty, mental health difficulties

Sacred Heart is situated in a racially and economically diverse part of Sheffield. We are fortunate to have a Priest from Nigeria, a Deacon and a Religious Sister. But some in the Priesthood in Hallam resist welcoming Priests from Africa or the ministry of Deacons, which can be dispiriting.

Finally, as part of our synod activities we have reached out to our other local faith communities and churches. We also reached out to the community at large using social media. We asked them about priorities for our parish, the diocese and the Universal Church, as well as what would make a difference to them in attending our Parish. Some of their responses will be incorporated into our response to Sacred Hearts Parish Council. The following themes seem important to raise with the diocese:

- More visible support for the poor and needy, including activism on the big challenges facing our community such as housing issues, climate change
- Inclusion, particularly the role of women and the churches relationship with the LGBTQ+ community; and
- Community, being more engaged in the wider community based around what the community needs

We see this very much as a two part process and in addition to the above will prepare a suitable local response for our local parish council. With a view of using this to create a clear parish renewal plan.